



International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR)

ISSN 2307-4531
(Print & Online)

<http://gssrr.org/index.php?journal=JournalOfBasicAndApplied>



Attitude of Pakistani Consumers towards SMS Advertising

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Abstract

Advertisement through short messaging service SMS is a recent trend in this new era. Pakistan is among those countries where people use mobile phones excessively. Promotional messages which are entertaining, informative, without any irritation and sent by a credible source succeed in getting attention of consumers and help in the formation of favorable attitude. Demographic variables like age, education and gender also effect on the attitude formation of consumers who are exposed to advertisements via SMS's.

Keywords: SMS; Advertisement

1. Introduction

The usage and growth of mobile technology is increasing rapidly. According to of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority 90% of the world population is using mobile services, which was 61% in 2003. According to PTA's annual report Pakistan is emerging in the field of telecommunication. Mobile penetration and growth of telecommunication industry of Pakistan is one of the dynamic economies in the world. Pakistan shows a rapid growth of 120 million subscribers in which 11 million are added in 2012. It also increased the mobile penetration up to 68.5%.The network of Pakistan is assumed to be very strong along with covering 92% of land.

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The cellular companies have access almost every sector and location of Pakistan. In Pakistan, the mobile operators offer attractive packages of voice and SMS tariffs, which include free calls and unlimited SMS. Due to these packages, there is a huge increase in voice and SMS traffic. During the year Of 2012, 277.7 billion, SMS were exchanged by the mobile customers which is 25% more than the previous year [1]. This increasing number attracts many marketers and business man to search an entirely fresh media studied O’Imaie [2]. For this purpose the marketers and businessmen are using short message services (SMS) for advertisement. This fresh opportunity implies the marketers to gain insight of consumer attitude towards SMS advertisement. This limelight of the paper would be on determining the attitude of the Pakistani consumer towards SMS advertisement because this medium is only effective when it is widely acknowledged by consumers. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on the attitude of consumers towards SMS advertisement also SMS advertising is the cheapest way to convey message, promotion or advertisement towards masses and in this field a very little research has been done particularly in Pakistan. The majority of the research has been conducted in foreign countries where there is a difference in culture and acclimatization in telecommunication technology, therefore, may not be applied to Pakistani circumstances.

2. Literature Review

2.1 SMS Advertisement

Frolick and Chen studied that short message services have become very popular in sending messages from business to customers on mobile devices. To enable customers who are interested to obtain more information, many companies and businesses include their text message numbers. This medium enhances the customer relationships by using wireless communications and performs promotional activities and direct marketing [3]. Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy and Scharl studied that mobile Marketing definition which clarifies the concept of this type of advertising is “the use of wireless medium to provide cellphone users with time, location sensitive, personalized information that encourage products, services and ideas, and generates value for all stakeholders [4]. Okazaki et al defined mobile advertising as a short message is those messages that are used to transfer business-to-customer (B to C) messages to mobile device [5].

Tsang, Ho, & Liang’s study stated that certain studies have shown that SMS advertising has significant benefits, and this medium allows businesses to communicate with consumers in real time environment [6]. Kavassalis P presented the research that consumers carry mobile devices with them everywhere and every time, which increase the possibility that the target market will receive the advertisement message [7].

Tsang, Ho and Liang studied the traditional advertising methods cannot attract the young users with agile lifestyles as they are not exposed to it, therefore, SMS advertising is the only medium to capture young consumers. Annica Andersson presented that younger consumers are interested in more frequent advertisement[8].It was shown that achievement of goals of the advertising campaign can be facilitated by that SMS advertisements and the SMS advertising medium, in general.

The major advantage of SMS advertisement is that if efficiently planned and managed it is economical and low

cost. The capacity of the wireless mediums to provide relevant information to targeted customer and attain high response rate among recipients of the advertising which in turn further decreases the cost of SMS advertising is much more effective from traditional mediums of advertising, but it should not be used alone studied by Kavasaalis.

