

Effective Telecom Service Advertisements and Its Influence on Students Buying Behavior in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research study is to find out the effectiveness of Pakistan telecom service advertisements in attracting university students and the factors that influence their buying behavior. The study was quantitative in nature and the methodology of non-probability convenient sampling employed to collect data from 400 respondents from different universities of twin cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The main variables were low-cost, entertainment, convenience/mobility and multimedia services.

The result showed that those telecom service advertisements that hold humorous appeal played their role in attracting consumers. Telecom service advertisements presented in entertaining way affects the consumer purchase decision. Whereas, the respondents has not given more attention to those advertisements that fulfills their daily need easily and have convenience factor in it. Majority of the youngsters have not given much importance to multimedia services as compared to

other factors. Thus from the findings it is concluded that Pakistan telecom service advertisements are effective in attracting consumers and guides their purchase decision.

KEYWORDS

Telecom service advertisements, Low-cost, Entertainment, Convenience/mobility and Multimedia services.

1 INTRODUCTION

In this epoch of globalization and technology, effective advertising is considered as useful tool that influences the consumer buying behavior. Advertisements are one of the substantial ways to promote products as well as services to viewers and potential customers of the society (Ahmad and Arshad 2014). Marketers considered the advertisements as preeminent way to communicate and convince the consumers towards the product,

services or idea. This long lasting tool set product image on consumers mind (Abideen, Farooq and Latif 2011). Television is one of the most influential and powerful communication medium. Because of its powerful effects, advertisers used and relied on television for advertising of their products and services to entice their viewers (Rishante 2014).

Ranges of products are persistently on offer for consumer's attention and consumption. Organizations are using the advertisements to create awareness by facilitating the positive brand image and educating the district benefits and features of offered brand (Ehrenberg, Barnard, Kennedy and Bloom 2002). Advertising are supporting people decision making by possessing the company brand more salient. Effective advertising affects customers and influences them to try the advertised products services (Shimp2007). Brands advertisements demands that consumers persistently making their decisions about the choice of product they wanted to consume and purchase. During this information, searching the purpose of advertisements is to inform, aware and persuade the consumers who did not come to point to take any decision (Ducoffe 1996). Sketching the impact of advertising on consumer's choice suggested two significant advantages. Firstly, it

allowed access to large selection of naturally occurring stimuli. Secondly, it presented a natural observable result of successful persuasion that is the choice of advertised product (Russo and Chaxel 2010).

Advertising can influenced and its effects are well-established (Ailawadey and Neslin, 1998; Tellis, Chandy and Thaivanich 2000). Much written literature studies showed that how people processed information about the available products offers and making the choices in relevant choice situations (Ehrenberg et al. 2002) and increased the chances of purchasing the brands that otherwise difficult to choose (Machleit, Allen and Madden 1993). O'Donohoe (1994) suggested that there are certain uses perceived by the people through means of advertisements. Enjoyment in the form of entertainment, diversion and escapism are the important use that advertisements delivered to the people. The advertisements also do the surveillance role by providing the education as well as allowed the people to get familiar with the product. Leung (2005) talks about market competition of cellular companies offering their SMS rate as low as possible competing with each other in order to attract maximum people. Jun and Lee (2007) stated that people attitudes towards the mobile advertisements

depended on their purpose of using the mobile media. More they used mobile media for specific purpose more their attitudes are favorable towards mobile advertisements. Furthermore, people attitude towards mobile advertisements are directly relating with behavioral intentions for mobile advertisements. Mobility, multimedia services and convenience are two important factors that influenced the public towards the advertisement (Jun and Lee 2007).

There are hardly any researches done in Pakistan about the telecom advertisement effectiveness on university student's purchase decisions. In Pakistan, now in 2016, there are number of telecom companies like Ufone, Warid, Zong, Mobilink and Telenor are producing different advertisements to attract their viewers to catch their specific brand. These cellular companies are continuously putting efforts to prove themselves that they are better services provider and through advertisement, they are presenting their packages details.

