



POWER OF ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY ON THE “SHARE A COKE” CAMPAIGN

Ibikunle Olayiwola Ajisafe (Ph.D.) and Doyinsola Oluwaseun Dada

Media and Communication Studies Department, Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the influence of advertising on customer buying behaviour by analysing the impact of the 'Share a Coke' Campaign. This text elucidates the significance of advertising in shaping the consumer's purchasing decisions. Several Nigerian organisations exhibit a lack of enthusiasm when it comes to promoting their products and services through an efficient advertising platform, which negatively impacts their sales performance. They do not consider it necessary to allocate a percentage of their money to ads for promoting their products and services and influencing customer purchase decisions. This study elucidates how the brand Coca-Cola has strategically utilised advertising to its benefit, ensuring not just customer affinity towards the brand but also driving real product purchases. The fast progress of technology has led to a substantial rise in the use of technology and digital media in the advertising industry. Given the fast progress, it has become more and more crucial to have effective advertising in order to get a competitive edge. This research is necessary to achieve that. Therefore, it is advisable to do comprehensive research on the target audience to gain insights into their watching patterns and purchase behaviours, thereby ensuring a successful advertising campaign.*

KEYWORDS: Advertising, Consumer, Consumer purchasing behaviour, Share a Coke, Technology.



INTRODUCTION

Advertising is often regarded as the most potent, influential, and manipulative instrument that companies possess and employ to exert influence over consumers globally. It is a kind of communication that usually aims to convince prospective clients to buy or consume a specific brand of product or service, sometimes in larger quantities. It has transformed into a venomous serpent, prepared to stalk and capture its prey. Brands such as Coca Cola have effectively employed this strategy to boost global sales of their products.

A consumer, as defined, encompasses all individuals. In the context of advertising, a consumer refers to an individual or a group that pays for and utilises the goods and services offered by a seller. The term "consumer" can encompass both individual consumers and organisational consumers. Specifically, it refers to the ultimate user in the distribution chain of an item or service, regardless of whether they are the purchaser or not (BusinessDictionary.com, 2019).

The demand for a certain product by consumers is determined by their individual preference or taste for that particular product. Individual preferences vary across individuals and are influenced by several circumstances. Now, here is where advertising plays a crucial role, particularly if it is effective. Advertising is a form of commercial communication that uses a publicly supported, impersonal message to promote or sell a product, service, or concept (Stanton, 1984).

The main goal of the 'sharing a Coke' campaign was straightforward. The objective was to augment the consumption of Coca-Cola throughout the summer season. The other aim was to stimulate conversations about Coke once more. Their primary objective was not just to garner consumers' favour towards the business, but also to encourage them to actively purchase and consume the product (Magazine Mag, 2012).

Consequently, they have effectively managed to captivate customers with their innovative advertising. Undoubtedly, the campaign is undeniably one of the most triumphant ones to emerge in the industry. This sparked widespread discussion about Coca-Cola, with each person desiring to have their own name included on a Coke bottle. Some individuals even went to the extent of exclusively consuming the bottles that had their name. Indeed, that is very astonishing. The question is how influential do you believe advertising is in shaping consumer purchase behaviour?

Multiple studies have been undertaken to assess the efficacy of advertising and its influence on consumer behaviour. In contrast, this research has presented a synthesis of several factors in order to comprehend the efficacy and influence of advertising on consumer buying behaviour, utilising the 'Sharing a Coke' campaign as a case study.

The study is expected to provide valuable insights for advertising scholars and executives to comprehend key aspects of advertising and aid marketers in implementing more effective advertising strategies.



LITERATURE REVIEW

The Influence of Advertising

As individuals, we are constantly inundated with all types of messages wherever we go and wherever we look. Advertising has a significant influence on several aspects of our life, such as our eating habits, fashion choices, appearance, and even the schools we choose to attend. As a result, we often don't need to make decisions about these things on our own. That is the influence of marketing.

Have you ever contemplated the reason behind our stronger affiliation with certain companies compared to others? Typically, this occurs due to advertising. It is widely acknowledged that the majority of individuals today has a fondness for and consumes Coca-Cola due to its ability to evoke strong emotions in its customers and consistently provide a refreshing sensation. The expansion of a brand, due to the competitive market, is heavily reliant on advertising. Therefore, in order to captivate the audience, an advertisement must include both an engaging and visually appealing quality.

Advertising is disseminated through several mass media channels, which encompass conventional platforms including newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor advertising, and direct mail. Additionally, new media outlets such as search results, blogs, social media, websites, and text messaging are also utilised for advertising purposes. Advertising, often known as an "ad" or advert, is the visual or auditory representation of a message in a specific media (Wikipedia, 2020).

An effective commercial anticipates our needs before we are even aware of them. It provides us with a glimpse into the perfect existence, the perfect physique, the perfect partner, all encompassed inside a perfect universe (Rajpal, 2010).

