CHAPTER II

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature on Consumer Buying Behaviour, Advertising Communication Process and Advertising effectiveness provide the basis for the present study. In this chapter the literature on these are reviewed and the related empirical studies in the field are examined. The researcher reviewed more than 100 journal articles and books which explain the impact of advertising on consumer behaviour. Theoretical principles of a set of models are reviewed first and then their empirical findings are summarized. On the basis of these theories and models the conceptual frame work for the present study is developed. There are several theories which explain the impact of mass media advertisements on consumer behaviour. For the purpose of the study these theories are grouped as follows:

1. Advertising Theories and Communication Models
2. Consumer Behaviour Models

1. Advertising Theories and Communication Models

*Traditional response hierarchy models*

Advertising is generally seen as a persuasive communication process involving a series of phases. This basic idea appeared in an introductory advertising text written by Frey (1947). Fry suggested that the advertisers must understand the mental steps through which consumers pass through as they process the ad. A number of models have been developed to explain the communication effect of advertisements. All these models assume that the consumers pass through
different stages while moving from a state of non-awareness of the product to actual purchase behaviour. The exact nature of this communication process has consistently been described in marketing literature as a “hierarchy of advertising effects”. Table 2.1 shows four of the best known response hierarchy models as summarized by Belch (2003).

**Table 2.1 Hierarchy Models of the Consumer Response Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>AIDA Model</th>
<th>Hierarchy of Effects Model</th>
<th>Innovation Adoption Model</th>
<th>Information Processing Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attention</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Yielding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire</td>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
<td>Trial</td>
<td>Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adoption</td>
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The **AIDA** model was developed to represent the stages a sales person must take a customer through the personal selling process. The model assumes that a buyer passes successively through attention, interest, desire, and action. To the marketer the last step is the most important. This last stage i.e., the action
stage involves the getting of commitment to purchase by the prospective buyer and closing the sale.

According to Strong (1925) the first formal advertising model was probably AIDA (Attention- Interest- Desire- Action), attributed to E. St. Elmo Lewis in 1898. During this era of restricted commercial media (Print), and limited product availability consumers were frequently involved in extended decision making processes and collected necessary information from mass media. As explained by Smith and Swinyard (1982) these conditions generated the AIDA model stating that the advertising message must first gain the audience’s attention, then its interest, next its desire for the product, and finally action (purchase) will occur. Originally it was a model of personal selling and was adapted only later. The AIDA Model is presented as flow chart in Fig: 2.1

Fig.2.1 Flow Chart showing Aida Model of Advertising Communication

```
Attention
   ↓
Interest
   ↓
Desire
   ↓
Action
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Frey (1947) suggested that those who create advertising must understand the mental steps through which consumers pass. According to him the persons planning and building the advertisement consider that their task consist of the following steps.

1. Attracting attention to the advertisement

2. Endowing it with qualities that will hold the interest of prospective customer and induce them to read it

3. Presenting the appeal in such a way that, once read, it will create consumer acceptance, consumer preference or consumer demand for the merchandise.

According to this formulation, advertising is responsible for creating a series of successive responses from individual consumers that may lead to a completed sale. Different versions of hierarchy-of-advertising effects models have been in the literature of marketing for more than 100 years. Darrel and Britt (1950), in their introductory text ‘Advertising Psychology and Research’ presented a formula for the hierarchy-of-advertising effects: "There is a popular advertising, or buying formula that contains the steps: attention, interest, desire, conviction, and action.” Different versions of hierarchy-of-advertising effects models have played a significant role in the development of advertising research. The concept of hierarchy-of-advertising effects is described in Russel Colley’s (1961), “Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results” (or simply DAGMAR). Theories based on the assumption of rational consumer processing, includes the hierarchy models by Lavidge and Steiner (1961), O’Brien, Terrence V. (1971), McGuire (1978), and Preston (1982). The hierarchies suggest that the
information consumer select from commercials travels through a series of processing stages such as attention, comprehension, evaluation, and finally yields (or fails to yield) an intention to purchase.

