CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter covers conclusion, recommendations, and implication and direction for future research. The conclusion is made under two sections: quantitative and qualitative from the empirical findings – so as to show the deductions clearly to the audience.

The dissertation was intended to examine the overall attitude of consumers towards promotion mix and to this end survey method has been employed. Out of the 535 questionnaire distributed in three cities in Ethiopia, 500 valid questionnaires returned have been analyzed. The product category were FMCGs particularly cosmetics, soaps, and detergents. The analysis of this particular thesis was using mean, independent sample t-test, ANOVA, Garrett rankings, correlation and multiple regressions. Qualitative approach has also been employed for interviews and for open ended questions

The major objective of the theses was to examine the attitude of consumers toward promotion mix in Ethiopia.

The specific objectives of the study were

1. To identify the overall attitude of consumers toward print and non-print media.
2. To assess association of awareness of consumers with promotion mix and to find the relationship of awareness with attitude.
3. To analyze the impact of promotion mix on consumers purchase decision.
4. To investigate whether promotion mix is the major source of information for making purchase decision.
5. To pinpoint which behavioural components (cognitive, affective or conative) companies need to emphasis in designing their particular promotional campaign.

6. To identify relationship (if any) of demographics variables and attitude of consumers towards promotion.

7. To find out the rationale of consumers for a particular brand preference

8.1. Quantitative data

In general, there are positive attitudes of consumers towards each promotion mix tools overall as we have high mean score for aggregate attitude mean score in each promotion tool being above 2.9.

At aggregate mean score level, most consumers agree on the deceptive nature of ads and they are skeptical about sales discount, mild on continuous public relations engagement of companies and retail stores’ adequate provision of merchandise. Traditional media is more and more often a “pointer” to an online device, because consumers are no longer passive message recipients. They want to be in control of the content they receive from the media, and they are seeking information and entertainment, from a variety of sources.

At the disaggregate level of analysis across demographics, consumers do not show significant differences across marital status for promotion mix but advertising and personal selling. Consumers do not show significant variation across all demographic variables for direct marketing. On the other hand, consumers demonstrate significant difference across all demographic variables except residence for advertising. We also notice significant difference across age and city of residence for advertising, sales promotion, and personal selling.
Education wise, with the exception of direct marketing, significant differences are found in the remaining promotion mix tools studied.

Women have more positive view than men toward promotion mix; more aged people did not show favorable view towards sales promotion. And elderly people are less enthusiasts as compared to those who are below 23 years old.

In terms education, those above high school are less optimistic towards sales promotion and except for masters’ education level, the rest education level respondents are enthusiastic about ads, personal selling, public relations, and direct marketing.

Regarding education, from advertising perspective, housewives followed by students do have a more favorable attitude. Concerning marital status, married people demonstrate favorable attitude but less than the unmarried or single.

Blue collar workers favor personal selling than ads and also earlier research corroborates this (Chan, and Cui, 2004)

Income wise analysis shows lesser income group demonstrates higher support for the promotion mix tools.

Finally, when comparing consumers across city of residence, more favorable attitude is observed in Addis Ababa than Bahir dar and Gondar. Advertising, sales promotion and personal selling are seen favorably in Addis Ababa followed by Bahir dar and Gondar.
For the theme regarding consumers’ attitude towards promotion mix, the correlation shows that there is positive and medium correlation between promotion mix tools and consumers’ attitude towards promotion of cosmetics, soaps and detergents.

With respect to impact of promotion mix on consumers’ attitude, all promotion mix elements combined has explained the variations in consumers’ attitude by 27% and there is strong positive impact of promotion mix on consumers attitude as confirmed by the p value which are less than .05 for each promotion mix elements.

Efforts aimed at helping consumers better understand the role of ads in the market place and running ads that is honest, fresh, entertaining and informative will make a more viable part of the marketing mix.

- Obviously, advertising can make consumers aware of and interested in a brand, but it can’t make them buy it particularly if it is not readily available or is priced higher than a competing brand. However, Ads stimulate or direct desires. (Belch and Belch, 2010) Thus, Marketers must provide relevant information and create favorable predispositions toward their brand before purchase behavior will occur.
- Ads using humor, sex, and other appeals that are entertaining, arousing, upbeat, or exciting can affect the emotions of consumers and put them in a favorable frame of mind. Studies show that emotion-based ads are better remembered than are non-emotional messages (Belch and Belch, 2010)
- All promotion mix elements have positive association with consumers’ attitude and that public relation and advertising have relatively more positive association with attitude.
- Promotion mix tools optimally and positively affected consumers’ attitude towards promotion mix of cosmetics, soaps, and detergents in Ethiopia.
• Promotion mix has a moderate positive impact on information supply to consumers. That is, consumers can obtain a lot of information about the cosmetics, soaps and detergents from the promotion mix.