2.2 Consumer Attitude

Fishbein proposed that in marketing and information systems, the research on attitude towards advertisement is a significant concept [9]. Chakrabarty & Yelkur proposed that consumer's attitudes towards advertisements are their tendency to respond to a particular message in a positive or negative way [10]. Similarly, Javid, Namin, & Noorai define, attitudes towards mobile advertising that how consumers react towards a specific mobile advertising in a positively or negatively way [11]. An attitude is one's long-lasting positive or negative assessment, sentiments, and tendencies to act towards some object or idea studied Kotler [12].

Haghirian and Inoue proposed that it is significant in mobile advertising perspective to understand that attitude towards mobile advertising is similar to consumer's attitude towards this advertising medium in general and not to focus to one particular advertisement [13].

Tsang, Ho and Liang studied the consent based advertising is much more unique than traditional irritative advertising; these messages are only sent to those persons who have willingly requested to receive the message about specific product, service, or content. Annica Andersson According to Fishbein Attitude Theory. SMS advertisement of a particular brand is a stimulus that changes consumer value and belief system, which develops a particular consumer attitude towards the advertised brand and influences the consumer opinion to purchase the brand's offerings.

3. Theoretical Framework

Brackett & Carr presented that the framework for the study of attitude of the Pakistani consumer towards SMS advertisements is adopted from model developed by Brackett and Carr which depend upon the model for the study of consumer attitudes towards internet or web advertising and advertising in general [14].

Model proposed by Brackett and Carr determines the attitudes of users towards web advertising is developed on the basis of model of Ducoffe which demonstrates the perceptual predecessors of entertainment, Informativeness and irritation that are used to test consumers' attitudes towards internet advertising[15]. Entertainment, Informativeness, irritation, shown in Figure 1 are the concepts determined in the model suggested by Ducoffe .Other two more concepts namely credibility which is predecessor of consumer attitudes towards an advertisement were studied by MacKenzie & Lutz and appropriate demographic variables such as gender, age, and educational level which can effect consumer attitude towards internet advertising and then mobile advertising [16].

The framework shown in Figure 1 has been used in the previous studies to test consumer attitudes towards SMS advertising proposed by Tsang, Ho, & Liang entertainment, Informativeness, irritation and credibility will be used in this study.

3.1 Entertainment

The sentiments of enjoyment of the consumers while advertising play a major role in the attitude development of the consumer [17]. Entertainment is the ability that satisfies the consumer desires for pastime, deviation, appealing enjoyment, or emotive enjoyment proposed by Ducoffe. Bauer and Hans’s study tested the relationship among consumers’ observed utility of entertainment via mobile marketing and point of view of consumers towards mobile marketing. Consumers’ perceived entertainment utility of mobile marketing has a favorable effect on attitude of consumers towards mobile marketing [18].

The proposed study model to describe the factors that affect the consumer’s attitude towards SMS advertisement is shown in figure 1.

H1: Entertaining advertising messages have an effect on consumer’s attitude towards SMS advertisement.