Hence, a potent commercial is characterised by its enduring impact on viewers. There are several key factors to consider while crafting a triumphant ad. It is simple to deviate from the topic or to inundate the listener with excessive information. Short yet effective material is successful for several reasons. For example, concise commercials with a memorable message increase viewers' ability to retain the content. Furthermore, advertisements that are easy to recall usually convey a single, straightforward idea. This enables viewers to promptly engage with the commercial. For instance, the 'Share a Coke' campaign featuring 'Falz' effectively conveys a straightforward yet impactful message to the public.

Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

Consumer purchase behaviour refers to the examination of individuals, groups, or organisations and the methods they employ to efficiently identify, safeguard, utilise, and discard goods, services, experiences, or ideas. It also encompasses the impact of these methods on both the customer and the community.

Consumer behaviour encompasses all actions related to the acquisition, use, and disposal of products and services, including the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions of consumers that occur before or after these actions (Kardes, 2011). The term "consumer" can encompass both individual consumers and organisational consumers. Specifically, it refers to



the ultimate user in the distribution chain of an item or service, regardless of whether they are the purchaser or not (BusinessDictionary.com, 2019).

Advertisers face a significant problem in comprehending consumers' purchasing habits. Consumer behaviour, in its most comprehensive form, focuses on the process of individuals' decision-making when it comes to purchasing products and services, as well as their utilisation and perception of them. Certain buying selections need thorough and intricate processes that entail conducting substantial research to choose amongst competing options (Belch, 2009).

The consumer purchase process is often described by five major components:

- i. The decision-making process starts with the stage of problem recognition. This phenomenon arises when the customer recognises a requirement, sometimes referred to as the disparity between the consumer's present condition and their preferred condition. The intensity of the demand influences the entire decision-making process.
- ii. The next stage is doing an information search. This is the stage in which customers actively search their own memories and other sources for information on items or brands that have the ability to fulfil their needs. The objective of the information search is to ascertain a compilation of alternatives that accurately depict feasible buying possibilities.
- iii. Transitioning is the phase of assessment and progress. During the whole process, the customer does a sequence of cognitive assessments of several options, in order to find the most advantageous choice.
- iv. Thus, as the assessment stage nears its conclusion, customers develop a buy intention, which may or may not result in an actual product purchase. Even when customers make a purchase, the decision-making process is not over until they actually use or experience the product and evaluate it afterwards.
- v. The last phase is the Post Purchase Evaluation. The stage referred to is when the buyer compares their real experience with the product to the expectations they had made during the stages of gathering information and evaluating options (Khosla, 2010).

The steps of the decision process often follow a predetermined sequence. Nevertheless, the act of searching for and assessing information can take place at any stage of the decision-making process, even after the purchase has been made (Rossiter, 2005).

The 'Share a Coke' Campaign

With the global transition to the digital domain, our modes of interaction have undergone a significant transformation. It seems that as our online social connections increase, our face-to-face interactions decrease. Coke required a marketing plan that would motivate customers to actively interact with the brand in both digital and physical realms, in order to adapt to the evolving environment. Coca-Cola has historically seen robust sales throughout the summer season.

Thus, in 2011, Coca-Cola initiated the 'sharing a Coke' Campaign in Australia for the first time. They need a marketing strategy that would create a significant impact and disturb and captivate the Australian audience. Additionally, it was necessary for the product to possess widespread

appeal, while precisely targeting the specific demographic of 24-year-olds (Magazine Mag, 2012).

In early January, the 'Share a Coke' campaign made its way to Nigeria, four years later. Prior to the start of the campaign, the renowned brand, recognising the energy and vitality of Nigeria, the country with the highest population in Africa, carefully chose 600 of the most well-known names from the diverse range of names found in different areas of Nigeria. These names were then printed on different varieties of Coca-Cola packaging. Nigerian consumers are already encountering the thrill of discovering their names on PET bottles of Coca-Cola when shopping at stores. It has been a frequent occurrence to observe individuals meticulously sifting through several Coca-Cola bottles in order to discover ones with their names on them (Agbaje, 2015).



Image Attribution: <https://images.app.goo.gl/x8eHvQpCk6boWxqp9>

By substituting the Coca-Cola brand name with the names of other individuals, it fostered a feeling of inclusivity and connection among all persons. Names hold significant importance for individuals since they serve as the primary means of identification. They recognised the significance of the name to each person and used it in developing a powerful campaign to sway the audience's choices.

Share a Coke commemorates the variety and sense of community in Nigeria. The ad reiterates the company's dedication to revitalising the environment and fostering shared moments of optimism and joy. Consequently, it can be confidently stated that the 'sharing a Coke' campaign has transformed the worldwide Coca-Cola brand into a distinctive and intimate encounter for Nigerians, fostering tighter connections between Coca-Cola and its consumers, reinforcing familial ties, and promoting affection among friends.

Firstly, Coca-Cola is widely recognised and highly regarded as a beverage of exceptional quality and flavour, which is much appreciated by customers. The company's success over the last 128 years can be attributed to a combination of always developing marketing and advertising methods, which aim to strengthen the emotional bond between the brand and its customers.

