Chapter VI

1. Summary

2. Conclusions

3. Suggestion for further study
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

SUMMARY:

Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and theories of consumer behaviour:

Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages are an important Marketing Strategy used by Marketers to promote the sale of their products. Such Messages find their base in various theories of Consumer Behaviour like the Economic theory, The Pavlovian Theory, The instrumental Learning Theory, Instrumental Conditioning Theory and Observational Learning Theory.

For example If we look at the “Economic Model”, we find that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages in a way have taken something from this model. In the sense that, they focus at the rational human being driven by income and utility. These messages focus on giving more for less and thus it could be said that their base is in the Economic Model.
Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages of the kind “buy one product and take another for free” use the Pavlovian theory to sell unknown products by associating them with known products. Thus the unknown product gets the advantage of the goodwill of the known product and gets established in the market with ease.

Advertisements promoting the sale of magazines through a yearly subscription that offers the free gift of a branded product once again have a base in the Pavlovian Model of Consumer Behaviour.

Frequency Marketing Programmes: A popular technique known as “Frequency Marketing” reinforces regular purchases by giving them prizes with values that increase along with the amount purchased. This technique finds its base in Instrumental Conditioning Theory. This instrumental learning strategy was pioneered by the airline industry, which introduced “frequent flyer” programmes in the early 80’s (in America) to reward loyal customers. This practice has spread to other businesses as well, ranging from video parlours to fast food joints. In India the frequent flyer programme has been successfully incorporated by Jet Airways. The frequency-marketing programme is also used by all chain departmental stores like West Side, Shoppers Stop, Crossroads etc.
Consumer’s attitudes towards sales promotion messages are formulated based on their past experiences with similar sales promotion messages. If in the past their experience was positive they tend to believe in future sales promotion messages too. However if their past experience is negative their future attitude and perception towards advertisements carrying sales promotion messages tends to be negative. This finding too finds its base in the Instrumental Conditioning Theory.

During the world cup many an advertisement campaigns focused on sales promotion contests in which the prize was a return ticket for the world cup matches. The advertisements showed happy winners flying for the world cup. This strategy was capitalized upon by many marketers and this strategy finds its base in the Observational Learning Theory of Buyer Behaviour.

Thus advertisements carrying sales promotion messages find a base in the various theories of Consumer Behaviour.

Choice of Pune city and women:

Today, Pune city is in “the reckoning” as a growing business destination and is in fact being looked upon as an “emerging metropolis”. In this scenario the researcher chose Pune City for
carrying out the present study. Further it has been proved beyond
doubt there exist definite differences in the consumer behaviour
of males and females, and hence the present study focused on the
consumer behaviour of women in Pune city.

*Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and attitudes:*

Attitudes are built on beliefs and feelings, which are based on
experience. Further attitudes are subject to change. This research
study studied the beliefs and feelings of Women in Pune city towards
advertisements carrying sales promotion messages, formed as a
result of their experiences with previous such messages.

The results of the study of the beliefs and feelings of the women in
Pune city in relation to advertisements carrying sales promotion
messages showed that 42.6% of the women feel that advertisements
carrying sales promotion messages lead to satisfied customers. 33.4% of
the respondents believe that advertisements carrying sales
promotion messages are ethical, and 30.3% of the respondents feel
that advertisements sales promotion messages lead to brand loyal
customers.
Further the researcher also found out that 42.6% of the respondents had had a positive experience in relation to responding to advertisements carrying sales promotion messages whereas 36.3% of the respondents had had at least one negative experience while responding to advertisements carrying sales promotion messages.

Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and decision-making:

Decision Making requires the existence of choice. This is exactly what advertisements carrying sales promotion messages do. They provide the consumer with a choice of buying a product at a discounted price during a particular period or at the full price after the expiry of the period of time. Thus advertisements carrying sales promotion messages are a marketing strategy designed to substantially increase sales and hence do affect purchase decisions.

In the present research study, the researcher found that 58.2% of the respondents agree that they are on the look out for advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and 64.5% of the respondents agree that their purchase decisions are based on such messages.
Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and lifestyle:

In this present research study the respondents belonging to the same social classes have shown a similarity in their attitudes towards advertisements carrying sales promotion messages. Further social class does not remain the same. There is upward and downward mobility of people from one social class to another. People from different social classes may have the same life style and people from the same social class may have a different life style. Also lifestyles are constantly changing and there is social mobility both upwards and downwards. Thus lifestyle and social class are both dynamic variables and a person may shift from one to another depending upon a change in various factors like income, education, occupation, activities, interests and opinions. Further there is a general tendency among human beings to aspire for growth and thus move towards a better lifestyle and upward social mobility. Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages capitalize on this tendency of human beings and offer them products/services which they may not normally be able to afford at affordable prices. Thus “Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion messages” have an effect on the lifestyles of women consumers.
This research found that 70.1% of the respondents agree that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages have changed their lifestyle and 47.3% agree that such messages have led them to undertake credit purchases.

Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and family peace and harmony:

Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages target the human Psychology of wanting something for nothing. The scheme is portrayed in a very attractive manner and hence may sometimes cause a tension in the mind of the individual to purchase leading to credit purchases and liabilities which lead to tension in the family and thus effect the peace and harmony of the family.

The present research study revealed that 11.1% of the respondents faced family tension due to such messages, 28% of the respondents responded that such messages had led them to liabilities, 47.3% of the respondents revealed that that such messages had led them to undertake credit purchases, 12.1% of the respondents responded that such messages caused a tension in them and 17.4% of the respondents agreed that such messages disturb their peace of mind.
Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and ethics:

Basically three types of deceptions can occur through "Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages". First the outright lie occurs when a claim is made that is completely false, even from the objective viewpoint. That it is impossible for the consumer to achieve the claimed benefit. Second, the advertiser may be guilty of claim-fact discrepancy, in which a claimed benefit of the advertised product must be qualified in some way for it to be correctly understood and evaluated (but this is not done in the advertisement). Third, the advertiser may deceive on a basis of claim-fact interaction. That is the advertisements claim interacts with the accumulated belief and attitudes held by consumers in such a way that they are misled or deceived by it. When advertising is unethical and deceptive it creates expectations which are not fulfilled on purchase/consumption of the product. Hence "Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages" sometimes lead to dissatisfied consumers.

In the present research study the researcher found that 54.2% of the respondents disagree that advertisements carrying sales promotion
CONCLUSIONS:

1. Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages find their base in the various theories of consumer behaviour.
   - Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages focus on giving more for less, they focus at the rational human being driven by income and utility, as such they are based in the economic model of consumer behaviour.
   - Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages of the kind “buy one product and take another for free” use the Pavlovian theory to sell unknown products by associating them with known products. Thus the unknown product gets the advantage of the goodwill of the known product and gets established in the market with ease.
   - Advertisements promoting the sale of magazines through a yearly subscription that offers the free gift of a branded product once again have a base in the Pavlovian Model of Consumer Behaviour.
   - Frequency Marketing Programmes: A popular technique known as “Frequency Marketing” reinforces regular purchases by giving them prizes with values that increase
along with the amount purchased. This technique finds its base in Instrumental Conditioning Theory.

During the world cup many an advertisement campaigns focused on sales promotion contests in which the prize was a return ticket for the world cup matches. The advertisements showed happy winners flying for the world cup. This strategy was capitalized upon by many a marketers and this strategy finds its base in the Observational Learning Theory of Buyer Behaviour.

2. Consumer’s attitudes towards sales promotion messages are formulated based on their past experiences with similar sales promotion messages. If in the past their experience was positive they tend to believe in future sales promotion messages too. However if their past experience is negative their future attitude and perception towards advertisements carrying sales promotion messages tends to be negative. This finding too finds its base in the Instrumental Conditioning Theory. In the present research study the researcher found that that 42.6% of the respondents had had a previous positive experience in relation to responding to advertisements carrying sales promotion messages where as 36.3% of the respondents had had at least one previous negative experience while responding
to advertisements carrying sales promotion messages. Respondents who had a negative experience with such messages tended to portray a negative attitude towards such messages and respondents who had a positive experience tended to have a positive attitude.

Thus ‘Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages” are an accepted marketing strategy. If carried out ethically they tend to affect the attitudes of women consumers positively. If they are not ethical they tend to have a negative effect on the attitudes of women consumers.

3. Further in the present research study the researcher found that attitudes are built on beliefs and feelings, which are based on experience. The results of the study of the beliefs and feelings of the women in Pune city in relation to advertisements carrying sales promotion messages showed that 42.6% of the women feel that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages lead to satisfied customers. 33.4% of the respondents believe that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages are ethical, and 30.3% of the respondents feel that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages lead to brand loyal customers.
4. Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages offer a choice to consumers where previously none existed. Decision Making requires the existence of choice, and “Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages” do this. They provide the consumer with a choice of buying a product at a discounted price during a particular period or at the full price after the expiry of the period of time. Thus advertisements carrying sales promotion messages are a marketing strategy designed to substantially increase sales. In today’s era of increasing competition, most of the marketers and advertisers are using this winning marketing strategy. This strategy draws in the consumers and usually good sales take place during the period of such schemes, as the purchase decision of women respondents of Pune city depends upon such schemes. In the present research study, the researcher found that 58.2% of the respondents agree that they are on the look out for advertisements carrying sales promotion messages and 64.5% of the respondents agree that their purchase decisions are based on such messages.
5. There is a general tendency among human beings to aspire for growth and thus move towards a better lifestyle and upward social mobility. Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion messages capitalize on this tendency of human beings and offer them products/services which they may not normally be able to afford, at affordable prices/schemes. Thus Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion messages have an effect on the lifestyles of women consumers. This research found that 70.1% of the respondents agree that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages have changed their lifestyle and 47.3% agree that such messages have led them to undertake credit purchases.