The hierarchy of effects model developed by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) is a famous pattern for setting and measuring the effectiveness of advertisements. The model assumes a set of sequential stages through which a consumer passes before the purchase action. The series of steps take a sequential order ranging from internal awareness of a product to actual purchase. A basic promise of the model is that the advertising effects occur over a period of time.

According to Lavidge and Steiner, the advertising communication may not lead to an immediate purchase action. The effects are over a series of stages, with each stage fulfilled before the consumer moves to the next stage. This model has turned out to be the foundation for the setting ad objectives and measuring of ad effects. Ultimate consumers normally do not switch from disinterested individuals to convinced purchasers in one instantaneous step. Rather, they approach the ultimate purchase through a process or series of steps in which the actual purchase is but the final threshold.

Lavidge and Steiner (1961) in their article “A Model For Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness” referred to a stair step model for measuring ad effectiveness. Flow chart showing the stair-step model for predictive measurements of advertising effectiveness is provided in Figure 2.2
Lavidge and Steiner (1961) were also the first to employ the summary labels of cognition, affect, and conation to represent the advertising response sequence more efficiently. The theory proposes that cognitive activity (non-evaluative thinking) causes affective activity (evaluative mental activity) which causes conative activity (plans for actions and also the actions themselves). The response sequence is presented in Table 2.2.
According to O'Brien, Terrence V. (1971), in terms of the hierarchy of effects, awareness represents cognition; attitude represents affect; and intention, purchases, and use represent the conation stage. Advertising and word-of-mouth are information inputs to consumer thinking, where the first is commercial and the second is non-commercial. Most of these models assume that, if any of the steps of the hierarchy fails to occur, no intention to purchase can occur, at least as a response to the commercial.

The **Innovation Adoption Model** is related to the purchase of new products. The steps preceding the adoption of a new product are awareness, interest, evaluation, and trial. The last traditional model referred to is the **Information Processing Model** of advertising effectiveness, developed by William Mcguire. This model assumes the consumer in a persuasive communication situation like

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**Table. 2.2 Advertising Response Sequence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement towards purchase</th>
<th>Related behavioral dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase</td>
<td>Conative – the realm of motives. Ads stimulate or direct desires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conviction</td>
<td>Affective – the realm of emotions. Ads change attitudes and feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive – the realm of thoughts. Ads provide information and facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
advertising, as an information processor or problem solver. The series of responses constitutes the hierarchy and the model is similar to the hierarchy of effects sequence. The model incorporates another element i.e., retention which is not seen in other models. Retention is the ability to retain that portion of the comprehended information which is used not to take an immediate action. This information is used by the consumer later when a purchase action is to be made. The companies are designing their advertisements to motivate the consumer not to take an immediate action but to make use of it later. Each stage in the response hierarchy is a dependent variable that can be influenced and measured and that may serve as objective of the communication process.

**Association model of the advertising communication**

The Association Model is an advertising communication process model which analyses the consumer responses to advertisements (Preston, 1982). The Association Model, is an extension of the famous AIDA formulation. The model introduces the concept of ‘association’ into the hierarchy-of-effects literature. It incorporates the concept of “integration”. Integration is the result of interaction of prior experience of the consumer with advertising related elements or attributes conveyed about the product. The model provides a means for relating the consumer-information-processing point of view with the hierarchy-of-effects point of view. The model is further justified for its ability to incorporate important elements of both the traditional Stimulus-response Psychology and the newer Consumer Information Processing. This model incorporates all of the measures of research commonly used in advertising. The model is represented as follows:
Petty an Cacioppo (1979) introduced the Elaboration Likelihood Model of consumer processing of advertisements. The model explains how people approach, process, and respond to ads. Basically the model suggests that attitudes are formed through two different routes. The central route focuses on message argument, examining them for quality, and on the generation of thoughts in reaction to them. This is the high involvement conditions. When it occurs, the probability of thinking about or elaborating on the information in the ad is said to be high, when the consumer involvement is low, the peripheral route to processing advertising is taken. The consumer may infer things about the brand from a superficial analysis of cues in the commercial and there will be little or no elaboration of the arguments.