Considering this, it is believed that it is prudent to recognise that advertising holds significant influence. Advertising pervades every aspect of our lives. Previously, various forms of media, such as movies and the internet, used to be mostly devoid of commercial content. However, they now contain a plethora of commercial messages. Until recently, the majority of musicians were hesitant to allow their work to be exploited for the promotion of shampoo or trainers. Currently, the music and advertising businesses are engaged in a mutually beneficial and



profitable relationship (Lewis, 2011). It has become an integral aspect of our everyday life, making it difficult for folks to not engage with regularly.

Coca-Cola acknowledged the significance of advertising on customers' purchasing behaviour and consequently employed it as a strategic approach to surpass all rival companies. The following are the results obtained from the study of the Share a Coke campaign, according to Heble (2019):

- i. There was a 7% increase in the ratio of Coca-Cola consumption between young individuals and adults.
- ii. The campaign generated around 18.3 Lakhs media impressions.
- iii. The Facebook website had a significant surge in visitors, with a rise of 870%. In contrast, the Facebook page witnessed a growth of 39% in terms of its fan base.
- iv. Approximately 76,000 digital representations of Coke cans were distributed on the internet.
- v. There were a grand total of 378,000 bespoke Coca-Cola cans printed nationwide.
- vi. The ad successfully cultivated a favourable perception of Coca-Cola as a brand.

The Coca-Cola Company has constantly enhanced its existing products while prioritising the development of new ones. The Company's business strategy is on revitalising all individuals impacted by the brand. Consumer behaviour analysis has therefore become a valuable approach for gaining a deeper knowledge of clients.

Through the implementation of an effective strategy and compelling advertising, Coca-Cola successfully attracted a substantial number of new customers. The majority of individuals choose to associate themselves with the brand due to their perception of a personal bond with Coke. Consumers are therefore more inclined to purchase a product as a result of its marketing.

Companies may enhance their profitability by understanding consumer psychology and the factors that influence client purchase behaviour, allowing them to develop creative products and marketing methods. It is crucial to communicate with consumers, prevent disappointments, and most importantly, understand their wishes and objectives, as the saying goes, "customers are always right."

Thus, advertising is a potent instrument in shaping a consumer's buying decision. Therefore, it is imperative that the content is delivered promptly, attention-grabbing, and uncomplicated, since these three attributes collectively enhance its potency.

Nevertheless, there is a contrasting aspect to the influence of advertising on consumer buying behaviour. Despite the positive publicity and the pleasant and calming sensation that Coca-Cola provided, there were additional difficulties related to the impact of advertising on customer buying habits.



CHALLENGES

Although the phrase "advertisement" may appear remarkable, it undeniably has drawbacks and influences on customers and their purchasing habits. As per the American Psychological Association, the typical youngster is subjected to about 40,000 television advertisements annually. Research also indicates that youngsters have the ability to remember the information presented in a commercial after seeing it just once, and they may show a strong inclination to purchase the advertised goods.

Several of these consequences are outlined by Lagudu (2020);

- i. Impact on Consumer Purchasing Decisions
- ii. Consuming excessive amounts of the beverage can lead to the development of eating problems, since many users fail to recognise the negative impact it has on their health. Currently, their whole focus is on the invigorating sensation they experience from it.
- iii. Advertising is one of the causes of childhood obesity. The Rudd Centre for Food Policy & Obesity reports that food firms allocate about \$11 billion each year for television advertising. Due to the impact of these advertisements, consumers are inclined to exhibit a greater desire to purchase and consume unhealthy food and beverages, resulting in an increased prevalence of obesity.
- iv. Impulsive buying is sometimes triggered by persuasive commercials created by brands with the intention of enticing customers to purchase their items. Through frequent exposure to these advertisements, youngsters may be inclined to engage in impulsive purchasing, regardless of whether or not they actually require the goods.

These are only a few examples of the issues that arise from the influence of advertising on consumer buying behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to achieve effective advertising, it is essential to do comprehensive research on the target audience to gain insights into their watching preferences and consumer behaviour.
2. It is possible to build customised communications that really connect with specific consumers. Targeted information may be created by utilising names, preferences, and historical behaviours.
3. It is possible to create interactive marketing that actively engages customers in enjoyable and captivating ways. Contests, challenges, and hashtag campaigns have the ability to stimulate engagement and encourage the act of sharing.



SUMMARY

This research conducted a study on the influence of advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour, specifically focussing on the 'Share a Coke' campaign. According to the research findings, commercials significantly influence customer purchase behaviour. This study aims to assist advertisers in determining the factors that influence consumer purchasing behaviour. They will determine the most effective components of advertisements and identify those with a lesser influence. This research has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the existing body of literature. Qualitative data can be utilised for future research purposes. Qualitative data will offer additional understanding of the correlation between these variables. It has the potential to provide further insights into the correlation between these factors.

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