ADVERTISEMENT SENSITIVITY IN THE PROMOTION OF CELLULAR SERVICES : A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN PUNJAB

ABSTRACT

NTP 1999 was aimed to transform the Telecommunication sector to a great competitive market both in urban and rural areas and to enable Indian Telecom Companies to become truly global players.

Today, it is the time of communication system. Through this communication system, one can solve one's domestic, personal and official problems, while sitting at a distant place. Cellular phones and Cellular phones services are the recent important entries to the most advertised product/service category list. Hence, role of cell phone and cellular service provider companies has become very significant and demanding among all sections of the society - both in urban and rural areas.

Effective advertising refers to informing the public about the right product at the right time through the right medium. The right media selection is the crux of the success of the entire advertising campaign. Advertisement, in the present global competitive atmosphere, is a powerful social and economic force. Consumers look to it for information in respect of products, brands and services that might help them in proper selection. Now-a-days, most of the firms spend a good promotional budget on sales promotions and on advertising with the result sales
promotion has become an important component of the promotional mix. Ultimate goal of sales promotion is to increase sale and to increase profit of the company.

Punjab is one of the States where per capita use of cellular phones is maximum; and this factor has prompted to investigate some of the issues related to it. This study relates to Punjab State and is restricted to three districts due to their own significance. For this purpose, 600 respondents were contacted with a questionnaire, 200 from each district with a break up of 100 urban and 100 rural respondents. The study highlights advertisement sensitivity in the promotion of cellular services with a comparative study of Rural and Urban areas in the selected districts.

The objectives of the study are: (1) To study the socio-economic profile of the cellular users and examine the impact of socio-economic factors in the sale/purchase of cellular services in both rural and urban areas. (2) To study the extent to which advertisements affect the promotion of cellular services. (3) To examine the efficacy of different promotional schemes affecting the sale promotion of cellular services. (4) To identify the most effective ways of advertising in cellular services business. (5) To study the consideration in the minds of the customers while making a choice of cellular service. (6) To suggest a marketing strategy for further growth in the cellular services.
From the discussion of the data analysis, it is concluded that a substantial percentage of respondents having no income are using mobile phones. More than half respondents observe that they were not influenced by any advertisement during the course of buying their mobile service. Indeed, electronic and print media has its own some say in the popularity of mobile phone services. In urban segment an abnormal trend has been seen where hundred percent respondents in the age group of 15-20 years agree that advertisements in media effects the customers' buying behaviour for the sale of mobile phone service.

Overall analysis opinion goes against the version that promotion schemes launched by the various companies have an impact on the customer's buying behaviour. More than three-fifth respondents like/very much like to go through deeply into the advertisements while reading newspapers/magazines and also while seeing television. One significant analysis has emerged that source through advertisements in electronic media plays a guiding role for the rural and urban respondents both.

Appearance of celebrities in advertisements contributes to affect the minds of the customers in making choice. Rural respondents are comparatively more responsive in this behalf. The liking of brand ambassadors and the advertisements presented through them also contribute to change the customers buying behaviour, the only question is only of rating.