Shimp (1981) and Mitchell and Olson (1981) introduced Attitude Towards Advertisement (ATTA) models holding the basic concept that the consumers’ attitudes about the advertisements sometimes influence their attitudes towards brands and their intentions to purchase. It is suggested by Shimp (1981) that liked ads create positive feelings or affect, and this affect is then transferred to the brand creating a positive attitude towards the brand. He developed a theoretical case with empirical support showing why ATTA is an important mediator of brand choice. According to ATTA approach, the advertising efforts are to create a favourable attitude towards the advertisement so as to leave the consumers with a positive feeling after processing of the ad. When examined from the consumers’ perspective, it is an effect engendered in consumers.

Shimp identified two relatively distinct dimensions of attitude towards the ad, one cognitive and the other is emotional. The cognitive dimension was compared to liking for the ad and it was believed to be represented by consumers' conscious responses to execution elements (e.g. humor, endorser characteristics etc.) But the more important second dimension of attitude towards an ad result merely because the ad evokes an emotional response, such as feeling of love, joy, nostalgia or sorrow, without any conscious processing of execution elements. Several advertising researchers have presented arguments in favour for the ATTA concept.
2. Consumer Behaviour Models

Comprehensive and valid models of consumer behaviour are essential tools for any one trying to understand the effectiveness of advertisements. Consumer behaviour may be defined as the decision process and physical activity individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services (Loudon, 2002). Consumer behaviour is the field of study of how individuals make decision on how to spend their available resources like time, money and effort on various consumption related issues. Generally consumers make purchase decision on the basis of the information available to them. Thus it will be very important to understand what and how much information is required by consumers so as to help them to evaluate the different offers available in the market.

Consumer behaviour is a multistage process and actual buying comes at a later stage. An understanding of the consumer behaviour thus requires the knowledge of these consumer decision making processes. These models attempts to interconnect psychological, physiological and social aspects of the behaviour. These models facilitate the understanding of the complex relationships between variables influencing a consumer. Consumer Behaviour Models give useful frameworks for further research on consumer behaviour. The important consumer behaviour models are explained in the following:

**Stimulus Response Model**

Stimulus is the input to consumer behaviour and it provokes action. Media advertisement communication, influence of opinion leaders, etc are some stimuli
provoking an action. A response on the other hand is the observable manifestation of consumer behaviour.

The consumer mind is represented by a black box in this model. The model relies heavily on the observable stimulus variables and responses rather than the internal process. Stimulus response model is the simplest form of the black box model of consumer decision making. Stimulus is expected to generate purchase behaviour (response) among those at least who are undecided whether they should or should not buy a brand (Srivastava 2002).

**Nicosia Model**

The Nicosia Model was developed in 1966 by Francesco Nicosia, an expert in consumer motivation and behaviour. Francesco Nicosia was one of the first consumer behaviour modelers to shift the focus from the act of purchase itself to the more complex decision making process that consumers engage in. The model suggests that the messages communicated by the firm first influences the predisposition of the consumer towards the product. Based on the situation consumer develops certain attitude towards the product. This may result in a search for the product or an evaluation of the product attributes by the consumer. If the result is positive, it may end up in a decision to buy the product otherwise the reverse may occur. The model contains four major areas:

1) the firm’s attributes, outputs or communications and the consumers’ psychological attributes

2) the consumers search for and evaluations of firm’s output and other available alternatives

3) the consumer motivated act of purchase
4) the consumer’s storage or use of the product. The model is represented as a circular flow of influences where each component provides input to the next.

**Howard-Sheth Consumer Behavior Model**

The model given by Howard and Sheth is a comprehensive and largely approved one. The model is composed of three stages. ‘Input-process-output.’ Input is a stimulus provided by two sets of stimulus variables, namely, the firm’s marketing efforts and the social environment. The firm’s marketing efforts are designed to positively expose, inform and influence consumers. These efforts include product itself, advertising, price strategies, distribution network and in fact all marketing functions. The social environment serves as a non-commercial source of consumer information and influence which is not under the direct control of the firm. It includes reference groups and individuals, family members, social class, caste, cultures and the like. Both these stimulus variables influence consumers and the buying process.