There is a point of consideration that how these Pakistan cellular companies' advertisements are affecting the people who are watching these advertisements and helps to make their decision on purchasing that product. Additionally, what factors (Entertainment, Mobility/Convenience,

Low-cost and multimedia services) presenting in the cellular companies advertisements are influencing the people. Pakistan university students are the focus of this article because of the reason that youth are the one who used telecom services more. However, to researcher knowledge; there is no existing study on the relationship between telecom advertisements and university student's choice in the context of Pakistan telecommunication services advertisements in Pakistan.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Now days, there are many Pakistan telecom service advertisements are seen on Television. All these advertisements are competing with each other to grab the attention of viewers especially the youth. It is important to examine the youth perception regarding the factors that influenced them to guide their purchase behavior. This research study deals to find out the Pakistan telecom service advertisements are effective in influencing the buying behavior of university students. In Pakistan there is no such study conducted which focuses on university students thinking about the factors in telecom service advertisements that affected them to buy that telecom brand services.

1.2 Objectives

The main objectives for conducting this research are as follows:

- To find out how much Pakistan telecom service advertisements is playing its strong role in influencing the students purchase decision.
- To investigate the humorous telecom service advertisement are more effective.
- To inspect that those Pakistan telecom service advertisements, which focuses on low cost services, are more effective in influencing the students purchase decisions.
- To observe out either Pakistan telecom advertisings is more effective in influencing the purchase decision as compared to interpersonal communication with friends and family.

1.3 Significance

Article findings will give benefits to the advertisers, advertisement designers and helpful for the advertising agencies to design and presents an effective advertisements. Advertisements producer will come to know about the factors in telecom service advertisements that attracts the attention of youth and guides their behavior to purchase their

services. This article information will be supportive for the new cellular companies who wanted to launch their services in Pakistan and they will come to know about necessary elements that should be included in their advertisements to grab the interest of target audiences. The article will give new light to private cellular companies as well International cellular companies who wanted to start their telecom services in Pakistan.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review for this research study covered the uses and gratification theory used as the base of this article as well as covered the youth perception regarding usage and influencing variables entertainment, mobility/convenience, low cost and multimedia services. This literature also focused on variables affecting the consumer behavior towards advertisements.

Uses gratification theory is a popular approach to understanding mass communication. The theory placed more focus on the consumer or audience instead of the actual message itself by asking, “what people do with media” rather than “what media do with the people” (Katz, 1959). Uses and gratification theory approach developed by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) stated that media users played an active

role in selecting their media and thus goal oriented in media use. The theory assumed that audiences are not passive however took an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory also comprised that that audience is responsible for choosing media to meet their needs. This approach suggested that people used the media to fulfill the specific gratification (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch 1974). Auther (2007) found that mobile phones were vital source of interpersonal communication for the young people. The common feature that all youngsters used were playing with the ringtones, caller screening etc. Along with the other gratification they get from the mobile phones were SMS and MMS. The customers used all these services to stay in connected with their social groups even when they are in their own home or in their other places. The gratification from the cell phones were closely linked to the customary interpersonal communication motives, which included inclusion, relaxation situational control, affection and pleasure.

The primary function that advertising played was to informed the public about the product or service rendered. Advertising also performed public service function by explaining something to the public which the public needs or has right

to know. Today, entertainment is the result of advertising. Persuasive advertising attempted to convince the customer of the merits of buying something is it a product idea or service (Imitiaz 2008). Tsao and Sibley (2004) research showed that advertisement in free papers helped the readers what to purchase and due to this, they used variety of different product and services. Further, level of gratification depended on individual to individual. People moved towards the free paper in order fulfill the needs of information about the product and services from the advertisements.

Brand loyalty created among the users because of their contact with the mobile package advertisements. These advertisements have effects on the user buying decision. The purchasing behavior of the users directly correlated with their exposure to advertisements of different telecom service brands. Furthermore, the users were more satisfied when the advertisements showed the claims based on reality (Mahsud and Yaser 2010).

