Chapter - 1

COGNITIVE EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER BUYING PROCESS: AN INTRODUCTION
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Advertising all over the world has come up as social and economic phenomenon of vast scope in the recent year. But the role of advertising has often been a subject of much debate in society. Advertising may be useful to consumers, considering that dissemination of information is necessary when the consumers have to make a choice amongst various products and services. Another school of thought contends that consumers are duped by advertisements because they very often communicate deceptive claims. So the merits and demerits of the advertisements and their consequent cognitive effects need to be discussed here.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Advertising is an instrument of information and persuasion. As per one definition “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). The informative role of advertising consists in provision of information about products, features, functions, specifications and prices to prospective buyers. Due to ignorance of advertising, they may purchase an inferior product, pay higher prices, or worse still, may not even know the variety of products that exist. This increases the short-run propensity to consume by informing buyers of the various bargains available. Besides, it is also true that consumer spending declines when the normal advertising flow is cut-off.

By advertising the goods, a manufacturer comes in direct touch with the consumers. Banking upon this information, the manufacturer can directly sell to the customers.
The number of middlemen, whose margins increase the price for the consumers is consequently reduced.

Advertising ensures better and improved quality of goods to consumers at cheaper rates. Since advertised goods promise a certain quality which has to be maintained and further mass advertised goods are produced and distributed in large quantities, thus reducing the production cost per unit (due to economies of scale).

Goods are generally advertised with brand names. When an advertisement appears with a brand name, it imprints an image of the product in minds of the consumer. If the use of the advertised product confirms their expectations, a repeat order is expected and the product will earn a favourable image and good reputation. Thus, the manufacturer is prompted to maintain and if possible, improve the brand quality so that the confidence of consumers is maintained. Else, the brand will lose market share.

Advertising creates the desire to possess better and newer items by educating the buyers about better life-style. Advertising gives a direct stimulus to consumer which in turn prompts the producer to produce more and better quality. On the other hand, advertising acts as a mirror that shows the country's way of life. It is in fact a running commentary of the way people live and behave. Advertising and selling have played an important part in expanding the economic system by stimulating consumers into buying more. Advertising makes people work harder than they otherwise would. This has had the effect of raising the aggregate level of the economy. In the long run, advertising has probably played a major part in making people favourably disposed towards high levels of consumption and in creating new products and ideas. Thus, advertising also increases the employment levels, directly and indirectly. Advertising
reduces the risk of innovation. The cost of innovation can be more than recovered by the sales which advertisements may generate and encourage manufacturers to undertake research and development. The revenue through subscriptions is quite inadequate to support the publication of newspapers, magazines or TV channels. Advertising revenues, in fact, provide a greater support to viable functioning of these media. 

Further, advertising encourages competition and subsequently firms compete with each other to provide the best products and services to create and sustain brand loyalty. This also creates price competition. But while dispensing its role as a dream merchant, advertising has also been in controversy because of the many ills that it brings to society. It is accused of encouraging materialism and consumption, of stereotyping, of causing us to purchase items for which we have no need, of taking advantage of children, of manipulating our behaviour, using sex to sell, and generally contributing to the downfall of our social system. Advertising does not function in a vacuum but in a market environment where several forces like consumer needs, business interests and government regulations are at work. It is a powerful force in terms of its persuasiveness and functions a critical social role. Moreover, the high visibility and pervasiveness, it generates criticism and controversy. Much of this controversy springs from the fact that advertising is used more as a persuasive communication tool thereby creating serious impact on the tastes, values and lifestyles of society. 

Every day we are exposed to countless commercial messages persuading us to buy brand name products, creating images for us to adopt and convincing us that we need
and want more. Because of this, it is important for us to carefully examine advertisements to determine exactly what they are saying. While most advertisements honestly inform and educate us, some are false or deceptive and illegal.

In his study, David Paton (2008) reports his study based on advertising practices of 843 medium-sized and large UK-based firms. As per this study nearly one-quarter of all the advertisers surveyed state that they attribute importance to entry deterrence as an aim of their advertising. Further, one in five managers of advertising firms state that they would increase advertising expenditure if a new rival company appeared in their market.

However, realisation of these effects depends much on the nature of advertisement as well. Advertisements may be classified broadly into informative, persuasive, targeted and comparison advertisements. The bulk of advertisements we experience every day are persuasive advertisements intended to enhance the taste of consumers and they particularly attract inexperienced and new consumers. From developing the habit of soft drinks consumption among the young generation to increasing in the dependence on credit cards and cellular phones, persuasive advertisements have reshaped our life and culture like nothing before. Similarly, it is through such advertisements that among the urban Indian consumers, cornflakes, noodles and chowmins have become popular fast food items over the last decade. Informative advertisements are primarily intended to attract experienced consumers by providing them information regarding price, quality, product characteristics and availability. Such advertisements are expected to eliminate informational externality and influence the buyers' willingness to pay. In targeted advertisements, the focus is narrowed down to a particular group of
consumers and to a few attributes of the advertised brand. While expenditure on such advertisements thus can be kept within limits, their scope of generating the demand augmenting effect is limited too. Of course, the content of targeted advertisements depends much on the target group. For example, if the target group is inexperienced and new customers, then such advertisements will have more persuasive than informative content. Comparison advertisements, which directly or indirectly compare the attributes of the advertised brand with those of the competing brands, trigger the strategic or switching effect. Comparison advertisements are not legal in most countries including India. What we observe instead are advertisements that are indirectly comparative. In USA, where direct comparison advertisements are legal, 60 per cent of all advertisements are indirectly comparative and 20 per cent are directly comparative. In India, examples of indirect comparison advertisements, which have led to advertisement warfare are so many.

In addition to it, different approaches adopted by companies also influence the targeted groups in one way or the other. On this basis, advertisements may be classified under the following groups:\(^3\):

- **Refutational Advertising**: It involves explicitly stating competitive claims and then refuting them. It is often contrasted to supportive advertising which focuses on a one sided presentation of brand benefits only.

- **Emotional Advertising**: This category of approaches relies on emotions or feelings as the essential ingredient. Emotion – evoking approaches are most suitable when the product category is one where buying is based on a “feeling” benefit either the low-involvement small pleasures of candy or soda pop or the highly involving feelings associated with products like perfume, sports cars or jewellery.
• **Use of Celebrities in Advertising:** Celebrities are often used in testimonial advertising and they are examples of source-oriented approach. There are many types of sources in advertising and a model of source factors shows the range of source components and the cognitive and affective ways in which the credibility of any of the components can be assessed.

• **Distraction Approaches:** A final approach in advertising called distraction and involves trying to distract the audience from counter arguing during the viewing or listening process.

So, the concept of advertising is really complex. It is multi-dimensional also if studies from the marketers’ point of view or from the consumers’. There are different ways the consumers respond cognitively towards an advertisement.

**1.1.1 Cognitive Response of Consumer Towards Advertisements**

Exposure of various types of advertisement creates certain beliefs which may or may not mould the attitude and may result in change of intentions and ultimately the behaviour. The cognitive response model is based upon the assumption that some kind of learning plays a role in determining attitude change. The cognitive response model follows the belief that people actively relate information contained in persuasive messages to their existing feelings and beliefs about the message topic. A cognitive response is the attitude a consumer depicts after seeing an advertisement. The consumer will either agree or disagree with the message and may transmit the message to previous beliefs about the particular product. When exposed to a communication, a member of the audience is assumed to react with at least two distinct responses. He thinks of his own opinion and also of the opinion suggested by
the communicator. Merely thinking about the new opinion along with the old may not, in itself lead to an opinion change. The individual could memorize the content of the new opinion while his opinion remained unchanged. Cognitive response is based on the same idea i.e., a consumer’s mind can be swayed through knowledge.

The cognitive elements stored in long-term memory are usefully considered in terms of beliefs about the product i.e., cognitive linkages between the product or brand and other concepts, attributes, or outcomes of use. These subjective linkages or beliefs vary in strength-i.e., the perceived likelihood of association between the two concepts that constitute the belief. Beliefs also differ in terms of their salience and in the direction and intensity of evaluation associated with each belief.

When the advertising context provides exposure to a certain attribute (e.g., when a magazine article mentions the attribute), this attribute is likely to become accessible. Subsequently, that attribute is likely to be used in processing advertisement information and evaluating the advertised brand. Research in social cognition has shown that the accessibility of certain concepts is enhanced by prior exposure to those concepts. The impact of the advertising context on brand evaluation would therefore depend upon the attribute primed or activated by the context (e.g., magazine article) prior to ad exposure. When the advertising context primes an attribute (e.g., comfort) that has positive implications for the evaluation of the advertised brand, overall product evaluations will be enhanced. In contrast, when the context primes an attribute (e.g., gas consumption) whose evaluative implication is negative, overall product evaluations will be lowered. This suggests that the same advertisement can have different effects, depending upon the cognitive context in which the advertisement appears.⁴
There are three measurement paradigms that are potentially appropriate for detecting the occurrence of cognitive responses: thought listing, thought recognition, and belief verification. From each of these tasks, four specific measures are possible: the response itself, the attractiveness of that response, the confidence expressed in the validity of that response, and the reaction time taken to respond.