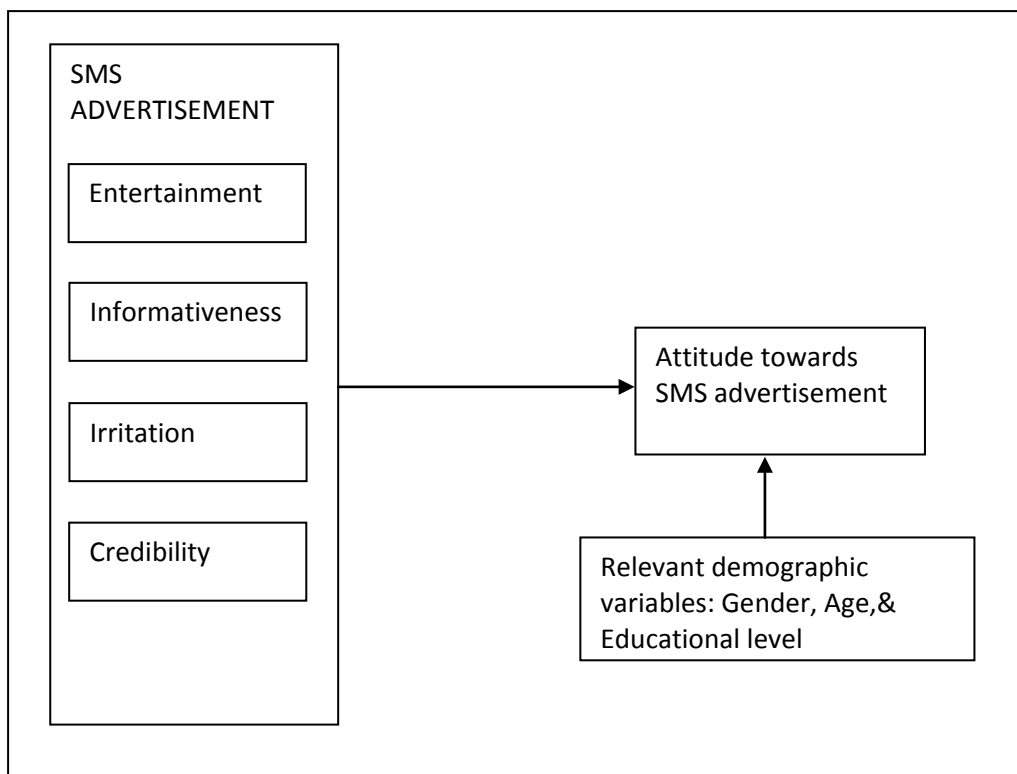


Figure 1: proposed model to describe the factors that affect the consumer’s attitude towards SMS advertisement

3.2 Informativeness

Siau & Shen studied that the Information displayed on websites of companies must be qualitative as it has a major impact and vast effect on the consumer perception about the company and its products similarly,

information having qualitative features like precision, appropriateness, and worth for the consumer must be provided to them via mobile devices [19]. A consumer needs the information quickly on the product that consumer is using or intended to use and information can also be provided to them automatically studied [20].

Informativeness is the capacity of advertising to provide knowledge about the product alternatives so that purchases results in a highly satisfied consumers by Ducoffe. The study of Blanco and Carlos results show that the perceived informativeness of mobile advertising positively effects consumer's attitude towards mobile advertising Based on the literature [21].

H2: Informativeness of advertising message has an effect on consumer's attitude towards SMS advertisement.

3.3 Irritation

When consumer feel Dishonor due to advertisements there attitude towards advertisement greatly changes [22]. Consumers found it as unsolicited and irritating when companies use methods that annoy, irritate, insult, or are excessively controlling said Ducoffe. Consumer attitudes towards SMS advertisements developed by Brackett and Carr hypothetically supports the correlation between consumers' perception of the irritation of an advertisement and consumers' attitudes towards an advertisement said Brackett & Carr.

There exists a negative correlation between consumers' perception of the irritation of an advertisement and consumers' attitudes towards an advertisement said Tsang, Ho, & Liang.

H3: Irritation of advertising message has an effect on consumer's attitude towards SMS advertisement.

3.4 Credibility

MacKenzie & Lutz said that credibility plays a very a significant role in shaping up the attitude of users. The extent to which consumers believe in the claims and promises made by the brand is credibility. Credibility is consumers believe in the truthiness and possibility of making claims happen in reality was studied [23]. Obviousness and fulfillment of implicit and explicit necessities of an agreement is credibility according to Stewart and Pavlou. Different aspects effect the credibility of the advertisement mainly company's credibility and the deliverer of the message proposed [24]. The correlation between the consumer opinion of the credibility of the advertisement and the consumer attitude towards the advertisement is supported by correlation according to the proposed model of Brackett and Carr. Various studies like Haghirian, Madlberger, & Tanuskova have identified that there is a positive relationship between credibility of the advertisement and consumer's attitude towards the advertisement [25].