• For the correlation between each promotion mix and information consumers obtain from promotion, the correlation is relatively higher for public relation with information followed by advertising. And regression shows public relation and advertising have more impact or can be said the major sources of information from the promotion mix.

• From all the promotion mix, there is moderate level of association of awareness of consumers and advertising (.49 Pearson correlation) followed by public relation (.42 Pearson correlation).

• Aware consumers can have favorable attitude towards promotion mix than those who do not get any knowledge on promotion mix so far.

• There is positive association of promotion mix elements with purchase intention/decision where Advertising has .46 associations, followed by direct marketing (.412), public relation (.342), sales promotion (.28), and personal selling (.23) with purchase decision.

• Consumers prefer sales promotion first followed by advertising, personal selling, public relations, and direct marketing respectively among the promotion mix.

• Consumers prefer electronic media first followed by outdoor ads, print media ads, Web ads, and SMS & telemarketing respectively.

• Consumers prefer primarily joy appeal followed by love appeal, comedy appeal, and respect appeal. Romance appeal and fear appeal are the least preferred. Although there are studies in favor of emotion based ads as better than non-emotional ads to be remembered, many still believe the most effective ads combine practical ads with emotional ads.

• In sales promotion schemes, patronage award is the first preference followed by free samples, coupons, cash refund and sales contests; here sales contest is chosen as last preference since it is not practically seen in FMCGs in Ethiopia.
• The multiple regression indicates there is significant association between Advertising, Direct marketing, Sales promotion, Overall attitude, awareness, and consumers’ purchase decision. The variation in purchase decision is explained by these factors by 37%.

• Consumers’ main reasons of purchase in order of preferences are good value they get by buying a particular brand, followed by goods ads made for the brand, good public relations availability, and others.

• Although focus group interviewees emphasized on good selling environment as their major reason for a particular brand preference, the survey of respondents indicated that good selling environment is not preferred by consumers as they might not be comfortable with the selling conditions encountered. Moreover, good direct marketing is least preferred next to personal selling since there are no online marketing avenues for cosmetics, soaps, and detergents and many kinds of product categories in Ethiopia

8.2. Qualitative data

The following are conclusions drawn from interview analysis of ads and promotions agents and institutions’ responses

• There are mixed views on the way of presentation of ads by ads and promotion agents but majority reflected their compliance with EBA ads proclamation, and the majority of the ads are informative than reminder. Most agents claim they are credible but few are reflecting that ads and promotions agents are doing in theatrical mind and they lack professionalism and capacity.

• Majority media organizations reflect that agents are company focused rather than consumer oriented.

• Media and government institutions agree on the presence of cooperation in the industry unlike the private agents.
• The major incentive of many institutions is serving people and getting income although all agree on the insufficiency of the income.
• The main ads and promotion seen are ads (sometimes electronics), sales promotion, public relation, outdoor ads, and print ads.
• Majority raised the challenge of professionalism as the job is being done by practice and by theatrical mind.
• Consumers might have positive attitude toward promotion as far as it is well done.
• The industry is underutilized and there is misunderstanding on its purpose by the clients.
• Few seem to stick to ads proclamation and majority assumes ethical contents of the script.
• Consumers generally have recognition and respect for celebrities and believe in what celebrities say.
• Some see negative attitude by consumers since the consumers consider the ads as exaggerated; but a few observe no negative attitude;

We can conclude from interview analysis of companies of cosmetics, detergents and soaps manufacturers the following:
• Majority of manufacturers are using promotion like TV, radio ads, billboards, flyers, and posters. Although the promotion mixes are employed, the extent and variety differs across companies and there are mixed views on the effective media of communication. There is no uniformity in their views though engaged in the same industry;
• Seven companies using different promotion methods emphasized they expect promotion to inform, aware, get new accounts, and make sales. Regarding the actual attitude all except one observe there are positive attitude, increased sales, and account.
• Almost all did not use celebrities for promotion except one since they assume celebrities as expensive, not professionals in the field and not experts.
• Only four out of nine engaged in public activities and social cause.
- Majority of customers of soaps, detergents, and cosmetics are young men and women

Based on open ended question analysis the following conclusions are drawn.

- The major strengths of ads and promotion of cosmetics, soaps, and detergents as stated by respondents were creating awareness on new items, offering options available in the market to the consumers, comedy and entertaining appeals usage by advertisers.

- The major weaknesses emphasized by respondents on the ads and promotion were exaggeration, gaps or claim differences in quality, service, ingredients, benefits, and product features; promotion of inferior quality items in the market, boring or redundant manner of presentation, and wrong media selection and timing and imitation

8.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings and literature review, the following recommendations are forwarded.