Advertisements contain informational cues which may be present in various forms including explicit verbal claims of product performance or nonverbal features such as pictures, illustrations, and symbols. A consumer who is exposed to an advertisement and attends to it may acquire and comprehend some of these cues. During comprehension, the cues contained in the advertisement are encoded, that is, converted to an internal symbolic or cognitive code, i.e., information. Then, if appropriate cognitive effort is exerted, the consumer may transfer this coded information to long term memory storage. Because for most products the purchase decision and the exposure to advertising are rather widely separated in time, the most relevant impact of deceptive advertising is on the encoded form of information stored in long term memory. It is this possibly false information held in long term storage that may have harmful or dysfunctional effects on the consumer's purchase decisions.

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creates a false or incorrect belief about the product. Unfortunately, application of this simple definition is not without difficulty. The basic problem involves determining whether or not a particular belief is false or incorrect.

When advertising format is compatible with processing mode, the ability to process information gets enhanced, making the message more persuasive and ad evaluations and purchase intentions more favourable than when advertising format and processing mode are incompatible. It is a matter of study to find out an effective advertising message strategy for the segmented target markets. The basic approach in studying advertising preference is to view the consumer as a processor of information; that is, the consumer is characterized as interacting with his or her choice environment, seeking and taking in information from various sources, processing this information and then making a selection among some alternatives.5

The purpose is to provide an integrated view of choice from an information processing perspective. Since the effective combinations of advertising appeal and advertising execution style will be different for different target audiences, it is necessary to study different segments with respect to age and sex and tries to explore the effective combinations of advertising appeals and advertising execution styles.

The cognitive major means by which learning constructs are changed is information received from (1) the buyer’s commercial environment, consisting of advertising, promotion, salesmanship, retail shelf display and (2) his social environment consisting of his family, friends, reference groups and social class6.

A company communicates its offering to buyer either by the physical brand itself or by symbolic (pictorial and linguistic) which represent the brand. Significative and symbolic communications are the two major means of interaction between sellers and buyers.
The social environment of the buyer family, friends, and reference groups is another major source of information influencing his buying behaviour. Most social input is likely to be symbolic (linguistic), although at times a friend may show the physical product to the buyer.

1.1.1.1 Effect of Information from the Social Environment on Learning Constructs

Information from the social environment also affects the four learning constructs: motives, decision mediators, the evoked set, and inhibitors. However, the constructs is different than that of commercial environment. First, information about brands is considerably modified by the social environment before it reaches the buyer. Most of modifications are likely to be in adding connotative meanings to brands and their attributes.

Internal and external search are two steps that are generally posited to precede a purchase decision. Consumers search for information in pursuit of particular goals and this search may be internal (memory) or external (packages, consumer reports, advertisements, etc). Furthermore, an internal search is usually performed initially and is followed by external search if there is insufficient information in memory to make a decision.

Two authors have provided categorizations of variables that are related to external search. Newman (1977)\textsuperscript{7} categorized the determinants into six categories: Cost, Potential payoff (price, style, perceived difference, perceived risk, knowledge, experience, education, and income), Buying strategies (brand and store preference, satisfying versus optimizing, strategy of information acquisition), Situational
variables (urgency, financial pressure, special buying opportunities, location of residence), Personality variables and other variables (household role, party of major influence, social class, occupation, age, stage of life cycle). A similar breakdown (Bettman 1979) classified determinants of choice process intensity (which includes processing of information as well as collection) into five categories: properties of choice situation (availability of information, difficulty of choice task, and time pressure), costs versus benefits of information, conflict and conflict response strategies, individual differences (in-store versus prior processing, abilities, concern with optimality of choice) and knowledge.

1.1.1.2 Determinants of the Extent of Information Search

Market environment, number of alternatives, complexity of alternatives, marketing mix of alternatives, stability of alternatives on the market (new alternatives), information availability situational variables, time pressure, social pressure (family, peer, boss), financial pressure, organizational procedures, physical and mental condition, ease of access to information sources potential payoff/product importance, price, social visibility, perceived risk, difference among alternatives, number of crucial attributes, status of decision-making activity (in the family, organisation, society) knowledge and experience, stored knowledge, usage rate of product, previous information, previous choices (number and identity), satisfaction individual differences and ability.9

Thus the various formulations for understanding buyer behaviour at best seem interdisciplinary: Mathematical Statistics, Cultural Anthropology, Sociology, Social Psychology and the conscious and unconscious psychology of the buyer all seem
relevant. Psychology plays an important role in advertising. The advertisements which could activate impulse of prospective customers to channalise their behaviour towards creating demand for desired goods and services are considered effective advertising. Conversely, if the said advertisement fails to arouse the requisite response, it may prove to be a heavy financial burden on organisation. So in that sense a good advertisement has to pass the tests of all the above disciplines.

1.1.2 Cognitive Dissonance

Dissonance theory postulates that if a person, given a choice between two equally desirable products, chooses one and rejects the other, he will experience dissonance. Such dissonance will lead the person to evaluate the chosen product more favourably and the rejected product less favourably. Dissonance can be aroused in three ways and can motivate the person to reduce this tension in a variety of ways. Dissonance may be aroused: 1) after making an important and difficult decision, 2) after being coerced to say or do something which is contrary to private attitudes, opinions, or beliefs and 3) after being exposed to descriptive information. The magnitude of dissonance depends upon the importance of the decision and the relative attractiveness of the rejected alternative. Dissonance reduction may not operate as a strong reinforcer in the case of frequently purchased merchandise.

The surprising phenomenon occurs in the case of frequently purchased products, such as food and personal-care items. The buyer, after establishing a routine decision process, may begin to feel bored with such repetitive decision making. He may also become satiated, even with preferred brand. In both cases, he may feel that all existing alternative—including the preferred brand are unacceptable. It generates a desire to
complicate the buying situation by considering new brands. This process can be called “the psychology of complication.” Ultimately the buyer identifies a new brand, and begins again to simplify. Thus the continuing process of buying frequently purchased items develops a cycle of information seeking that goes from simplification and back again.

The more frequently the product is purchased, the less important becomes the question of which brand is purchased at any one time and the less the post-purchase dissonance. The consumer who has purchased a convenience good usually would not experience strong dissonance because he knows that he is not irrevocably tied to that particular choice, but can easily switch brands. Since his dissonance is not strong, advertising's role in reinforcing the purchase is diminished.

On the other hand, the consumer who has just purchased an expensive specialty good is likely to experience strong dissonance if his purchase is irrevocable and if it is important in some psychological sense. For example, if a substantial financial outlay is involved or if his taste and intelligence are judged by the purchase, strong dissonance may be present. Under these circumstances, an advertisement which emphasized the desirable features of the chosen brand can reduce the dissonance which may lead the consumer to form a more favorable attitude toward the brand.

Creating a favourable product attitude may provide a refinement over the use of purchase as the target, particularly in client relationships. In order to actually create this attitudinal outcome it is essential that marketers develop a conceptual understanding of the psychological processes which mediate acceptance of the information they provide.
1.1.3 Advertisements and Impulsive Purchase

It has also been observed that advertisements make the consumer to take impulsive purchase decisions. When the consumer has not considered the bargain properly and is persuaded to make a deal through some oppressive and manipulative marketing strategies, his rights may easily be jeopardized.

That is why enduring efforts and unlimited attempts to explain consumer impulse buying behaviour have been made by scholars throughout the world. A consumer’s behaviour at any given point in time is distinctly related to personal characteristics of self-control and impulsivity. The degree of magnitude in which these actions exist is dependent upon one another. The same is true with the amount and extent to which a decision process takes place. Consumers treat decision making as a means-end chain of problem solving where goals are sought to be achieved or satisfied. The greater the need or desire for accomplishment is the greater increase in motivation to succeed.

1.1.4 Perception Regarding Price and Quality

One of the topics of greatest interest in consumer buying process is the effect of price on quality perceptions. Extant research evidence suggests that though the use of price as an indicator of product quality is widespread, the impact of price varies significantly across individuals and products being judged. So it is important to assess whether the relationship between price-perceived quality and price-objective quality is moderated by individual differences or the type of products being judged i.e., durable or nondurable\(^\text{10}\).