Leung (2007) studied that the strongest motive behind SMS using was entertainment factor. People also perceived that SMS and MMS as entertainment mode other than mode of communication. Entertainment included ringtone downloading, daily horoscope, news

headlines, weather reports etc. Entertainment factor was the motivation for media mobile media uses. However, this factor has less impact on the consumer's reaction or adoption towards mobile advertisements (Jung and Lee 2007). Entertainment factor affected the consumer's attitudes and this factor able to influenced people towards mobile advertisement. Furthermore, the entertainment has positive and direct influenced on people behavioral intentions of using the service. People considered mobile services advertisement uninteresting and non-entertaining when they compared these advertisements with other media advertisements (Tsang, Ho and Liang 2004). There was positive relationship between entertainment presented in advertisements perceived by young people and their purchasing intentions. People who found SMS advertisements more entertaining than this factor effected their buying decision and purchasing of the services (Alak and Alnawaz 2010).

Leung (2007) stated that frequency of SMS using depended on the convenience and because of easily accessibility of these mobile services, people used SMS during travelling, walking in mall, restaurants etc. Students used the mobile services not only it provides entertainment to them but also for utilitarian purposes (Richard and

Murphy 2006). Phau and Teah (2009) found that convenience factor influenced the young people and they used SMS because they think that it was easy and fast to use. Jun and Lee (2007) stated that convenience and mobility was two important factors that influenced the people towards mobile advertisements. There was positive relationship between perceived usefulness and intentions to participate. Consumers who found the advertisements useful and fulfills their needs they showed more willingness towards such advertisements. Consequently, when the consumers were convinced then they buy that services presented in the advertisements (Alak and Alnawaz, 2010).

Jung & Lee (2007) explained that not only the convenience and mobility factors influenced on the people intentions to attract towards mobile advertisements but there were also multimedia services that attracted the people towards advertisements (Jung and Lee 2007).

There is no literature researches found in Pakistan that focused on Pakistan Telecom service advertisements factors that influences the students that guides their purchase decision. There is knowledge gap exists as there are vast literature written internationally on this area of advertisements

however there is hardly any research studies conducted either internationally or locally found that focused on Pakistani university students factors influences buying behavior of telecom services.

3 METHODOLOGY

The idea behind this specific section is to divulge the rationale for research methodology, methods and strategies adopted in gathering the data for this research study. This particular part also revealed the operationalization of variables data that seeks to investigate the effectiveness of Pakistan telecom service advertisements in influencing the buying behavior of university students.

3.1 Research Design

The study was quantitative in nature and involved a survey from the educated youth of universities in an urban center, as they are the biggest user of television medium. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) quantitative research method is explaining phenomenon by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods. Survey research is one of the best research techniques for describing such population that are too large to observe it directly (Groves 2011).

3.2 Population

After visiting the websites of all major universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi city, a rough estimates population was placed around 100,000 to 150,000 that are undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level students studying in universities. For the sake of this article, the population analyzed comprised of students (both male and female) from the four universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

3.3 Sample

Undergraduate students from each of four universities (International Islamic University Islamabad, Bahria University Islamabad, Fatima Jinnah University Rawalpindi and Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad) were the sample of this research study. This research article employed Non-probability sampling method. Undergraduate students of the selected universities were approached and asked to fulfill out the questionnaires. Four hundred questionnaires were distributed.

3.4 Operationalization of Variables

3.4.1 Low cost

Low cost means at low price. Pakistan Telecom service advertisements are providing the different packages at low rate in

order to grab the attention of maximum people.

3.4.2 Entertainment

Entertainment means form of enjoyment that telecom service advertisements are presenting in different styles and ways to attract the people.

3.4.3 Convenience/Mobility

Telecom service advertisements that focused on the benefits of their services by telling the people about the easy use of their services and the people have easy access to variety of services.

3.4.4 Multimedia Services (MMS)

Telecom services advertisements that included details about multimedia services (sending of messages along with sound files, images, video clips and graphics).

3.5 Data Collection

The researcher after selected the four major universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad went to campuses of these universities approached the students and asked them to fill the questionnaire. The response rate was 100% and the respondents of these universities filled the entire 400 questionnaire.

3.6 Data Analysis

Four hundred questionnaires were distributed and all found valid and completed. Data tabulated by using SPSS to find out the answers of research questions.

4 RESULTS

This particular chapter analyzed the respondent's response through administration of questionnaires.