H4: Credibility of advertising message has an effect on consumer's attitude towards SMS advertisement.

3.5 Age

Usually, people of younger age use mobile phones consistently studied Scharl, Dickinger and Murphy [26]. They use mobile devices as communication devices and also as a fashion [27]. Younger consumers are more comfortable with looking at ads and show more positive attitude towards traditional advertising was explored by Shavitt, Lowrey and Haefner. Although older consumers show a positive attitude towards mobile advertising but they are comparatively more watchful whereas younger consumers show a much more satisfactory attitude towards mobile ads as compared to older ones by Kaasinen. Taking into account these realities we have concluded that younger consumers have more favorable attitude towards mobile advertisement than older consumers.

H5: There is a negative relationship between the age of consumers and the positive attitude towards SMS advertisement.

3.6 Gender

Gender plays a role in developing overall attitude on cell phones. Men and women use and see mobile phones differently studied [28]. Ling has found out that mobile phone plays different roles between genders studied [29]. Males are more likely to show positive attitude towards ads than women studied Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner. Due to very little or no research has been conducted on attitude of genders towards mobile advertisement therefore we come to the only conclusion that there is difference between the attitude of male and female consumers. The following hypothesis can therefore be stated

H6: There is difference between men and women attitude towards SMS advertisement

3.7 Education

With the increase in education level the negative attitude towards mobile advertising also increases was explored by Dedeoglu. These results are also validated by Sarker, who states that the usage and adoption of mobile phones are influenced by the economic conditions. People have more positive attitude towards advertising in general who are less educated and have low income. The following hypothesis can therefore be stated

H7: There is a negative relationship between the education level of consumers and the positive attitude towards SMS advertisement.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

Our research is based on testing of hypothesis; attitude of consumers towards SMS advertisement and its relationships with of SMS advertisement contents (Entertainment, Informativeness, Irritation, and Credibility).

To test the hypothesis a quantitative research method is used. The study setting of our research is field study as there is no manipulation in data collection. The data is collected through structured questionnaires which are designed to provide answers to our research.

4.2 Education

For the purpose of data collection the consumer of age 16 and above from Islamabad who have received SMS advertisement from organizations about products and services on their mobile phone in the past were targeted.

4.3 Sample

The sampling technique that is used to collect the data is convenience sampling. In this study two hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed but only two hundred and thirty seven useable questionnaires were realized.

4.4 Research Tool

For the purpose of our research, primary data was collected by communication via questionnaires which we have personally administered. The complete questionnaire was adopted from the study conducted by studied Zabadi, Shura and Elsayed. To check the face validity of survey questionnaire it was tested with twenty consumers. Furthermore, specialist in the field have validated the questionnaire there remarks were considered in the final questionnaire. The questionnaire consists two parts the initial part includes three questions such as demographic characteristics of respondents, gender, age, and, education level, Similarly, in the second part of the questionnaire 15 items were used to analyze attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement. All items in this study were based on five point Likert scale categorized from (1-strongly disagree) to (5-strongly agree) was used and no items were reverse scored.

4.5 Reliability and Validity

SPSS 20.0 version is used to check the reliability and validity. Chronbach's Alpha values for the items were 0.711 which are considered as reliable and valid.

TABLE 1# Chronbach's Alpha

Chronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.711	15

5. Results and Discussion

Respondents are categorized on the basis of gender, age, education level. Total number of respondents was 237. The statistics according to gender are, 62.4% (n =148) were males, while the other half 37.6% (n =89) were

females. Categorization of respondents on educational terms are, about 55.7% (n =132) were post graduate. The majority of the participants were between the ages of 16-22 years old 45.6% (n = 108) and 23-29 years old 35.9% (n=85). The attitude of consumers was analyzed by regression analysis which show that the all the independent variables have less impact on consumer’s attitude towards SMS advertising. The R² value is 0.533. The R² value shows that there exists 53.3% effect on attitude towards SMS advertisement.