The buying process is composed of a number of stages and is influenced by an individual’s psychological framework. It is composed of the individual’s personality, motivation, perceptions and attitudes. The various stages in the buying process include need recognition, product awareness, consumer interest, evaluation and intention.

**Engel – Kollat - Miniard Model**

The decision making process model given below is a very famous model. The Engel-Blackwell-Miniard model stands as one of the most popular representations of consumer behaviour. It was originally developed in 1968 and
The model depicts consumer behaviour as a decision process. In figure 2.3 the simplified version of the consumer decision process model developed by professors Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, (2001) is given. As the model shows, consumers typically go through seven major stages when making decisions: need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase evaluation, purchase, consumption, post-consumption evaluation, and divestment. Clearly the buying process starts long before the actual purchase and has consequences long afterward. The study of consumer behaviour focuses primarily on these
seven stages and how various factors influence consumer’s decisions at each stage.

Kotler (2003) explains how the marketers can learn about the stages in the buying decision process of the consumers. It can be done mainly in four ways: Introspective method, retrospective method, prospective method and/or prescriptive method. In introspective method one can think about how he himself would act in a buying situation. In retrospective method, a small number of recent purchasers are interviewed, and asked to recall the events leading to their purchase. When the consumers who plan to buy the product are asked to think aloud about going through the purchase process, it is called prospective method. In prescriptive method the marketers ask the consumers to describe the ideal way to buy the product. Each method yields a map of the steps in the buying process.

Final consumer decision making can be categorized as extended, limited, or routine. (Evans and Berman, 1995). The consumer decision processes vary considerably in their complexity. In real life situations the extent to which the CDP model is followed in the precise form and sequence, vary according to the situations.

At any point in the decision process, the consumer may decide not to buy and end the process if the product is found unnecessary, unsatisfactory or too expensive. In the case of repeated purchases the consumers generally do not spend time on information seeking. They simply purchase the same brand as was purchased earlier. This represents Repeated Problem Solving (RPS).
Limited Problem Solving (LPS) represents a situation in which the purchase does not assume great importance. The decision process is simplified and purchase usually involves a moderate amount of information seeking time in choosing. When the decision process is very complex, it is called Extended Problem Solving. EPS is commonly used when consumers purchase expensive consumer durables like automobiles, television and other major products where the risk involvement is high. When EPS is activated, all seven stages in the decision process are likely to be followed, although not necessarily in the exact order. Consumers engaging in EPS generally evaluate many alternatives; consult a wide variety of product information sources and research options on how and where to make the purchase.

The Consumer Decision Process Models have wide implications to the marketer. For example, knowing how far media advertisements influence the consumer at different stages in the consumer decision process in comparison with other promotional tools will be valuable information in framing promotional strategies. It will enlighten the marketer to cut down the cost of advertisement or to increase it profitably. To persuade a consumer to buy a specific brand of the product, marketer has to focus on all stages of consumer decisions and develop suitable strategies.

**Empirical Review**

In this section survey of some empirical evidence concerning the various hierarchical stages of consumer decision making is made. Empirical evidences are collected from advertising related journal articles, magazines and books.
There is enormous amount of empirical literature available on advertising effectiveness, providing rather mixed and sometimes conflicting evidences of the different approaches given in the literature. But the empirical studies on the impact of ads on the sequential consumer decision making process of Indian consumers are almost non-existent. Hence an attempt has been made to explore the evidences from related advertising research areas. The studies selected reflect on the significant and current theories of advertising effectiveness and its influence on consumer behaviour.

Increased accessibility to media increases the ability to process the information from external sources. The study therefore seeks to understand the media consumption habits of the respondents and their information search pattern. Katona and Mueller (1955) and Newman and Staelin (1972) conducted empirical studies which focused on how pre purchase information was gathered. Both the studies were based on interviews with the buyers of major durables and both the studies described pre purchase search in terms of type of information gathered, sources of information used and duration of search. The study found some consumers with extremely deliberate search behaviour, but for most of the respondents, information gathering was limited. Katona and Mueller found no relationship between knowledge and mount of information search for appliances and that only 40 per cent of the purchasers visited more than one store to get information on the product. Newman and Staelin findings indicated the complexity of the search behaviour and highlighted the importance of interaction between variables in the analysis of search behaviour.