Total 400 questionnaires were distributed and response rate was 100%. All response rates were included in final analysis. The data was thus compiled revealed that 50% of the respondents were male and 50% were female. The respondent ranged in age from 18 to 23 years old. Out of these, 28% were aged 20 years old, 20% were aged 22 years old, 19% were aged 19, 16% were aged 21, 11% were aged 18 and 6% were aged 23 years old.

Some general questions were asked from the respondents. In order to know which telecom service they were using now days the question was asked about the telecom connection they are currently using. The result showed that 46% of the respondents were using Ufone, 25% were using Telenor, 16% using Warid, 8% were using Mobilink, and only 5% respondents were using Zong. This means that majority

respondents were the Ufone customers and using their services.

Another question was asked from the people that what they are using prepaid connection or postpaid connection or both. The response clearly indicated that 87% of respondents were using prepaid connections, 7% were using postpaid connection while 6% respondents were using both prepaid and postpaid connections.

The question was asked from the respondents about the amount of spending money for recharging their mobile each month. The response from the respondents showed that there were 26% respondents who said that they spends Rs.200 for recharging their mobiles, 26% respondents were said Rs.500, 19% said Rs.300, 17% respondents said Rs.1000 and 12% respondents spends Rs.100 for recharging their mobiles.

Another question was asked from the respondents that which electronic telecom service advertisement they like most now a days. The result showed that 62% respondents like Ufone TV advertisement, 15% respondents like Mobilink, 8% respondents like Telenor, 8% respondents like Warid however only 7% of the respondents like Zong TV advertisement now a days.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked how often they buy any telecom service package because of its advanced multimedia. In response, 33% of the respondents replied that they never buy any telecom service packages because of its advanced multimedia, 31% of the respondents said sometimes, 17% said often, 15% said occasionally and only 4% of the respondents said that they regularly buy any telecom service package because of its multimedia services.

4.1 Research Questions

RQ1: Do telecom service advertisements played a strong role in influencing the customer's purchase decision.

To determine this, respondents were asked that in their opinion telecom service advertisements played a strong role in influencing them to make the purchase decision. Results revealed that majority of students (71%) agreed that telecom service advertisements played an effective role in their lives as it effected their purchase decision of their telecom brand and its services (Table 1). Only few students (5%) were disagreed that telecom service advertising valued them in influencing their choice decision of telecom services (Table 1). Whereas 24% of the respondents remained neutral on the question of Pakistani

telecom service advertisements played a strong role in influencing them to make the purchase decision.

Table 1. Role of Telecom Service Advertisements in Influencing Consumer

Options	N%
Strongly Agree	100 (25)
Agree	184 (46)
Neutral	96 (24)
Disagree	12 (3)
Strongly Disagree	8 (2)

Second question was asked from the respondents that how often the telecom service advertisement do affected their purchasing decision. As indicated in table 2, majority of respondents agreed that telecom service advertisement do affected their buying behavior towards specific telecom brand and their services. Only 26% of respondents said that telecom service advertisement never influenced their purchase behavior of telecom services.

Table 2. Purchasing Decision Affected by Telecom Service Advertisement

Options	N%
Never	104 (26)
Occasionally	56 (14)
Sometimes	172 (43)
Often	48 (12)
Regularly	20 (5)

RQ2: Do telecom service advertisements on electronic media have greatest influence?

To check in which medium telecom service advertisements have strongest influence on university students. To determine this, respondents were asked that telecom service advertisements in which medium influenced them more often. The respondent responses amazed the researcher. Results clearly indicated that telecom service advertisements on TV have the greatest influence. As 67% of students responded that, they telecom service advertisements presented on electronic media (TV) have greatest influence (Table 3). However, 8% students responded print, 20% said internet and only 5% respondents replied that radio was the strongest influencing medium for telecom service advertisements.

Table 3. Influencing Medium of Telecom Service Advertisement

Options	N%
Print	32 (8)
Electronic	268 (67)
Radio	20 (5)
Internet	80 (20)

RQ3: Is advertising more effective in influencing the purchase decision as compared to

interpersonal communication with friends and family?