Table 2 #Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.716 ^a	.533	.159	1.10444

a. Predictors: (Constant), Credibility, Irritation, Entertainment, Informativeness

b. Dependent Variable: ATT

Independent variables entertainment and Irritation do not cast any impact on attitude of SMS advertisement in Pakistani context. The significant values of these two variables are 0.240 and 0.347 respectively. These values are greater than .05 (p value> .05) hence they are rejected. The line of regression is $Y = \alpha + \beta X$. For every one unit value increase in the Informativeness of SMS advertisement, consumer attitude towards SMS advertisement changes by 0.328. $Y = 0.827 + 0.328X$. The results gained after putting the value of credibility are that for every one unit value increase in the credibility of SMS advertisement, consumer attitude towards SMS advertisement changes by 0.447. $Y = 0.827 + 0.447X$.

Table 3# Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.827	.518		1.597	.112
Entertainment	.107	.091	.080	1.178	.240
Informativeness	.328	.122	.195	2.678	.008
Irritation	-.127	.135	-.062	-.943	.347
Credibility	.447	.114	.268	3.935	.000

a. Dependent Variable: ATT

The first hypothesis stated the relationship between attitude and entertainment. The results of hypothesis test are shown in Table 4. The value of p is 0.240, which is greater than 0.05 which nullifies the hypothesis. The results show that in Pakistani context there exists no relationship among entertainment of ad and attitude formation.

Second hypothesis stated the relationship between Informativeness and attitude formation of consumers. The significant value is 0.008 which is below the required p value of .05. Hence it came out that there exists a significant relation between these it is concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between Informativeness and attitude towards SMS advertisement. The correlation coefficient R of the test shows that there is a positive relationship between Informativeness and attitude towards SMS advertisement (0.297)

The significant value of third hypothesis, that stated there is a relation between irritation and attitude development, is 0.34. This value is larger than 0.05, which nullifies the hypothesis. Due to this result this hypothesis got rejected.

Table 4# Correlations

		Entertainment	Informativeness	Irritation	Credibility	ATT
Entertainment	Pearson Correlation	1	.352**	.065	.418**	.257**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.161	.000	.000
	N	237	237	237	237	237
Informativeness	Pearson Correlation	.352**	1	.424**	.374**	.297**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	237	237	237	237	237
Irritation	Pearson Correlation	.065	.424**	1	.133*	.061
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.161	.000		.020	.174
	N	237	237	237	237	237
Credibility	Pearson Correlation	.418**	.374**	.133*	1	.367**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.020		.000
	N	237	237	237	237	237
ATT	Pearson Correlation	.257**	.297**	.061	.367**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.174	.000	
	N	237	237	237	237	237

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Hypothesis (H4) is proven by the results shown in the table 4 the Sig. (1-tailed) value is .000 as this value is above the required cut-off of .05, it is concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between credibility and attitude towards SMS advertisement. The correlation coefficient R of the test shows that there is a positive relationship between credibility and attitude towards SMS advertisement (0.367)

Hypothesis form 5 to 7 dealt with the demographics of the consumers of Pakistan. These hypotheses were not supported. There exists a negative relationship between the age of consumers and the positive attitude towards SMS advertisement says hypothesis 5. This hypothesis got rejected due to its significant value which is 0.476, which is shown in table 3 is greater than 0.05. Hence it is concluded that age does not affect the attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement. There exists a difference between men and women attitude towards SMS advertisement. The significant value of this relationship is 0.237 which is larger than 0.05 which nullifies this hypothesis. The value is shown in table 3.

Hypothesis 7 is also rejected as its significant value which is shown in table 3 is 0.071, which are greater than 0.05. Therefore it is concluded that education level does not affect the attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement

The results of hypothesis test shows that the Informativeness and credibility have positive correlation with the attitude of SMS advertisement however entertainment and irritation does not affect attitude of consumers towards SMS advertisement.