6. Advertisements carrying sales promotion messages target the human Psychology of wanting something for nothing, or more for less. The scheme is portrayed in a very attractive manner and hence may sometimes cause a tension in the mind of the individual to purchase leading to credit purchases and liabilities which lead to tension in the family and thus effect the peace and harmony of the family. The present research study revealed that 11.1% of the respondents faced family tension due to such messages, 28% of the respondents responded that such
messages had led them to liabilities, 47.3% of the respondents revealed that such messages had led them to undertake credit purchases, 12.1% of the respondents responded that such messages caused a tension in them and 17.4% of the respondents agreed that such messages disturb their peace of mind.

7. When advertising is unethical and deceptive it creates expectations, which are not fulfilled on purchase/consumption of the product. Maintenance of ethical standards in such messages is very important if consumer satisfaction is to be achieved. If expectations created from such messages are not fulfilled by responding to such messages or by the use of the product or service then consumer dissatisfaction tends to take place. Thus use of ethical standards in such advertisements is very important if satisfied consumers are to result from it and if the company is to maintain its goodwill in the market.

In the present research study the researcher found that 54.2% of the respondents disagree that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages are ethical and 36.3% of the respondents disagree that such messages lead to satisfied customers. Hence
Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages sometimes lead to dissatisfied consumers

Thus in conclusion it can be said that advertisements carrying sales promotion messages do affect the attitudes, purchase decisions, lifestyles, family peace and harmony and customer satisfaction of urban women in Pune city.

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions emerge from the main findings of the study:

Suggestions for Marketers:

Marketers should take care to see that there exists the most minimum amount of deception in “Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages.” Blatantly false messages should not be advertised. Further care should be taken to see that there is no claim-fact discrepancy. In case the advertised message is qualified in some way then this qualification should be made in a bold fashion, so as not to mislead the consumer. Further all precautions should be taken to see that such messages are made in such a way that there is a minimal
chance of them entering the perceptual process of the consumer in
the wrong way and thereby leading to a dissatisfied consumer even
though the advertisement may itself not be false.

Such messages do generate a lot of response, and consumers do look
forward to gaining a lot of advantage from a response to such
messages, from gaining more value for money to earning free gifts;
right up to an increase in the lifestyle of the consumer. As the
expectations of the consumers are very high the probability of feeling
dissatisfaction if the scheme does not live up to the expectations
created by it, too, are very high. If the scheme does not live up to the
expectations created in the mind of the consumer then she is bound
to feel dissatisfied and cheated. Further such schemes do sometimes
tempt the consumers to purchase beyond their means. Hence it
becomes more mandatory on the part of the marketers that they
reveal all hidden costs associated with the schemes, as, a failure to do
so will get the consumer more enmeshed in debt and liabilities, more
than she had bargained for.

Thus the main suggestion of this research study is that
“Advertisements carrying sales promotion schemes” should be as
free from hidden costs and deceit as far as possible, as, this will
increase the faith of the people in marketers and gain a goodwill for
the Commercial Business Houses.
Suggestions for Consumers:

It is human nature to want something for nothing and it is this nature that is used to promote sales promotion messages. Human beings do desire for more than they have and do generally aspire for a better lifestyle. In their fervor to do so they sometimes get carried away and do not analyze the schemes propagated by "Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages" thoroughly. This may lead them to take on more than they can chew, in the form of being shackled with hidden costs. Thus it is the researcher's suggestion to all consumers when faced with "Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages" to analyze them properly in dept so as not to fall prey to unethical marketers. Further more, nothing in this world is free. And hence when something is offered for nothing, it is only prudent to try to identify the hidden costs. Most things that are offered free in the beginning have to be paid for at a later stage.

Specially while incurring debt in response to advertisements carrying sales promotion messages it becomes even more essential that all angles of the scheme be thoroughly studied so as to avoid taking on a bigger burden of debt than originally planned for.
In short when attracted by the possibility of major gains from responding to various sales promotion messages, it is prudent to check out all the angles so as to avoid dissatisfaction, disappointment and extra costs.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

During the course of the literature, survey and during the period of the field study, it occurred that there is a vast potential for research on the understanding of “Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages” by consumers. An interesting angle of study would be the extent to which consumers understand the computation of interest rates on various low level and zero level finance schemes and on use of credit cards. Another angle of study would be the extent of debt that has been inculcated by consumers due to the proliferation and free availability of credit cards.

A detailed study on the impact of the mass proliferation of credit cards on the family expenditure pattern would also make an interesting study.

Another angle of study could be the effect of “Advertisements Carrying Sales Promotion Messages” on Memory retention and recall
as compared to the effect of educational or informational advertising on memory retention and recall.

Another aspect that would make an interesting angle for further study is the impact of Advertising on the socio cultural behaviour of viewers.

The above suggestions are only illustrative of the potential for further research in this area in advertising. As such this cannot be considered either exhaustive or comprehensive.