To find the answer of this research question, two questions were asked from the respondents. Firstly, which source has convinced them to use the specific telecom service they are using now?. As indicated in the result, 43% of respondents said that telecom service advertisements were effective tool that influenced them to use telecom services as compared to friends and family suggestions. Whereas, 32% youth said that friends has given them suggestion to use certain telecom services and they buy it. Only 25% respondents said that their family guided them to purchase the specific telecom service brand.

Table 4. Convincing Source to Use Specific Telecom Service

Options	N%
Advertisements	172 (43)
Family	128 (32)
Friends	100 (25)

RQ4: Are telecom service advertisements, which focus on low cost more effective in influencing the purchase decision?

To find this, respondents were asked that which factor in their opinion affected their service purchase

decision. Results showed in table five that 25% of the respondents said that those telecom service advertisements in which low cost packages details were presented guide and influenced them in their purchase decisions. However, those advertisements in which quality service details were presented 24% of the youth did not think as effective in influencing their buying behavior. While 14% of respondents said wide coverage, 34% said variety of packages details presented in telecom advertisements helped them to decide which telecom services brand they wanted to purchase. Only 3% of respondents answered multimedia services.

Table 5. Factor affects Service-Purchasing Decision

Options	N%
Quality Service	96 (24)
Wide Coverage	56 (14)
Low-cost	100 (25)
Variety of Packages	136 (34)
Multimedia Services	12 (3)

RQ5: Are humorous telecom advertisements more effective?

Researcher main aim was to know that what factors in telecom service advertisements influenced the youth to buy the specific brand services. To verify this, the respondents were

asked that which type of telecom service advertisements appealed most. Results in table 6 clearly revealed that those telecom service advertisements in which advertisers used humorous (entertainment) attraction appeals to youth and represented by 40% of the respondent agreed. While telecom advertisements in which celebrity were used did not attract the youth whereas 36% of youth said that informational telecom advertisements were appealed to them. However, only 3% of respondents agreed that telecom advertisements that focused on multimedia services appealed to them. Respondents (12%) also did not like advertisements in which emotional appeal was used to attract their attention.

Table 6. Type of Telecom Service Advertisements Appeals the Most

Options	N%
Humorous	160 (40)
Emotional	48 (12)
Informational	144 (36)
Celebrity	36 (9)
Multimedia services	12 (3)

5 DISCUSSION

Telecom companies come to know the importance of advertisements now days. It is one of the strongest strategies to reach the target

audiences especially the youth. In recent times, wide variety of advertisements is showing through different media. The role of advertisements in recent era is not only to aware the people about the particular services but also to attract the maximum people towards those specific services. Telecom companies made exciting and interesting advertisements to grab younger audiences to use their particular service. At current times, there is competition going on between different telecom companies that are clearly competing in different mediums. Each telecom companies try to highlight their particular services to attract the maximum people e.g. some are providing low cost SMS packages, others offering new multimedia services while some focuses on the entertainment factor in their advertisements.

The aim of this article was to examine the effectiveness of Pakistan telecom service advertisement in attracting young consumers. The research also focuses on of the Pakistan telecom service advertisements that influence consumer behavior to utilize their services.

After conducting the research, it was found that 100% of youth are using different telecom services and they have knowledge about telecom

companies. The result indicated that majority of youth considered that electronic medium is the strongest medium for telecasting of telecom advertisements. Electronic advertisements is far more effective as it has both audio and video which people can see, listen and understands it in much better way. This is in accordance with research conducted by Ranjbarian, Shaemi and Jolodar (2011) who asserted that TV advertisements are effective. In fact, TV advertisements are successful in taking attention of audiences, creating interest and desire for action and eventually are effective in behavioral change.

Results further revealed that youth was also attracted towards such telecom advertisements that focused on services that ensure convenience and mobility factor and provide the services that assured them of their easy lifestyles. This is in accordance with the research of Jung and Lee (2007) who asserted that convenience and mobility are two vital factors that influenced the people towards mobile advertisements. Similarly, another research conducted by Phau and Teach (2009) showed that convenience factor influenced the younger people and they used SMS because they think that it is easy and fast to used.