Katona and Mueller (1955), and Newman and Staelin (1972) examined the pre-purchase information search patterns of the consumers of durables. Newman and Staelin found that increased positive experience led to less external search behaviour for durables. Dommermuth (1965) compared the number of stores visited with the number of brands considered and identified distinctive search patterns among the consumers. A number of studies have found income and education to be positively related to external search for several durables. (Claxton, Fry and Portis 1974, Katona and Mueller 1955, Newman and Staelin 1972).

O'Brien (1971) examined the hierarchy of effects description of consumer decision making. He examined the chain of events taking place in the consumer’s mind in connection with the purchase of convenience food and its effects on marketing policy. Scales were constructed to measure three variables of the hierarchy: awareness (for cognitive), attitude (for affective), and intention (for conative). The study revealed that commercial information (advertising) has no direct influence on ultimate purchase of the product studied. Such influence begins solely with personal sources like word of mouth. Advertising had some effect, but it was not prominent in the consumer’s decision path.

According to Wells (1964) the recall method of testing advertising must be designed to answer two basic questions: how many consumer remembered the ad and what did they remember about it. Wells conducted a series of studies of the development and use of advertising rating scales. A Reaction Profile Scale was developed by him to measure the emotional appeal of the ad. He concluded that an analysis of Reaction Profile scores in conjunction with recall scores
produced evidence that both measure are related to advertising in an understandable way. Some of the reaction profile scales included semantic differential scales such as ‘attractive-unattractive,’ ‘meaningful-meaningless,’ ‘convincing-unconvincing,’ ‘believable-unbelievable,’ ‘interesting-uninteresting,’ ‘easy to understand-hard to understand,’ ‘exciting-unexciting,’ ‘appealing-unappealing,’ ‘worth remembering-not worth remembering’ etc.

While consumer surveys have shown the mass media advertisements to be a widely used information source, they have supplied little detail on the extent and character of use of this source. A number of studies have attempted to analyse the information processing area of advertising. Nelson, Philip (1970) developed a highly simplified theory of the consumer’s quest for information about the quality of goods. They were able to predict that the recommendations of others will be used for purchases of experience goods like T.V. Washing Machine etc, than search goods; advice will also be used more for durable than non-durable goods.

Achenbaum (1972) in his study on the ‘Advertising doesn’t manipulate consumers,’ concluded that consumers are knowledgeable and experienced buyers. They seek information given in a persuasive context. But they do not rely only on what they hear or see. Information alone has no apparent effect on consumer attitude or behaviour. Product experience is also an important influencing factor for future purchase.

Information integration theory and the integrated information response model were used by Smith (1973) to explore how consumers combine information from advertising and trial. Results showed that advertising can lessen the negative
effects of an unfavorable trial experience on brand evaluations, especially when the ad is processed first.

“What Makes Advertising Effective?” and “What is the Real Impact of Advertising?” These questions are addressed respectively by Krugman (1975) and Lambin (1975). Krugman began by explaining “the environment of advertising which consists of an intricate web of social, economic, and technological circumstances that direct an ad towards a particular audience through a particular medium. Obviously, the advertiser’s primary concern in this environment is the consumer himself.” The author suggested three elements for successful advertising: information, rational stimulus, and emphasis. Lambin concludes that consumer buying behaviour is more rational than what advertisers can assume.

Empirical research on the pre-purchase search behaviour of the consumers of durables was made by Claxton, Fry and Portis (1974). They classified furniture and appliance buyers in terms of their pre-purchase search behaviour. The number of information sources used, total visits to stores and the deliberation time were found to be three measures to generate distinctive groups of consumers on the basis of search pattern.

As it is very difficult to measure external search, the determinants of external search are not well established empirically. As stated by Stigler (1961), Goldman and Johnson found out that for most of the empirical studies on external search of information, the primary theoretical basis is provided by the cost-benefit concept drawn from economic theory. According to this concept, a person will continue to acquire and process information until the costs of additional
acquisition and processing out weigh the expected benefits. Product importance would imply higher benefits and hence more search (Katona 1960).