Resultantly, in marketing, the study of the impact of price expectations on consumer choice behaviour has begun to receive increasing attention in recent years. The
intuitively appealing propositions that consumers form and use in evaluating price information when making a purchase has both theoretical and empirical support. Introducing a product at a lower than regular price and then raising the price afterward to its regular level has been shown to have an adverse effect on subsequent sales. The reason is that consumers come to adopt the low introductory price as a reference and consider the regular price to be unacceptably greater than the price they expect to pay. From a managerial viewpoint, understanding how consumers form and use price expectations in making purchase decisions is important because the failure to incorporate price expectations has been shown to result in a misestimating price elasticity, which can lead to non-optimal pricing decisions. Recently, the price expectations hypothesis has been used to provide an alternative explanation for the observed adverse long-term effect of price promotions on brand choice. Previous research has shown that repeat purchase probabilities of a brand after a promotional purchase are lower than the corresponding values after a non-promotional purchase. If a purchase is induced by an external cause (such as a price promotion) as opposed to an internal cause (e.g., preference for the brand), repeat purchase probability of the brand will be reduced when the external cause is removed. Consumers' reactions to a retail price then may depend on how the retail price compares with the price they expect to pay for the brand. Specifically, during a price promotion, they are apt to perceive a price gain and react positively; correspondingly, when the deal is retracted, they are apt to perceive a price loss and are unlikely to purchase the brand. Another argument is that the lower repeat purchase rates may be the result of statistical aggregation rather than actual declines in the purchase probabilities of individual
consumers after a promotional purchase. Specifically, if the promotion attracts many consumers who under non-promotion circumstances would have very low probabilities of buying the brand, then on the next purchase occasion the low probabilities of these consumers bring down the average repurchase rate among promotional purchases. The behaviour of households that have low probabilities of buying a brand upon the retraction of a deal can be explained readily in a price expectation framework. The price they expect to pay for the brand may be close to the deal price and they may forego purchasing the focal brand when it is not promoted because its retail price far exceeds what they expect to pay for it.

It is also suggested by some studies that consumers’ price-quality perceptions for durable products are more accurate than their perceptions for non-durable products. There are several possible reasons for this greater reliance on price as an indicator of quality for durable goods. It may reflect less knowledge about durable goods because the consumer is likely to have made fewer purchases in the average durable goods category and any purchases are likely to have been made less recently. Durable goods also can be viewed as complex products for which consumers’ quality evaluations are more difficult. As a result of these limits on quality evaluation ability and knowledge, consumers may be more likely to use price as an indicator of quality for durable goods.

1.1.4.1 Price Sensitivity and Advertising

The mere marketplace survival of brands that offer poor quality in relation to their price suggests that consumers are far from perfect in their assessment of price-quality relationships. However, quality variations are often recognizable and in general
consumers are viewed as rational processors of information who are reasonably informed and who should not be regarded as fools. Tellis (1988)\textsuperscript{11} notes that market leaders in several industries have undergone market share erosion from higher quality entrants (e.g., Japanese entrants in the automobile industry), suggesting that some consumers do process quality information with at least some degree of accuracy. These points combine to suggest a positive, but not strong, relationship between perceived and objective price-quality relationships\textsuperscript{12}. A key effect of higher advertising is to make fully informed consumers relatively more important than partially informed consumers in each firm's demand function. This implies that as advertising levels increase, the average price in the market shifts from being close to the theoretical monopoly price towards the competitive price. When differentiation is low, demand from partially informed consumers is completely price inelastic. Prices are less than the reservation price for the most distant partially informed consumer. As a result, demand from partially informed consumers cannot be increased by reducing price. In contrast, demand from fully informed consumers depends on price. For a fully informed consumer, price affects the relative attractiveness of the two products. This means that demand from fully informed consumers is price elastic. As noted earlier, higher advertising increases the importance of fully informed consumers relative to partially informed consumers for both firms. In other words, higher advertising shifts demand from an inelastic segment to an elastic segment. Consequently, demand becomes more elastic as advertising levels increase and this leads to reductions in the average price. Price affects the relative attractiveness of the two products. So demand from fully informed consumers
responds to changes in price. The big difference when differentiation is high is that demand from partially informed consumers also responds to changes in price. Consumers incur a significant taste cost to consume a product that is not suited to their tastes when differentiation is high.

As a result, some partially informed consumers do not purchase at all. In fact, both firms have partially informed consumers located close to the competitor who find the product too expensive. When a firm lowers its price, some of these consumers change their minds and buy the product. This leads to demand from partially informed consumers being elastic. The preceding paragraph explains why demand from partially informed consumers is price sensitive when differentiation is high. However, the relationship between advertising levels and prices is not explained by the simple observation that demand from partially informed consumer has become price sensitive. The relationship is driven by the fact that demand from partially informed consumers has become more sensitive to changes in price than demand from fully informed consumers. To attract a fully informed consumer who is now buying from the competition, a firm must do more than compensate that consumer for increased taste costs. The firm must also compensate for the fact that as it increases demand from fully informed consumers that are further away, those same consumers are also proportionally closer to the competitor. This makes the required price reduction to attract those consumers high. In contrast, to increase demand from partially informed consumers, the firm need only compensate more distant consumers for increased taste costs.
1.1.5 Impact of Advertisements on Social Values

An advertisement may result in such cognitive changes which may corrupt the social and ethical values as well, especially when the target groups are women and children. Generally advertisements are informative and persuasive for adults. This means the person who can understand, perceive and choose a message, product, service. But as children can’t understand, perceive and choose like an adult, they fall a victim of these advertisements. So it is not ethical to use children in misleading advertisements. Moreover, they stand as a weaker party while bargaining; as compared to the other consumer groups. Resultantly, they may fall an easy prey to the deceptive claims made in an advertisement. Moreover, some advertisements communicate such messages which may be injurious to the social values.

1.1.6 Gender (Women/Men) as Sexual Object

Especially in advertisements for men, or men products women are used as sexual object. Using women as a sexual object in advertisements is effective and powerful for men, but worthless for women. These advertisements include messages like to be sexy, beautiful and charming means everything and the only way to impress the men. Sex-role portrayed in advertisements constitutes another extensively studied topic. During the past decade, the use of sexual appeals in print advertising has become almost commonplace. Reichert stated that, “sexual appeals can be persuasive, sometimes more than other types of appeals used in social marketing campaign”.

The research produced in the 1960s and 1970s records a plethora of media images clustering around the ideological concept of separate and unequal cultural spheres or places for men and for women (Welter 1966)\textsuperscript{13}. Women were found to be relegated to
roles relating to their place in the domestic sphere wife, mother, sex object, and housekeeper. Whereas men were found to be free to roam everywhere else. The point of view that governed the production of the images was so automatically male dominant that women were seen through men’s eyes as generic nonmen who behaved in stereotypical ways. The study of constrained images of women in advertising goes back to Goffman's (1976) book, Gender Advertisements, a landmark in content analysis of pictorial gender display themes. Identification of themes such as the ritualisation of subordination and licensed withdrawal replicates identification of similar themes found by the first wave of feminist literary critics. The critics assigned causality to a triad of assumptions underlying the production of images of women: (1) most images occur in text produced by men, (2) the images apply to women as a generic group, and (3) images are perceived in the same way by all readers. The major task of early feminist researchers across disciplines was to document the assertion that images of women in Western culture have generally been created from the male perspective, that this perspective has as its object a generically identifiable "woman," and that the view of women through men's eyes is assumed to be the universal one for both men and women. In advertising research, the decade after Goffman's (1976) work produced content analyses of gender role portrayals (Courtney and Whipple 1983) that illustrated women's roles in advertising as well as gender stereotyping of products and services. At this point, the object of research was generic woman, no matter her race, national origin, sexual preference, or class membership, and inquiry was driven by interest in the essential ‘womanness’ that supported the man/ woman binary.
While youth, beauty and sexuality are stressed in advertisement depictions of women (Downs & Harrison, 1985; Ferrante et al., 1988), increasingly the emphasis appears to be on sexuality and sexual availability. Soly and Kurzbard (1986) described the increased use of sexually provocative and suggestive content in advertising as approaching pornography in some cases, in their analysis of magazine advertisements. Illustrations of sexuality are more overt in these days than earlier advertisements; the absolute number of advertisements containing sexual elements had increased with female models being disproportionately more likely to be portrayed as sexually clad or partially clad. Further, in contrast to previous limitations of such advertisements to certain adult magazines, these are now common in general interest magazines.