Telecom service advertising is more effective in influencing the purchase decision as compared to interpersonal communication with friends and family. Advertisements helped the youngsters to give insight of telecom services offered by different brands. So consumers can easily decide by comparing the offers and these advertisements guided them to decide which services they wanted to choose.

Advertisements that focused on low cost are not much effective in influencing purchase decision. As the respondents were younger generation they feel that sometimes, telecom service packages offered by companies are affordable and they managed all these facilities in their pocket money. Results are from youth oriented response so their purchasing decision is sometimes affected by the telecom services, which provide different packages and facilities but in low cost, which is easily manageable by them in their pocket money. Furthermore, sometimes, youngsters take low cost services as cheaper and fast way of communication, which connects them with other people.

Advanced multimedia services of telecom companies are more expensive and unaffordable by the young generation, so they do not buy or prefer any telecom package that

contains advance multimedia services.

Telecom service advertisements that used humorous appeal are most effective. The acquired results indicated that young people are more attracted towards the advertisements that are entertaining to them and they love to avail their services. Different SMS packages, internet services are presenting in entertaining way and youngsters wants them. This is related to the study conducted by Tsang, Ho and Liang (2004) who argued that consumer attitudes are affected by the entertainment factor and this factor able to influenced much the people attitude towards mobile advertisements. Moreover, the entertainment has positive and direct influenced on the people behavioral intentions of using the service. Other researchers Alak and Alnawaz (2010) found that there is a positive relationship found between entertainment perceived by young people and their purchasing intentions towards such advertisements. People who found SMS advertisements as more entertaining, this entertainment factors affected their decision of buying or purchasing the services. Humorous appeal is one of the advertising appeals used to grab more customers. Advertisers assure to maintain the level of interest by making every advertisement as more

humorous than others make. This is actually helping them to win their customers more. Other than humorous appeal, information is more preferred as it gives the deep insight of the service, its advantages and reason to use the particular service from others. This is related to the research conducted by Haller (1974) who stated that the viewer's not only just take the advertisements as source of information about the product or its feature they also derived pleasure and fun from the way they are being shown.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this article is to examine the effectiveness of telecom service advertisements in attracting consumer and the factors that influenced consumer behavior. The research study was quantitative in nature and the methodology of non-probability convenient sampling was employed to collect the data from 400 respondents from different Pakistani universities. The main variables in the study were low cost, Entertainment, Convenience/ Mobility and Multimedia services. The result showed that telecom service advertisements in which humorous appeal is used play their role in attracting consumers. Telecom service advertisements presented in entertaining way affected the customer decision. Whereas, the respondents did not

give more attention to those advertisements that fulfill their daily need easily and have convenient factor in it. Majority of the youngsters did not give much importance to multimedia services as compared to other factors. Findings approved the fact that advertisements are influencing consumer to make the purchasing decision with reference to telecom services as 71% of the respondents agreed to it. Advertisements are thus, the only source to convey the message and packages information provides the deep insight to the company approach and attitudes towards consumers in general. Therefore, the finding concluded that Pakistan telecom service advertisements are effective in attracting the university students and guides their purchasing decision.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing telecom service companies should pay more focus on entertainment factor in making their advertisements. Entertaining advertisements can increase the number of telecom service users. Even new international telecom companies that are interested in launching telecom service in Pakistan should promote their product through making entertaining advertisement that attracts the new customers especially youth in Pakistan.

Researcher recommended following recommendation for future research in this area of field. Survey methodology was adopted for this article. However, for future research, researchers can use content analysis for further in depth study of this topic. For forthcoming research, detailed interviews can also be taken from different telecom companies and advertising agencies e.g. telecom companies who design telecom ads. It will make the study more focus. The researchers can also do further research by taking a single variable to examine its influence on consumer buying decision e.g. low cost factor can be studied in detail to know how it change the customer attitude to buy certain telecom service.

8 LIMITATIONS

Printed survey was limited to respondents studying in Islamabad and Rawalpindi universities because of researcher's expediency. Finally, the biggest problem researcher faced was the loadshedding because most of research work has done using different computer applications. However, the research is done with great patience. In spite of all the limitations and problems researcher faced in compiling this article, it is an authentic research work.

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