Pre-purchase information search activities of the buyers of durable goods were studied by Westbrook and Fornell (1979) to determine whether distinctive patterns of information source usage could be identified. It was assumed that the number of purchase alternatives considered at the outset of decision making would be related directly to the buyer’s need for information; the larger the set, the greater the information need to be satisfied by subsequent search. The findings of the study indicated that major appliance buyers can be classified according to distinctive patterns of pre-purchase information source usage. The four segments which emerged were labeled as objective shoppers, moderate shoppers, store intense shoppers, and personal advice seekers.

A series of studies have attempted to develop sets of perceptual scales in connection with television advertising (Schlinger1979) ; Aaker and Bruzzone (1981). Aaker and Stayman (1990) conducted studies measuring audience perceptions of commercials and related them to ad impact. The first objective of the study was to explore methodological issues in assessing the underlying dimensions in audience perceptions. The second study objective was to relate those dimensions to measures of commercial effectiveness. The commercial effectiveness was measured mainly by ‘liking of the ad.’ It was revealed that being informative was the most useful predictors of ‘liking of the ad’ and ad effectiveness.
Aaker and Norris (1982) focused on the characteristics of commercials perceived as informative. The study attempted to find to what extent the viewers considered prime time television commercials to be informative and relevant. It was observed that, being informative is one of at least three rather distinct ways in which a commercial is perceived positively. Woodruff (1972) suggested that various sources of information have different effects upon attitudes. Capon and Burke (1979) found that people with higher socio-economic status were more efficient processors of information in the task of durable purchases.

Park and Lutz (1982) examined individuals’ choice behaviors at different stages of the choice process in a house purchasing decision. The research was designed to study an individual’s choice dynamics by examining three stages of the home purchasing decision on a longitudinal basis i.e., the before-search, search and post-search stages. The results revealed bounded stability of the Decision Maker’s initial decision plan. The Decision Maker maintained much of the original decision structure while accommodating necessary changes arising from market realities and learning.

Deighton, John (1984) explored the proposition that persuasion by advertising occurs in two steps. First, advertising arouses an expectation, which is weak because the partisan nature of the source is recognized. Second, the subject tends to confirm the expectations upon exposure to more objective information such as evidence or product experience. The author argues for an interaction between advertising and evidence on evaluations, and found experimental support for the interaction.
An empirical investigation of the association between consumers’ problem recognition styles and search patterns was made by Bruner (1986). It was conducted among 382 students representing a variety of majors in an upper-class course at a large mid western university. The objective of the study was to examine the styles of acknowledging problems which consumers develop over time and the influence they have on different aspects of search activity for clothing. If a need is not acknowledged, then a purchase does not occur. On the basis of need recognition styles, the respondents were classified into two types, i.e., ‘DS’ type (Desired state) and ‘AS’ type (Actual State). As explained by Bruner, in a particular instance of decision making, a consumer might have a need recognition triggered in three ways: by the actual state changing, by the desired state changing or by a combination of both changing. When the consumer experiences the problem several times a ‘style’ of acknowledging the need begins to develop. On the basis of this style or pattern the consumers were categorized as DS types and AS types. Among the DS types the problem recognition may be triggered mainly by a change in the desired state while the ‘AS” type rarely recognize a problem unless their actual status changes. The objective of the study was to determine how ‘DS’ and ‘AS’ types differ in some aspects of their external search of information. The study revealed that the two problem recognition types were significantly different in their information search pattern. Distinct differences are noted between two of these problem recognition types in their shopping orientations, quantity of shopping trips and importance placed on information sources.
Several studies have reported that majority of consumers make their purchase decisions after engaging in limited amount of external information search. External information seeking is defined as the process of actively searching for and collecting information on product alternatives (Newman and Staelin, 1972). It may be due to the fact that consumers by virtue of their exposure to advertising, and previous purchase experience have large amount of product related information stored in memory.

The conceptual definition of attitude towards the advertisements is found to be different in different researches. No universal definition has emerged so far in the literature. The basic concept of attitude towards the ad is that consumers’ attitudes about advertisements sometimes influence their attitude towards brands and their intentions to purchase. Attitude Towards Ad is defined as “a viewers general liking or disliking of an advertisement” (Phelps and Thorson 1991).