It may be argued that such widespread overt depictions of women as sex objects can be expected to have an impact on general beliefs and attitudes. There is evidence that women hold very negative attitudes toward such advertisement portrayals of women (de Young & Crane, 1992). However, existing empirical evidence of the effects of female images on sexual attitudes is limited to studies of various media portrayals (e.g., movies and magazines) of sexual aggression (see Malamuth & Donnerstein, 1984 for a review). Several authors (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980) have suggested that sexually degrading media depictions of women promote rape-supportive attitudes and beliefs. Sexual Attitudes Survey that have been used widely to gauge rape supportive beliefs show that attitudes so measured have been found to predict various rape related attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours in a variety of settings.
Several studies indicate that males who see print media advertisements in which women are presented as sex objects are more likely to evidence increased sex role stereotypic and rape myth beliefs, and are likely to be more accepting of interpersonal violence (primarily against women), than are males exposed to other types of advertisements. In contrast, among women, gender role stereotypic beliefs and rape myth acceptance were actually lowered when they saw females in advertisements. It appears that the images used in the experimental conditions may have brought to the attention of the female subjects the issues of sexual exploitation of women in the media, and perhaps the social alternatives available to women, thus decreasing their tolerance for rape supportive beliefs. In fact, females in the progressive conditions consistently produced the lowest scores, and males in the sex object condition consistently produced the highest scores, on attitudes supportive of sexual aggression. U.S. states in which women had the most status and social power were those in which Baron & Straus (1984) found the highest rates of sexual assault. Such findings have been attributed to a real increase in rape incidents arising from a backlash against the feminist movement, as well as from an increased availability of pornography or sexually exploitive portrayals of women. Attitudes supportive of sexual aggression may be elicited by seeing women in non-traditional roles. And the findings from the females in our sample indicate that women exposed to progressive models may be more intolerant of sex-stereotypic beliefs and sexual aggression. In turn, this may indicate a greater likelihood of reporting rapes. In today's society, not only are women being sexually exploited more but their status is higher and they are competing with men in the job market. For males these two conditions, perhaps, increase sexually
hostile attitudes toward women. Women in both cases become less tolerant of these attitudes, and presumably therefore less accepting of sexually aggressive behaviours. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the commonality of advertisements such as those we used in the sex object condition (in magazines, on television, public transportation and so forth), provides frequent reinforcement of rape supportive attitudes among males. Repeated exposure to advertisements in which women are presented as sex objects also may socialize similar attitudes. It might be argued that sexual attitudes alone, especially those engendered by advertisements, are not predictive of actual sexually aggressive behaviours and are therefore of little importance. But attitudes do guide behaviours. And even the most subtle presentation of gender biased information, for example the use of the generic masculine noun and pronoun, can have a significant impact on social choices and behaviours.

By viewing women as exclusively sexual beings whose purpose is to sexually arouse and gratify men, a power differential is created in which women generally are subordinate.

This power hierarchy may facilitate the perception of women as appropriate targets for sexually aggressive behaviours. Conversely, being exposed to women in progressive, traditionally male roles, may create a power differential in favor of women thus threatening men by challenging their traditional dominance and putting them in direct competition with women. In this context, attitudes supportive of sexual aggression might be explained as an attempt to realign the shift in the balance of power.

The power of advertisements to manipulate attitudes of such importance to our interpersonal and societal well being should not be underestimated. Advertisements
are more pervasive than pornography, and unlike pornography are presented in a socially acceptable framework\textsuperscript{25}.

\textbf{1.1.7 Effect of Advertisements on Children}

Today’s children live in a media-saturated environment. Television directly affects children’s energy intake and output; they spend less energy while they are watching television. Furthermore, they are generally eating snacks while watching television; therefore, they gain more energy. Food advertisements, especially on the television, affect the children’s food consuming behaviours and their decisions on which food to consume.

Therefore, in recent years the anxiety levels related to the negative effects of television advertisements on children’s food consuming behaviours are gradually increasing. Although there are recent studies on the effects of television advertisements on children, there are only a few studies on the effects of television advertisements on children’s purchasing requests and content of the television advertising\textsuperscript{26}.

As per a study conducted by David J. Stewart\textsuperscript{27} on USA children following facts came to the light: Approximate number of studies examining TV's effects on children: 4,000. Number of minutes per week that parents spend in meaningful conversation with their children: 3.5 Number of minutes per week that the average child watches television: 1,680 Percentage of day care centers that use TV during a typical day: 70 Percentage of parents who would like to limit their children's TV watching: 73 Percentage of 4-6 year-olds who, when asked to choose between watching TV and spending time with their fathers, preferred television: 54 hours per year the average
American youth spends in school: 900 hours. Hours per year the average American youth watches television: 1500

1.1.7.1 Violence in Advertisements

Number of murders seen on TV by the time an average child finishes elementary school: 8,000. Number of violent acts seen on TV by age 18: 2,00,000. Percentage of Americans who believe TV violence helps precipitate real life mayhem: 79

1.1.7.2 Commercialism and Advertising

Number of 30-second TV commercials seen in a year by an average child: 20,000. Number of TV commercials seen by the average person by age 65: 2 million. Percentage of survey participants (1993) who said that TV commercials aimed at children make them too materialistic: 92. Rank of food products/fast-food restaurants among TV advertisements to kids: 1

Total spending by 100 leading TV advertisers in 1993: $15 billion 6% of Britons feel their government should step in to regulate sexually explicit television and magazine images aimed at children, according to a BBC poll of more than 1,000 people. While the strongest support came from 55- to 64-year-olds (92%), a surprising 78% of 18- to 24-year-olds also believe tougher restrictions are necessary to discourage adolescent sex. Britain is currently experiencing a surge in STDs (up 57 percent from 1995) and HIV cases (up 20 percent from last year), along with a rising rate of teenage pregnancies.

For marketers, children constitute three different groups: the primary, the influencer and the future market. Certain products are simply children’s products for which they are the primary users or may be buyers. They, sometimes, either purchase a product
themselves or select the product before it is purchased by the parents. For other products, such as ones which are used by the entire family unit, they may influence purchases made by the parents. There are some products where children have direct influence by overtly specifying their preference. For other products, parents’ buying patterns are affected by prior knowledge of the tastes and preferences of their children. This passive dictation of choice is prevalent for a wide variety of daily consumed product items as well as products for household consumption. Also, decision making in non-durables households is seen to change with the mere presence of children. It is also observed that children are socialized by their parents to act as rational consumers.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported the rising incidence of obesity and chronic disease such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis, dental carries and diabetes among the population worldwide. It has also acknowledged the links between many of these diseases and the pattern of food consumed. Treatment of these diseases is an expensive alternative to prevention. Less-industrialized countries lack the financial resources and infrastructure to implement effective treatment, especially as some countries are experiencing the triple burden of continuing problems of widespread undernourishment and infectious diseases as well as the emerging problem of over consumption of damaging nutrients.

1.1.8 Stealth Marketing

Stealth marketing has gained increasing attention as a strategy during the past few years. A more inclusive definition of stealth marketing is required to conceptually understand its use in various contexts.
As per the definition of Financial Times Lexicon:

“Stealth marketing is a way of advertising your products so that people do not realize that you are trying to make them buy something.”

All the marketing strategies make children younger than eight especially vulnerable because they lack the cognitive skills to understand the persuasive intent of television and online advertisements. The new stealth techniques can also undermine the consumer defences even of older children and adolescents. Government regulations implemented by the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in USA provide some protection for children from advertising and marketing practices. Regulators exert more control over content on scarce television airwaves that belong to the public than over content on the more open online spaces.

According to the American Marketing Association, marketing is "an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit an organization and its stakeholders using the “Four Ps” of marketing: product, place, price and promotion. Advertisers use paid public presentations of goods and services in a variety of media to influence consumers’ attention to, and interest in, purchasing certain products. Television has long been the staple of advertising to children and youth. Children view approximately 40,000 advertisements each year. The products marketed to children like sugar-coated cereals, fast food restaurants, candy and toys have remained relatively constant over time. But marketers are now directing these same kinds of products to children online.
1.1.8.1 Stealth Marketing: Whether Socially Responsible and Ethical

When discussing whether a particular communication practice is socially responsible and ethical, it must be remembered that stealth marketing is more an issue of business ethics than corporate social responsibility. As per the one definition “Corporate social responsibility is related to the social contract between business and society in which it operates. Business ethics, in contrast requires that the organization or individual behave in accordance with the carefully thought-out rules of moral philosophy”. While the outcome in many situations is the same, this is however not necessarily always the case.\(^3\)

In a deontological perspective, there exist eternal and universal rules and ideals for how to practice business (e.g. no child labour at all), including absolute rules for how to communicate in an ethical sound and social responsible way (e.g. no manipulation at all). By contrast, in a utilitarian perspective ethical decisions are based on cost/benefit-analysis in particular situations; and there is no totally accepted, absolute statement of what is ethical and what not.