- Although it is not possible to eliminate exaggeration in advertising, advertising must present to the audience true picture of the advertised product.

- Companies should be engaged in a public relations or social cause on continuous bases. Retail store should provide adequate collection of products in the shelf space and sales people must use utmost effort to sustain relationship with patrons.

- Direct marketing is not seen differently across all demographic parameters and hence it is to the benefit of companies to introduce direct marketing or online shopping as an option for busy customers.

- The implication for companies, marketers, and advertisers is that a tailored or customized advertisement across demographics is helpful for the development of effective marketing and communication program as consumers are not similarly perceiving or recognizing advertising across all demographics.
- Students and housewives are more positive towards ads and this also implies other careers consumers need to be addressed by proper customization and channel of communication like addressing or reaching them in their work space, through print media, via outdoor ads, or by online or web or email ads and promotion and other mechanisms.

- Marketers must utilize the positive sentiment that consumers have to the benefit of maximizing the sales and revenue potential apart from building and nurturing image.

- Marketers’ consideration of IMC has paramount positive impact on company’s operation.

- Efforts aimed at helping consumers better understand the role of ads in the market place and running ads that is honest, fresh, entertaining and informative will make a more viable part of the marketing mix.

- Advertisers should carry on using promotion mix by enhancing their competence.

- Marketers should identify better means of supplying information to the customers, particularly the use of IMC efficiently.

- Companies need to use public relation and advertising aggressively since these two promotion tools are relatively major sources of information for the consumers.

- Sales promotion, ads, and personal selling from promotion mix, electronic media from media platforms, and joy and love appeals from ways of presentation must be given much focus by marketers as the consumers have shown their inclination towards these dimensions listed.

- Advertisers should focus on combining emotional and practical ads.

- From sales promotion schemes, patronage award and free samples must be given more priority.
- Advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, awareness (cognition) of consumers about product items via different medias, overall attitude of consumers towards promotion mix have significant influence on consumers purchase intention and purchase decision of various cosmetics, soaps and detergents and they need be treated properly.

- Companies should offer quality items and make use of good advertising and public relations to build better image about their offerings.

- Companies must improve their selling environment since personal selling is not good by consumers of cosmetics, soaps, and detergents in Ethiopia.

- Ads and promotion agents need to have a common forum and they have to form professional association, need to recruit and hire talented professionals, equipped promoters and managers.

- EBA need to provide an awareness program to the society about protecting itself from deceptive ads and it needs to arrange and offer common platform of discussion and training for media and ads and promotion agents and media and strengthen training and educational opportunities.

- Higher learning institutions should gear their efforts in assisting the ads, media and promotion industry through R&D, by training professionals and equipping the institutions in this respect. They shall also prepare long term training (via formal curriculum) and short term training for the purpose.

- Companies need to get adequate understanding about the uses and benefits of using IMC. To this end, they might hire professionals in the marketing management and ads and establish special promotion department to undertake the tasks of promotion.

- Ads and promotion agents must be governed by ads proclamation, and they need to have their editorial policy and also need to forward suggestions to EBA to improve the proclamation, if needed.