Empirical evidence in support of the role performed by attitude towards ad are many. The research experiment conducted by Mitchell and Olson (1979) provides concrete evidence to support the mediation role performed by attitude towards ad. Results of various statistical tests conducted by them revealed that subjects’ brand attitudes and purchase intentions were largely determined by their affect for the ads themselves, rather than being solely dependent on their beliefs towards product attributes.

The effect of attitude towards ad on purchase behaviour was investigated by Shimp and Yokum (1980). Two experiments were conducted by them under simulated marketing conditions. Results from both the experiments indicated
clearly that subjects attitudes towards the experimental ads were more important determinant of their purchase behaviour than other factors. It was revealed that the more favourable their evaluation of the advertisement the more positive their rating of the brand and the greater their frequency of purchasing the advertised brand.

Edell and Burke (1987) investigated the role of feelings in understanding advertising effects. They found that (1) negative and positive feelings co-occur; (2) both are important predictors of the ad’s effectiveness; (3) feelings contribute uniquely to attitude towards the ad, beliefs about the brand’s attributes and attitude towards the brand, and (4) the relative importance of feelings and judgments of the ad’s characteristics varies based on the extent to which the ad is transformational and informational.

Changing consumer attitude is a frequent business objective. The relation between attitude change and behaviour is the subject of several articles. Some consumer behaviorists believe that a necessary connection between attitude change and behaviour change exist. Another group which holds the proposition that an attitude change is not necessary for behaviour to change. Weinstein (1972) is interested in the notion of predicting behavior from attitudes: negative attitude towards action were found to be more predictive of behaviour than positive ones. Numerous empirical studies report consumer’s overall evaluation of advertising. Consumers differ in overall attitude towards media advertisements. While some have negative overall attitude towards the ads others have positive view about the same. Alwitt and Prabhakar (1992) observed that in order to interpret consumer’s evaluations of a specific commercial, an advertiser should
know how much the evaluation is due to the commercial itself and how much is
due to other influences such as overall attitude towards television advertising.
The results of their study suggested that the influence of overall attitude about
television advertising on evaluation of an individual commercial depends on
factors such as the viewer perceptions of the social costs of television
advertising, deceptive aspects of the ad, information content, personal benefit
from advertising etc.

Previous researches show that liking can influence viewer response and can be a
valid indicator of advertising effectiveness. Many practitioners advocate the use
of liking as a pretest measure to evaluate an advertisement’s potential
effectiveness. Liking of the ad has been found to be the single best discriminator
of advertising effectiveness in the major ARF study conducted by Russel Haley
(Haley, 1990). Biel and Bridgwater (1990) reported that likeable advertising has
an impact on persuasion because a likeable commercial affects the emotional
component of ones attitude towards the brand.

The Advertising Research Foundation’s report on likeability, released in July
1990, found that overall liking of a T. V . commercial, did better at predicting an
ad’s success than any of the other seven measures tested including ever-popular

Analysis of a major copy testing database demonstrated that liking is moderately
but significantly correlated with other, validated measures of effectiveness
(Walker and Dubitsky 1994). According to him, used in conjunction with other
appropriate measures, liking measures add substantial value to the assessment of advertising effectiveness.

No single measure can provide an overall Index of advertising effectiveness (Greenwald, 1984) One of the most widely used measures is ad recall. Free recall of the ad content can serve as an indicator that an ad has been processed at the highest level of elaboration. According to Greenwald a recall measure will completely miss the negative evaluative reaction of the respondents. Consequently evaluative measure of brand attribute beliefs may be the best indictors of effectiveness for ads processed at the elaboration level.

In connection with the effectiveness of advertising at the post-purchase stage, Schlinger (1979) claims that most advertising reaches consumers who already bought the product, and the task of much advertising is to reaffirm brand support. Most of the empirical studies cited refer to the studies conducted in western countries which may not be equally applicable in a developing country like India. The inferences obtained from these studies are any way valuable to make constructive researches in any part of the world.

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