Based on this distinction between a deontological and a utilitarian perspective, we now can discuss, whether the application of stealth marketing techniques is ethically sound and whether it is social responsible. The most common and widely shared perspective on advertising ethics among advertising practitioner and researchers is taking departure in a deontological approach. Article 12 in the International Code of Advertising from the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)\(^3\) and The World Business Organization declares that advertising shall be clearly distinguishable from other media content and that it shall be easy to be identified and recognized as such:
“Advertisements should be clearly distinguishable as such, whatever their form and whatever the medium used; when an advertisement appears in a medium which contains news or editorial matter, it should be so presented that it will be readily recognized as an advertisement”.

Marketers who practice stealth advertising embed products within a programme’s content, use so-called viral (word-of-mouth) marketing to interact with online characters that promote specific brands, disguise advertisements as video news releases, and collect information from youth at online sites. All these practices are designed to create or enhance branded environments that foster user loyalty. Attention-getting production features are designed to attract children’s interest in commercial content. Such features, which are heavily concentrated in children's television advertisements, include action and movement, rapid pacing, sound effects, and loud music.

Successful marketing campaigns often use branded characters that are media characters that are associated with a company, and hence promote its brand name that appeal to children and youth. Rights to use popular television cartoon characters like Nickelodeon’s Sponge Bob Square Pants, who are licensed for a fee to various companies, help sell products ranging from cereal to vacations, while animated characters are spokesmen for a specific product, in this instance Kellogg’s Frosted Flakes. Similarly, the Ronald McDonald character is used to sell the McDonald’s brand, including Happy Meals, and has recently taken on a new role as a physical fitness guru. Marketers associate the products and activities they want to sell with entertaining characters to increase interest in those products. They use the same
characters in online marketing campaigns and in television advertisements. They also use premiums, such as a small toy in a McDonald’s Happy Meal, to increase product purchases by children online and on television. Celebrity endorsements also help sell products. Children who like those celebrities are expected to purchase these products.

The amount of time allocated to advertisements in children’s programmes is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in US. The implementation of the Children's Television Act (CTA) by the FCC now limits advertisements on children’s commercial television stations to 10.5 minutes an hour on weekends and 12 minutes an hour on weekdays, though these limits are frequently violated. For instance, one in four of the 900 U.S. commercial television stations showed more commercial material than allowed by the CTA from 1992 through 1994; in 2004, the FCC levied a $1 million fine against Viacom and a $500,000 fine against Disney for showing more commercial material than allowed by the CTA.33

Because of age-based limits in children’s ability to understand advertiser intent, the Federal Communications Commission has placed safeguards into the television advertising marketplace to protect young child audiences. Among the guidelines is the separation principle, which consists of three components. First, the transitions between an advertisement and the programme content must be distinct; the programme must use a constant production convention, such as “After these messages, we'll be right back,” to separate programme and commercial content. Second, "host selling" is not allowed. That is, the main characters on a television programme cannot sell products during that programme or during blocks of commercial time adjacent to it. And third, products being sold cannot be integrated
into programme content (a practice that resembles the common practice of product placements). In addition, the FCC has limited the time allocated to commercial content during a given hour of children’s programmes.

Now talking about the Indian scenario, arrival of niche channels like the Cartoon Network, Hungama and Toonami has given a big push to the kid power in India. According to some estimates, in 2005, there were more than 120 million (children between 8-12 years of age. Among them around 45 million live in urban areas who have the power of determining or influencing the whopping Rs. 20,000 crore worth purchasing decisions on food, mobile phones, apparel, cars and FMCGs. This offers a big temptation to the marketers to treat the pre-adolescents as mature and independent customer. Using this strategy, they have been successful in making parents almost redundant in purchase decision.34

Consequently, industry spending on advertising to children has exploded in the past decade, increasing from a mere $100 million in 1990 to more than $2.5 billion in 2005. Parents today are willing to buy more for their kids because trends such as smaller family size, dual incomes and postponing children until later in life mean that families have more disposable income. As well, in certain families, guilt can play a role in spending decisions as time-stressed parents substitute material goods for time spent with their kids.

The debate over advertising junk food to children is still raging in India. There are no bars on advertising in schools in India. In fact some soft drink companies offer several sponsorships to schools, particularly for sporting activities. The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) proposed a ban on the sale of all soft drinks within
school premises. Many other government organizations will need to be involved in such a ban and it will take some time to see whether the ban can be made into law and then enforced by the police. If it is, this will be the first time something like this has been done for the sake of public health and the state will be a world leader. In state of Kerala, sale and production of Pepsi-Cola along with other soft drinks has been banned. Five other Indian states have announced partial bans on the drinks in schools, colleges and hospitals. Images of children often appear in advertisements, both those designed to sell children’s products and those designed to persuade adults to buy anything from car insurance to carpets. Children are the vulnerable members of the society. So the marketers, as adults, have the responsibility to depict children in the advertisements in a more responsible and responsive manner.35

1.1.9 Advertising Industry Regulations across the Globe

- Countries such as Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Austria have imposed a ban on advertising during children's television programmes. TV advertising and sponsorship of programmes aimed at children below the age of 12 are prohibited.
- In Britain, The Independent Television Commission's code on advertising, "No method of advertising may be employed which takes advantage of the natural credulity and sense of loyalty of children."
- Another rule says: "No advertisement may lead children to believe that if they do not have or use the product or service advertised they will be inferior... or liable to contempt or ridicule."
- In Greece, the advertising of toys on television is banned between 7.00 a.m. to 10 p.m.
• In Germany and Denmark there are bans on certain forms of toys.
• Australia does not allow advertisements during programmes for pre-school children.

1.1.9.1 Advertising Industry Regulations in India

Rules governing advertising aimed at children differ country to another. Multinational companies are selling their products across the globe. This necessitates having an international code on advertisements. This is a Herculean task, because such a code would have to take into account different cultural traditions and national priorities and it will also have to battle powerful manufacturers' lobbies that spend millions of dollars on breaking down such codes and restrictions.

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)\(^3\), the advertisement industry’s self-regulatory voluntary organization, has come out with a campaign encouraging viewers to pick up their pens and write in, if they find any advertisement offensive, vulgar or false in any way. ASCI has been at it for over 20 years, with its earlier campaigns occasionally featuring popular faces to bring out the message such as Priya Tendulkar (the ‘Jhoot bole, ASCI kaate’ campaign). Advertisements which make an over claim, are indecent and depict a Dangerous Behaviour are the ones which are called as offensive advertisements. Chapter III, Rule 2 of the Advertising Standards Council of India clearly says that “Advertisements addressed to minors shall not contain anything, whether in illustration or otherwise, which might result in their physical, mental or moral harm or which exploits their vulnerability. The International Code on Advertising too supports this rule. Article 13 says, “Advertisements should not exploit the natural credulity of children or the lack of experience of young people and should not strain their sense of loyalty”.

However, the world’s children need greater protection from the marketing of energy-
dense, low-nutrient foods. Experiences of marketing controls on tobacco and baby-
milk show that voluntary marketing code are not that adequate and stronger regulation
is required. International standards are needed to provide a coherent framework to
protect and promote children’s health. Newer marketing approaches have led to online
advertising and to so-called stealth marketing techniques, such as embedding products
in the programme content in films, online and in video games.

1.1.10 Comparative Role of Different Means of Media

In communicating the claims to the consumers, the manufacturers are assisted, by
different means of media. Considerable time and money is being spent in designing
advertisements that may appeal the consumers. At times, it is also alleged that
different means of media are recklessly advertising claims of the corporate without
showing any concern towards the society. When a consumer goes through a claim
repeatedly, he may fall for it. And if the claim is deceptive and false the rights of the
consumer are violated.

Print media like newspapers, magazines, journals and other printed material is very
popular in our country. In 1991 a sum of Rs. 1050 crore was spent on newspaper and
magazine advertisement. There are about 25,000 publications registered with the
Registrar of Newspapers. Each publication has its own readership. This readership
could be exploited through effective advertisement which contains the appeal and text
suiting the customers in view.

Thirty years ago, 55-77% of the total revenue of newspapers was from the readers.
Today it is advertising which sustains media. There is a declining dependence on the
reader and the viewer. And yet media are able to grow and increase their profits because of growth opportunities in the country.

Electronic media consisting of radio and TV network is considered to be more effective in motivating the customer to go in for purchase of goods and services. The composition of media plan depends on the objective and subjective factors. The objective factors may be classified under four heads:

- The match of media type to target market.
- The relative effectiveness of various media.
- The match of media typed to stated objectives.
- Influence of completion among subjective factors mention may be made of

The subjective factors may be classified under three heads:

- Perceived characteristics of media.
- Creativity of message and
- Media environment.