6. Limitations

This study has provided a better understanding of attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement and the factors that influence the consumer attitude. While this theory is generalized over whole population these limitations must be considered and which can provide the direction for new researches.

The first limitation for this research is a relatively small sample size i-e two hundred and thirty seven sample were collected using non probability sampling from the city of Islamabad and this limitation create hurdles to generalize and apply the findings of this study on the whole population. Secondly in this study data were collected by convenience sampling technique from universities and few offices of Islamabad. Mostly respondents of this study are young. The third and one of the important limitations of this study is that our study didn't include the problem of permission based SMS advertisement.

The last limitation of the study is that we have only measured overall attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement by using one item therefore it may not be very accurate measurement of attitude towards SMS advertisement.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to determine the effect of the four factors namely entertainment, Informativeness, irritation and credibility, of SMS advertisement that influence consumer's attitude towards SMS advertisement. This study also aims to find out the effect of relevant demographics variable such as age, gender and education level, on attitude of SMS advertisement [31].

This study has found that male and female have same attitude towards SMS advertisement these results validates the findings of Javid, Namin, & Noorai which shows that there is no significant difference between attitude of SMS advertisement of male and female. Also the demographic variables such as education level and age do not affect the attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisements.

In the previous researches of Javid et al and Zabadi et al it is shown that entertainment is highly correlated with the attitude towards SMS advertisement and irritation is negatively correlated But in contrast to these findings the empirical data shows that attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement don't have any effect of Entertainment and irritation of SMS advertisement.

In Pakistani context the major factors that influence attitude towards SMS advertisement are credibility and informativeness of SMS advertisement Therefore our study propose a new model for attitude towards SMS advertisement which include informativeness and credibility as predictors of attitude towards SMS advertisement and do not include entertainment and irritation

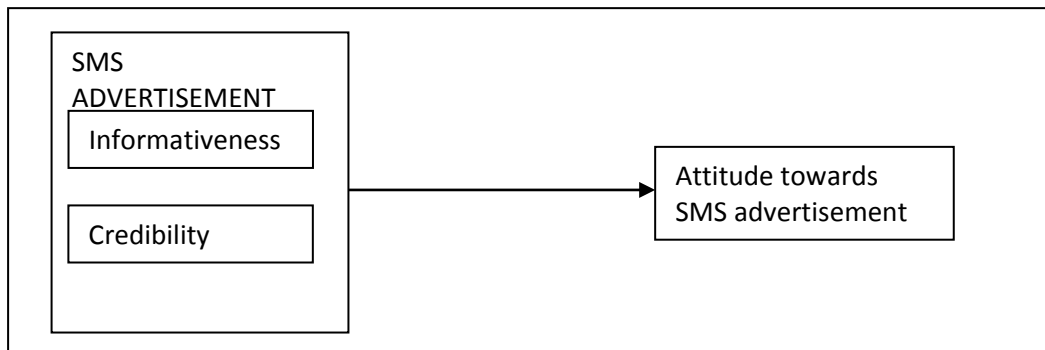


Figure 2: characteristics of SMS advertisement that influence attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement

Figure 2 shows that informativeness and credibility are two major characteristics of SMS advertisement that strongly influence attitude of Pakistani consumers towards SMS advertisement therefore marketers needs to develop SMS advertisement on the basis of above mentioned two characteristics Although SMS advertisement can attract larger no. of consumers but only if it contain rich and realistic information in the SMS advertisement. Therefore marketers will have to face new challenges in the future.

8. Directions For Future Research

The current study result proposes that, larger sample of respondents could be used by future researchers by using random sampling techniques to select respondents for the study. As we have measured overall attitudes towards SMS advertisements on a single item scale Future researchers should design a new measurement tool, which include more items of attitude towards SMS advertisement It is an astounding fact that majority of the population are among 16-29 age groups .Therefore future researchers could use a broad sample of consumers which comprises of different age groups. Another factor that must be considered for future researches is permission base marketing such as to send SMS advertisement to only those people who are willing to accept it.

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