- Manufacturing companies need to engage in a social cause to realize competitive advantage.
- Consumers need not necessarily accept the celebrities made ads for granted, but they need also to focus on the quality aspect among other factors for the promoted items.
- Ads should focus on consumers, local and not foreign feature to maintain core social values.
- Advertisers and ads and promotion agents and institutions should consider proper promotion including correct media and language or wording usage, supply enough information, test script before mass promotion, prepare value addition promotion, apply sensible public relations and sales discount program.
- Advertisers and ads and promotion agents and institutions should avoid gaps in claims of promotion and put prons and cons of the advertised items to the audience.
- Advertisers and ads and promotion agents and institutions must make proper appeals in ads and promotion and conduct research in ads and promotion.
- Advertisers and ads and promotion agents and institutions should minimize exaggeration.
- Ads and promotion done must be evaluated, controlled and must have follow up mechanism by proper body from the advertisers as well as government body concerned.
- Although most of respondents have not provided answers for strengths, weaknesses and suggestions to improve ads and promotion practices, it is very critical for every consumer to have his/her say on the practice or deeds on ads and promotion in the country. What kind of ads being done must reflect the true state of the society and people must know the benefit of ads and promotion along with restrictions to be sanctioned on the promotion practice.
- Consumers would be happy if they are offered reliable sales discount and this can be applied by various kinds of sales promotion techniques.
- The advertising that focuses on joy or happiness of the consumers must be worked out and love appeal is also relevant, and particularly cosmetics products promotion must reflect the beautification and the body care
• Professional advertisers may be employed or the task may be outsourced for ads and promotion agents who might have the best collection of talented entertaining casters and who have the opportunity and conducive avenue to prepare scripts.
• Demographic, as well as psychographic segmentation could be applied. Use of jingles, theatrical and emotional appeals could also be considered;
• While planning for media of promotion, companies need to consider the prons and cons of each media since electronic and print media have their own unique features, prons and cons;
• We should ensure that humor appeal may aid attention and retention, but does not aid persuasion in general and may harm recall, and that each of the appeals in ads must be seen from their prons and cons side before applying them.
• For effective appeal of ads and promotion, creating joyful and humorous ads, theatrical and creative presentation, consideration of ads size, understanding level of the target audience, the correlation of issues raised in the ads script with the product items, arts, and ethicality of presentation are some of the relevant factors that advertising agents and advertisers should emphasize.
• And it is to the benefit of the markets and ads and promotion, and media institutions to continuously aware consumers the benefit of ads and the level of exaggeration which may be considered as false claim.
• It would be advantageous if companies implement such appealing and smart schemes such as buy one get one free sales promotion programs.
• Although the free sample scheme is the second choice by the consumers, the cost implication for the advertiser should be taken care of.
• Marketers must provide relevant information and create favorable predispositions toward their brand before purchase behavior will occur.
• Good advertising, sales promotion and public relations activity will enhance the preference of the brand consumers buy.
• Companies need to give due attention for public activities and social cause to build better image in the consumers’ mind since only limited companies considered such key activity.
• Marketers should emphasize reminder and persuasive communication apart from awareness creation to realize conative consumer behavior.

8.4. Directions/Implications for Future Research

With the increase in education, we did not see an equivalent increase in sentiment of consumers towards promotion mix. This may imply consumers are less aware, of less interested in the promotion mix program of FMCGs in Ethiopia. And this requires further study.

Unlike earlier research findings by Wee and Chan (1989), the unmarried or singles demonstrated more favorable attitude towards promotion mix and further research into the rationale behind would suggest a novel picture of the issue.

Lower income consumers show high support for promotion unlike earlier research findings by Barker (1987), Wee and Chan (1989) and Chan, Yau and Chan (1990). And this requires further study.

Companies need to pay attention to integrating the promotion mix tools and tailoring their communication programs across demographics since promotion mix tools were found to be significantly and positively affecting consumers’ attitudes towards promotion and marketing of FMCGs. A consumer can rarely be moved through all response stages by a single promotional campaign. Since we observe significant differences in majority of the demographics, tailoring of promotional programs while keeping the integration of the promotion mix tools could bring better outcome for the company’s consistent delivery of its offerings and images by efficiently utilizing the limited budget. A more comprehensive study incorporating more cities, rural areas and
more samples, and other factors could be considered by future researcher keeping in mind the budget and time implications.

Since this research emphasized on FMCG promotion it would be good to include services too in future research endeavor. In addition, product categories not included in this research can be assessed and not only domestic but also multinational or foreign companies can be researched to get a comprehensive picture of the industry and to lay deeper base for exploratory examination and analysis of the ads and promotion industry in Ethiopia.

Most of literatures emphasize on advertising and there is either limited studies on promotion mix elements or there would be doubt or misunderstanding on all parts of the market that we do not find comprehensive views and coverage on other promotion mix elements. Usually it is assumed that advertising is the only means of communication and there is confusion as to whether what promotion in general and advertising in particular are meant to portray. Although advertising can be delivered in many platforms of communication or promotion mix, all the promotions made might not necessarily mean advertising. In many perspectives advertising may mean the method, the media, and the channel. The dissertation was an attempt to fill this gap in coverage and understanding through attitude survey. The investigation also attempted to identify what kind of attitude consumers have toward promotion mix in Ethiopia since such area is not studied so far. Finally, the influence of promotion mix, attitude, awareness, information source on consumers’ purchase intention/decision have been studied in the dissertation.

The study is presumed to provide benefits to Companies, Ads and promotion agents, Consumers, Policy makers, Government bodies, Trade associations, Competitors, researchers and any interested stakeholders

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the society and people must know the benefit of ads and promotion along with restrictions to be sanctioned on the promotion practice.

8.5. Limitations of the Study

The study has the following major limitations that would make generalizability difficult if not impossible.

- Unwillingness of some respondents to cooperate and supply response.
- Not incorporating all industries and services.
- Not including all cities and rural areas in the country.
- Shortage of literature in the area of promotion mix and consumers’ attitude towards promotion mix although ample sources are found for marketing mix in general.

Since the study has covered only major metropolitan cities, it will not be possible to generalize for all customers living in other cities and rural areas since their habit of reading, having exposure to variety of communication media and style of living may not be similar.