In short media selected for advertisement should match with the target market to get the desired response.

However, misunderstood claims are not necessarily deceptive. The meaning conveyed to the consumer may be different from the literal message but consistent with the brand's actual performance. Furthermore, the miscomprehension may not have a material effect on consumer behaviour, especially if it is on dimensions that are unimportant to the consumer and consequently only weakly related to brand evaluation and purchase. In addition, the levels of miscomprehension reported in past research may be inflated. High scores on the miscomprehension measures may have
been due, in part, to consumer inattention to message claims, a lack of relevant knowledge necessary to interpret claims and forgetting. Consumers are being provided with increasing amounts of decision-relevant information in their purchasing environments.

1.1.11 Deceptive and Misleading Advertisements

It must be understood by the marketers that supply of right quality and quantity of goods and services to consumers at reasonable prices constitutes the responsibility of an enterprise toward its customers. The enterprise must take proper precaution against adulteration, poor quality, lack of desired service and courtesy to customers thus misleading and dishonest advertising, and so on. They must also have the right of information about the product, the company and other matters having a bearing on their purchasing decision. Consumers are being provided with increasing amounts of decision-relevant information in their purchasing environments. Some advertisement may have the content of puffery, manipulation, comparative pricing, unsubstantiated claims, incomplete description, false testimonials or comparisons, partial disclosure or visual distortion of products. Advertisers often rely on strong subjective and evaluative claims in order to differentiate their brands from competitors. This is especially the case when competing brands have similar performance characteristics, such as with some consumer packaged goods.

Conceptually, deception exists when an advertisement is introduced into the perceptual process of some audience and the output of that perceptual process differs from the reality of the situation and affects buying behaviour to the detriment of the consumer. The input itself may be determined to contain falsehoods. The more
difficult and perhaps more common case, however, is when the input, the advertisement is not obviously false, but the perceptual process generates an impression that is deceptive. Following are major components of deception definition:

- There is a misrepresentation, omission, or practice that is likely to mislead.
- The practice is material and consumer injury is possible because consumers are likely to have chosen differently if there was no deception.

Misleading messages or images are just lies; unfair and dishonest. The aim of this type of advertisements is just cheating the consumer. Deceptive and misleading advertisements can also be controlled by competitor lawsuits and by self-regulation.

The advertising industry has developed an ambitious programme of self-regulation, which rests largely on the support to industry itself.

The legal meaning of advertising deception has been developed through numerous Federal Trade Commission and court decisions in USA. For the most part, these decisions have not relied upon consumer (behavioural) evidence. In some instances, this appears to be a justifiable position. A claim that the product is made of Cotton, when it is in fact not, clearly would not require consumer evidence. There are other situations, however, where consumer data is needed. Direct evidence is needed when the interpretation advanced by the Federal Trade Commission or the courts depends upon specific assumptions about consumer behaviour. In FTC v. Mary Carter Paint Co., Mary Carter was selling paint for $6.98 a gallon with a second gallon free. This pricing strategy was used by the company because it felt that if it sold its paint below the price of other national brands, consumers who judge the quality of paints by its price, would view their product as inferior. The FTC determined that Mary Carter’s
offer was deceptive because it implied that the price used was the usual and customary one for the single article. In this type of cases, consumer evidence is clearly called for.

Mary Gardiner Jones probably best sums up this need for behavioural inputs:

Consumer protection lawyers are just beginning to become aware of the need for obtaining a more thorough understanding of the behaviour of the consumers they are attempting to protect. There is no established framework for operationalizing this interdisciplinary process and much work, therefore, must be done first in familiarizing the lawyer with the potentialities and capabilities and, second, in developing appropriate methodologies and research projects to help the public policy administrator to come to grips most effectively with problems which at this point he may not even recognize he has.

Further, it is equally important that consumer must be aware of his rights, raise voice against exploitation and seek redress of his grievances. Consumers’ consciousness determines the effectiveness of consumerism. It is the duty of the consumer to identify his rights and to protect them. Voluntary Consumer Organisations engaged in organising consumers and encouraging them to safeguard their interests is another important element of consumer movement. The success of consumerism lies in the realisation of the business that there is no substitute for voluntary self-regulations. Little attention from the business will not only serve consumers’ interest but will also benefit them. Some businesses in India have come together to adopt a code of conduct for regulating their own activities. Regulation of business through legislation is one of the important means of protecting the consumers.
This has been realised by the regulatory and enforcement agencies that there is lack of awareness and resultantly understanding amongst the consumers of the deceptiveness of the claims shown in the advertisements. This is the reason that most of the Indian consumers not even claim their rights and the violations on the part of the advertisers go unnoticed and unheard.

To fight the competition or declining profits the perspective shifts from what is the best in the long run for the society to what is the best in the short run for the company.

In such situations, ethics, which is one of the fundamentals of social relationships, could be questionable. Advertising ethics affects the practice of our lives and also the practice of business, in subtle and prominent ways.

Competitive advertisements interplay under various formats in today’s markets. While some advertisements compare brands, some others (refer opening example) are sequelized on earlier advertisements in an attempt to spoof a competitor’s claim or to retaliate to a preceding comparative claim made against it. Comparative Advertising (CA) is an advertisement that makes specific or generic comparative claims about the sponsored brand and brand(s) competing with it. Sometimes CA are referenced or anchored on earlier-aired advertisements of competing brands. This essentially “sequelizes” the advertisements in the minds of consumers. The elements of sequelization (or referencing) and comparison form the crux of this advertising strategy that is referred to as Sequelized Comparative Advertising (SCA).

1.2 Significance of the Study

The study may prove significant in formulating a uniform approach to cognitive effect of the advertisements of non-durables as there are diverse approaches to the concept.
The understanding, how consumers select and organise information, can be used to create marketing communications that have a better chance of being attended to and processed. Cognition is an important subject to an advertiser and marketer dealing in non-durable products because the process is highly complex. Advertiser, therefore, needs to know in advance how consumers are likely to process and interpret a message. The differences in attitude and level of involvement for a particular product may raise so many problems with the individual characteristics that influence consumer’s decision making as to non-durable goods. An advertiser generally does not have the information about the motivation, perceptual characteristics, learning patterns or attitudes of the consumers. If the advertiser has this knowledge he can formulate better marketing strategies. Also, the extent and type of message processing depends on the interaction between product, advertisement, and programme involvement. Hence, advertisers should understand the nature of such interactions and make appropriate adjustments to their communication strategy. Such information potentially has important implications for both consumer policy makers and marketing practitioners.

It is true that the advertiser needs to follow such approach that draws the attention of the prospective consumers. But at the same time, he must devise such policies which are able to lessen the cognitive dissonance of the buyer, who is already using the product, especially in the case of non-durable products where so many alternatives are available. So it is important that the switching over among different brands is avoided. The study can be helpful in finding such ways.

The findings may help in forming effective strategies by which consumers may be informed of the nature of misleading and deceptive practices which are prevalent.
This will ultimately make them aware of their rights to fight against dishonest advertising and not to be swayed away by eye catching statements, which at times result in impulsive purchase decisions. If the advertiser is aware of the cognitive effects of the advertisement on different social and demographic groups he can deal with the particular target group more efficiently. Further, the study may help in finding the ways through which children and women, who can easily be persuaded by advertising, can be made alert of the harm to their rights as a consumer as well as special social groups. The study may also prove significant in finding out the parameters of media in communicating commercials to the society as it is a vital mode of disseminating information to different social and economic groups. On the other hand, the findings may prove significant for the advertisers when they are choosing amongst different means of media for promoting their products.

To reduce the potential for deception in advertising, the findings will also help in recommending better rules and regulations to check unfair trade practices, in addition to MRTP Amendment Act, 1984, The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and The Competition Act, 2002 and the policies followed by Advertising Standards Council of India\(^{38}\). Further, adequate enforcement methods leading to speedier settlement mechanisms for sustaining competition as well as development while ensuring business ethics may also be discovered. The findings may directly prove beneficial for the manufacturers and the service providers in two ways. One, they may protect their customers who trust their brands from any kind of fraudulent deals. Secondly, they may watch that there is no unfair conduct of the competitors which may be harmful to their interest as well.
1.3 The Objectives

The present study entitled, “Cognitive Effects of Advertising on Consumer Buying Process: A Study of Non-Durable Products” has been initiated that advertisement exposure creates certain beliefs which may or may not mould the attitude and may result in change of intentions and ultimately the behaviour. The cognitive response model frameworks the assumption that some kind of learning plays a role in determining attitude change. The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the role of different means of media in influencing the purchase behaviour of the consumer.
2. To study the role of advertisements in forming and preventing cognitive dissonance of the consumer.
3. To examine the relationship between advertisement and impulsive purchase decision of consumers.
4. To study the parents perception about impacts of advertisements on purchase behaviour of their children.
5. To study how the different tools/methods of sales promotion schemes influence the purchase decisions of the consumers.
6. To study the impact of different media channels on consumers perception about deceptive advertisements.
7. To examine the customers perception about price and quality of the product as shown in advertisements.

1.4 Hypothesis

**H1:** Advertisements influence shopping pattern of consumers with varying degree of frequency.

**H2:** The purchase behaviour of consumers is influenced by different types of media.
**H3a:** The advertisement of different media results in formation of Cognitive Dissonance if sample mean is greater than 3.

**H3b:** The advertisement of different media results in preventing of cognitive dissonance if sample mean is greater than 3.

**H4a:** Advertisements result in spontaneous purchase decisions if sample mean is greater than 3.

**H4b:** Advertisements result in non-spontaneous purchase decision if sample mean is greater than 3.

**H5a:** Parents perception about role of children in purchasing decision is different with respect to trend in unseasoned shopping.

**H5b:** Parents perception about impact of advertisements on children differs with respect to time spent in watching TV with children.

**H6:** Relationship between spontaneous /non spontaneous purchase decision of consumers and promotion schemes like (Coupons, Free Gifts, Low price, Contests).

**H7:** Relationship between type of media i.e. TV, Internet, News paper, Radio and deception communicated in advertisement.

**H8:** Customer perceives Price and quality of the product separately as shown in advertisements.

**1.5 The Data and Methodology**

Research is not only aimed at revision of the facts and building an up-to-date knowledge but also to discover new facts involved through the process of dynamic changes in the society. Research Methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problems under study.
1.5.1 Research Methodology

Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge. The dictionary meaning says, research is “careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge”. Research is actually to explore something new. We all possess the vital instinct of inquisitiveness. When the unknown confronts us, we wonder and our inquisitiveness makes us to probe and attain full understanding of the unknown. This inquisitiveness leads us to knowledge and the methods employed for obtaining this knowledge pave the way for research.

Research comprises defining and redefining the problems, formulating hypotheses and suggests solutions, collecting, organizing, and evaluating data, making deductions and reaching conclusions. Research methodology, thus helps us to systematically solve the research problem. It is formed as many dimensions and research methods. Every kind of research study initiates with defining the research problem. The present study titled as, “Cognitive Effects of Advertising on Consumer Buying Process: A Study of Non-Durable Products” has also been initiated with the basic objective of effect of advertisement on cognitive state of people and covers the following category of products:

- Food Products and Beverages (health foods, frozen foods, pickles, tea, coffee and squash)
- Apparels and accessories (clothing, shoes, wrist watches and sun glasses)

1.5.2 Research Design

Research Design is a purposeful scheme of action proposed to be carried out in a sequence during the process of research focusing on the problem under consideration.
Though collection and analysis of data are important aspects of research and hence the research design.

Exploratory personal investigation involves original field interviews with the males and females to have a greater insight into all possible practical aspects of the research problem. Pilot surveys of the initial ideas helped to refine the final statements of the questionnaire/scale. The study of the relevant literature has also been quite useful in formulation of the research problem. The adoption of the descriptive research design has been very effective in the present study. Primary data has been collected using the survey method.

1.5.3 Scope of the Study

The study has been restricted in the state of Punjab, and Union Territory of Chandigarh. Data is an important tool for the success of any survey/study. Moreover it reduces the uncertainty in decision-making process. In order to make meaningful research a suitable methodology has been adopted. Data collection is of two types i.e. Primary Data and Secondary Data. The major part of the data is primary data in nature and has been collected through the use of questionnaire/scale. Secondary sources to gather information were the various national/international journals, books, earlier related studies, reports and surveys of government and non-government agencies, newspapers, periodicals and internet.

1.5.4 Sample Design

All items in any field of inquiry constitute a universe. A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given universe. Sample design is determined before data is collected. The universe for the present study is quite large and scattered.
A number of variables have been considered which have been further tested to uncover the perception of advertisement which may affect the cognitive states of people. This study has been based on a limited sample size in the areas of Punjab and Union Territory of Chandigarh comprising male and female respondents.

Population of the Study

All the male and female respondents will include persons in the age group of 30 and above.

Sample

The sample has been selected using cluster sampling. Cluster Sampling is a sampling technique used when "natural" groupings are evident in a statistical population. It is generally used in marketing research. In this technique, the total population is divided into the groups or clusters and a sample of the groups is selected. Assuming a fixed sample size, the technique gives more accurate results when most of the variation in the population is within the groups, not between them.

In the present study, the data has been selected on the basis of population. The total population of Punjab is 2,77,04,236 (census of India 2011). From all the districts of Punjab, Ludhiana with a Population of 34.88 lakhs (census of India 2011) is the most populous and Barnala with a population of 5.96 lakhs (census of India 2011) is the least populous district of the state. Keeping in view the nature of products taken in this study, there is no variation in respondents from whom data was to be collected. So, on the basis of population the district with highest population i.e., Ludhiana has been selected with the state capital Chandigarh. From Ludhiana district a sample of 400 respondents and from UT of Chandigarh 200 respondents have been selected. The total sample thus is 600 units.
1.5.5 Instrument of Data Collection

Measurement is a process of mapping aspects of a domain onto other aspects of a range, according to some rules of correspondence. Scaling describes the procedure of assigning number to various degrees of opinion, attitude and the other concepts. This can be done in two ways i.e.

- Making a judgment about some characteristics of some individual and then placing him directly on the scale.
- Constructing questionnaire in such a way that the score of the individual responses assigns him a place on a scale.

Once the type and size of the sample has been determined, the next task is to select the various tools to be used to collect data from the identified universe. Depending upon the various considerations such as objectives of the study, suitability of the test, competency of the researcher to control the administration and interpretation of the results, the tool has been prepared by the researcher.

The response was measured on 5-point scale. The method is based on likert scaling technique: Rensis Likert who first developed this approach for attitudes surveys explained the benefits of his approach in his article, “A Technique for the Measurement of the Attitudes” (1972). The usefulness of this technique was that it was too quicker to develop and adopt as compared to any other technique. Further, the Likert scaling approach does not necessitate the use of negative items, a benefit that explains its widespread industrial applications.

The Likert technique consists of a series of statements to which one responds using a scale of possible answers. Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Indifferent (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1) and the scores can be vice-versa also. This 5-point Likert scale
can be expanded to seven or more steps with a modification of the adverbs (Strongly, Moderately, Mildly). The five and seven point scales are the most common form in use. In the present study, Summated Scale (Likert Five this Point Scale) has been used. In this Likert’s Five Point Scale, the respondent is asked to respond to each of the statements given, in terms of five degrees of agreement or disagreement as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Indifferent</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each point on the scale carries a score, i.e., from least score to the highest score. Most of the factors are psychological i.e., relating to attitude, behaviour, perception of individual etc. which cannot be measured quantitatively, so the need of Likert Scale has been tremendous.

1.5.6 Item Generation

At the initial stage, it was quite essential to identify those various factors which affect the attitude of the consumers, each constituent of the scope of the study towards the cognitive effects of advertisements. For this purpose, the existing relevant literature was explored to get help in the formation of various relevant statements.

- The statements were made on the basis of consumer behaviour towards advertisement.
- A deep study of the literature on effect of advertisement on consumers was made. International and prominent journals were also screened for the formation of relevant statements.
- Informal interviews with a good number of consumers, male/female were also held.
1.5.7 Preparation of the Questionnaire and Scale

For the present study, a questionnaire/scale has been prepared on the basis of the statements and the opinions of the experts on the related topics. This questionnaire/scale has been used to collect the data through personal contact i.e. survey method. ‘Reliability and Validity’ of the questionnaire/scale is generally the most important concept after preparing it. Reliability is concerned with the stability of test scores that it does not go beyond the test itself. Validity, on the other hand, implies evaluation in terms of outside and independent criteria. The prepared questionnaire/scale has been tested for “Reliability & Validity” by applying various techniques available.

The structured questionnaire was developed on the basis of objectives of the study. To start with, the personal or demographic features of the respondents were taken up. Then questionnaire has been divided into eight sections. In the first section, categorical questions of buying pattern and purchase behaviour regarding different commodities are formulated. The second, third and fifth sections are further divided into two sub-sections. In the first sub-sections, there are categorical questions and in second sub-sections close ended Likert scale questions are there. In the forth, sixth, seventh, and eighth sections only close ended Likert scale questions has been put in. In preparation of the scale, Likert summated rating technique was used. Shukla (1972) pointed out that Likert method of summated rating has been perceived significantly and is easiest to fill in. Therefore, in the present study, Likert’s Method of summated rating was employed. Each statement carried five alternative responses, Strongly
disagree, Disagree, Indifferent, Agree and Strongly Agree. The data thus obtained was statistically treated giving a weightage of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for the positive items. The weightage were reversed for negative items, i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Then the score of each individual was summed up to calculate the response of the items.

Data is collected from the respondents through personal interaction and the responses were recorded under almost similar conditions. The interaction with the respondents was made during the months of December 2010 to May 2011. There was a minimum refusal on the part of the respondents. Data were thoroughly evaluated before analysis. Data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS package) and the MS-EXCEL tool.

1.5.8 Selection of the Statements

The choice of the statements depends upon the opinion of the competent persons for its suitability towards the study and the tests. A set of statements has been developed and evaluated by the sample respondents on the Likert Scale. This also helped in determining the content validity. Approximately 100 selected statement items were given to the panel of judges’ experts in the field of Consumer Behaviour. The purpose was:

- To strike off the redundant statements.
- To delete the ambiguous items, words or statements.
- To suggest modifications (if any) or addition of new statements or items.

All the panel members were contacted personally and were given sufficient time to make their judgment on each statement item.
1.5.9 Item Analysis

Various approaches are used for the item analysis to finally select the items. The first method by which the individual statements are evaluated are known as the criterion method. In this method, twenty-five per cent of the subjects with the lowest total score are taken up. These constitute criterion groups in terms of which the statements are evaluated by finding out the t-value for each statement and ranking the statement in order of their t-values. In this way, the statements with higher t-values were retained to construct a scale (Garrett 1956) and Guilford, J.P. (1984).

The other method of item analysis is the correlation method, which may be used for evaluating the individual statements. In this method, the scores of each item are correlated with the total score by a statistical technique of point bi-serial correlation. In such case, there are two categories of responses. Hence, it cannot be used here, as it is a five-point scale.

1.5.10 Pilot Survey

After the selection of the data collection method, the particular methodology and scale to be used in the survey have been formulated. In the initial phase of the study, several test/experimental surveys have been carried out so as to list down various significant factors playing central role in the study in hand. In these types of complex studies, it is better to examine various aspects with the help of pilot surveys. The initial scale includes various statements recorded during the direct communication with the respondents, which later on helped to draft a final scale. It was decided to conduct a pilot survey for the following reasons:
• To finalise the method of measuring attitude and behaviour towards non-durable products will be used in the main empirical research.
• To finalise the scale to be used in the research.
• To gain familiarity with the fieldwork and the problems that can occur at different stages of the research.

1.5.11 Collection of Data

Primary Data and Secondary Data sources are used for data collection in this study, but the overall dominance remains with the primary data.

• **Collection of Primary Data**

In the case of descriptive research the primary data can be collected either through observations or through direct communication with the respondents in one form or the other. The data has been collected through the scale (prepared by the researcher), which has been filled by direct communication with the respondents. In spite of a big Universe and a large sample size the tedious work of collection of data has been completed successfully. Data has been collected from the respondents through personal interaction and the responses were recorded under the same conditions. There was a minimum refusal on the part of the respondents.

• **Collection of Secondary Data**

Though the primary data collected with the help of Likert’s Scale provides the real thrust to the study, yet it is incomplete without the assistance of secondary data. The secondary data has been obtained from various journals, books, earlier related studies, reports and surveys of government and non-government agencies in this regard press release, newspapers and periodicals. The relevant internet sites were also explored to get the necessary information for the study.
• **Processing and Analysis of Data**

The data after collection are to be processed and analyzed in accordance with the requirement and purpose at the time of the development of the scale. It is essential for such a scientific study that only the relevant data should be used from the collection of such a voluminous data and processed through the proper statistical tools. Data were thoroughly evaluated before analysis. Data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS package) and the MS-EXCEL tool.

• **Measures of Central Tendency**

The measures of central tendency, namely, the arithmetic mean (average) was worked out. The purpose was to judge the nature of distribution.

• **Measures of Dispersion (Variability)**

The different measures of variability, i.e. standard deviations were calculated to observe the scatteredness of the data around the central value. The coefficient of variation was calculated to see the variability in the scores of various items, areas under study

• **Chi-Square test**

If the Chi-square value is greater than or equal to the critical value there is a significant difference between the groups we are studying. That is, the difference between actual data and the expected data (that assumes the groups aren’t different) is probably too great to be attributed to chance. So, we conclude that our sample supports the hypothesis of a difference. If the Chi-square value is less than the critical value there is no significant difference. The amount of difference between expected and actual data is likely just due to chance. Thus, we conclude that our sample does not support the hypothesis of a difference.
Regression analysis is applied to derive the regression equations based on the variables having significant correlation coefficients. The coefficient determination method is used to judge the percentage-variation in the dependent variables due to independent variables. The goal of regression analysis is to determine the values of parameters for a function that cause the function to best fit a set of data observations that you provide. In linear regression, the function is a linear (straight-line) equation.

- **‘t’-test**

  t’-test (student’s ‘t’ distribution) of significance is applied to find whether there is significant difference between the means of two groups. A significant problem with this is that we typically accept significance with each t-test of 95% (p=0.05). For multiple tests these accumulate and hence reduce the validity of the results. The t-test is a basic test that is limited to two groups. For multiple groups, you would have to compare each pair of groups.

- **Analysis of Variance**

  The F-ratios are computed to study the significant difference in different responses of the respondents and attitudes towards non durable products. Thus, through ANOVA technique one can, in general, investigate any number of factors which are hypothesized or said to be influence the dependent variable. One may as well investigate the difference amongst various categories with in each of these factors which may have large number of possible values. If we take only one factor and investigate the difference amongst its various categories having numerous possible values, then this is one-way ANOVA and in case we investigate two factors at the same time, then this is two-way ANOVA.
Chapter Scheme

The significant task involving any research study refers to proper and logical presentation of the data concerning different aspects so that required weightage to every aspect can be observed. The problem in hand being an integral part of the respondents daily life, they shared their views freely which were then analysed to present the findings of the research problem. The final presentation of the study has been divided into the following chapters:

Chapter– 1 Cognitive effects of Advertising on Consumer Buying Process: An Introduction

1.1 Statement of Problem

1.1.1 Cognitive Response of Consumer Towards Advertisements

1.1.1.1 Effect of Information from the Social Environment on Learning Constructs

1.1.1.2 Determinants of the Extent of Information Search

1.1.2 Cognitive Dissonance

1.1.3 Advertisements and Impulsive Purchase

1.1.4 Perception Regarding Price and Quality

1.1.4.1 Price Sensitivity and Advertising

1.1.5 Impact of Advertisements on Social Values

1.1.6 Gender (Women/Men) as Sexual Object

1.1.7 Effect of advertisement on Children

1.1.7.1 Violence in Advertisements

1.1.7.2 Commercialism and Advertising

1.1.8 Stealth Marketing

1.1.8.1 Stealth Marketing: Whether Socially Responsible and Ethical

1.1.9 Advertising Industry Regulations Across the Globe

1.1.9.1 Advertising Industry Regulations in India

1.1.10 Comparative Role of different Means of Media
1.1.11 Deceptive and Misleading Advertisements

1.2 The Significance of Study

1.3 The Objectives

1.4 Hypothesis

1.5 The Data and Methodology
   1.5.1 Research Methodology
   1.5.2 Research Design
   1.5.3 Scope of the Study
   1.5.4 Sample Design
   1.5.5 Instrument of Data Collection
   1.5.6 Item Generation
   1.5.7 Preparation of the Questionnaire and Scale
   1.5.8 Selection of Statements
   1.5.9 Item Analysis
   1.5.10 Pilot Survey
   1.5.11 Collection of Data

1.6 The Limitations

Chapter – 2 Review of Related Literature

Chapter – 3 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Chapter – 4 Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter – 5 Conclusions and Suggestions

Bibliography

Annexure

1.6 The Limitations

The study has been conducted with immense responsibility keeping in the mind the fact that the success of first step is deemed necessary to have the second one. Proper planning has been done to analyze all aspects and related factors of the study. All
precautions have been taken to evolve a systematic study to reduce the element of bias to its lowest extent. The data were collected through personal interaction and every effort was made to observe consistency throughout. The statements of the scale were well explained and every response has been recorded properly.

Every effort has been made to make the study comprehensive but due to the small sample size as compared to the universe, bias or resistance in the respondents’ response due to some personal reasons, lack of published/unpublished direct literature on the study, time constraints and frequent developments/changes in the field, there could be some limitations also.
REFERENCES


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