

University Student's Attitude Towards Mobile Advertising in Pakistan: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Prior studies for mobile marketing have been carried out in many parts of the world but there is not any particularly for Pakistan. This paper is an attempt to evaluate the attitudes towards the flourishing phenomenon of mobile marketing in Pakistan. The research will be important for the markets and the organizations intending for mobile marketing. Pakistani youth has shown that gender and house hold income levels have no impact on the liking or disliking of the phenomena. This has been proved by the application of the Chi-Square test on the data gathered from these university students. The second significant observation is that of the impact of mobile marketing on the irritation to the consumer and the brand image that these consumers tend to develop. In first case it is shown that there is no irritation to the consumer and the second case shows that there is a negative impact on the brand image of the product/service.

Index terms—

Abstract -Prior studies for mobile marketing have been carried out in many parts of the world but there is not any particularly for Pakistan. This paper is an attempt to evaluate the attitudes towards the flourishing phenomenon of mobile marketing in Pakistan. The research will be important for the markets and the organizations intending for mobile marketing. Pakistani youth has shown that gender and house hold income levels have no impact on the liking or disliking of the phenomena. This has been proved by the application of the Chi-Square test on the data gathered from these university students. The second significant observation is that of the impact of mobile marketing on the irritation to the consumer and the brand image that these consumers tend to develop. In first case it is shown that there is no irritation to the consumer and the second case shows that there is a negative impact on the brand image of the product/service. The discipline of marketing has already been researched on massively in the past decades considering its various dimensions and subjects. With the explosion of technological innovation and invention of gadgets majorly handheld devices, this arena of study concerning the demographics, psychology, religion and socio-economy of humans while dealing with them in order to properly introduce a product, emergence of several other tactics and new aspects have also evolved. One such example is of "mobile marketing". The literature on this very phenomenon has revealed many interesting outcomes depending upon the geography, age, gender, income and other such elements relating to humans with mobile phones. This area of research has considered people of countries which have a large population i.e. China and Japan or countries with an impressive economy. The studies conducted earlier have also manifested the general attitude towards mobile advertising depending on the nature and preferences of that particular country hence in general a comment or result cannot be deduced. There is availability of a number of research articles regarding mobile advertising encompassing studies relating to its effect on the consumer attitude and its relation with the consent of the customer. The research also deals with the emphasis on the linkage between the attitude and behavior of the consumers.

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such study is carried out by Melody M.Tsang, Shu-Chun Ho and Ting-PengLian (2004). Literature concerning innovation in mobiles such as "smart phones" and the new ways of reaching to the consumers by the marketers have also been discussed by Ajax Persaud, IrfanAzhar (2012) have shown the reaction of the consumers on marketing techniques via smart phones supported applications. The study depicts that consumers have begun to adore such tactics based on their shopping style, brand trust and value. ChanakaJayawardhena, Andreas Kuckertz, HeikkiKarjaluto, TeemuKautonen (2009) have focused on the four factors (i.e.) stimulating permission for mobile advertising. They found that with the extension of familiarity among the consumers of mobile marketing, there is a reduction in the persuasiveness in perceived control on permission. A dimension of heightening the value offered by mobiles in the minds of the consumers through mobile marketing is researched on by Lynda Andrews, Judy Drennan and Rebekah Russell-Bennett (2012). The results have shown that mobile marketing strategies can greatly enhance the value being offered to the consumers through their mobiles. Tao (Tony) Gao, Fareena Sultan and Andrew J. Rohm (2010) have identified factors that can motivate along with the identification of repellents of mobile marketing centering Chinese youth. Adoption of mobile advertising by the MNC's detecting factors influencing the decision making process of these multinationals for mobile advertising is considered by Shintaro Okazaki (2005) in his article "Mobile advertising adoption by multinationals: Senior executives' initial responses". The study has shown unlikelihood in such a method of marketing in Japan whereas American companies show inclination towards the adoption of mobile advertising. Fiona Jenkins, (2006) in her article concerning mobile marketing to young consumers from age 5-24, has given emphasis on giving to the point, relevant and less jargoned messages for better and impulse buying behavior induction among the young consumers. Anne de Kerckhove, (2002) not only suggests integration of text, voice and image for a better mobile marketing campaign but also stresses on the regulations and compliance required on the content of the message. She writes about the need of awakening the sense of responsibility among the organizations involved in launching advertising through mobile phones. Mitch McCasland, (2005), has given his views on the utilization of mobile marketing for marketing to the millennial. According to him by effectively marketing to the youth the brand loyalty for life can be attained. Youth feel belonged to their hand held devices mainly mobile phones as they are a medium of communication with their peers and staying connected with whatever they feel comfortable with. The heavy usage of mobile phones is hence one of the most favorable ways of advertising to the young consumers (Andrew Jones, 2002).

Our research paper hence focuses on carrying out a research in a country like Pakistan which is a developing country and is going through a very crucial time in reference to its economy which has depicted high inflation and major shortage of electricity, gas, irrigation water along with floods and bad effect of terrorism and its war against terrorism. Thinking and attitudes of people of this country are therefore changed and a study on how are the consumers now reacting to certain technologically assisted marketing technique is a left out gap in the area of study to be fulfilled. This paper thus, focuses on carrying out a research to evaluate the attitude of consumers to mobile marketing. This will encompass; identifying the effect on the brand image or the advertiser, irritation caused by such messages even if they are being sent by the consent of the recipient. Pakistan shows a very large chunk of the population using mobile phone devices and marketers are over seeing a dimension which is cheaper and can even earn economies of scale to the company.

The paper begins with the description of the data and methodology then will be the findings and lastly a conclusion will be made to summarize the entire research.

Data has been collected randomly majorly from the youth studying in the universities. This research is questionnaire based with a sample size of 175 in total. The collection of data is convenience based and the questionnaires were distributed randomly to the ones available and willing to fill them. The questionnaire had 48 questions out of which 45 followed the Likert Scale. The data is collected from the university students coming from almost all parts of the country representing major cities of Pakistan. These students are majority from age 20-30. The significance level decided to run the Chi-Square test is 0.05.

The questions were designed keeping in mind the hypothesis which was to identify how gender and income affect the attitudes of the consumers towards mobile marketing in Pakistan. We have evaluated the attitude of the consumers in reference to the irritation caused by marketing messages and the brand image of the brands opting for mobile marketing as a medium of advertising.

There is a reliability test that is also applied on the data to know as to what degree the questions asked from the consumers are relevant enough to determine the attitude toward mobile marketing. The test executed to know that the questions asked to determine preference hence determining the attitude reveal a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.792 this is 79.2%. This paper attempts to examine the attitude of the youth of Pakistan towards mobile marketing which is now a days a booming and an inexpensive channel of marketing products and services to the customers. This study is also concerned to the comprehension of two other objectives. One is to know whether sending marketing messages to the consumer causes any irritation or not. Second aim is to establish whether companies opting for mobile marketing have any negative impact on the brand image.

The hypothesis developed to measure the preference which then determines the attitude of the youth of Pakistan is regarding the measurement of the preference of mobile marketing with respect to gender and house hold income level. Below is the hypothesis which will be followed by the illustration in the form of Chi-Square Chart.

1 Hypothesis : Gender and income level affects the attitude toward mobile marketing

This hypothesis is based on two aspects one is gender and the other is income, hence, the chi-square test is run first on the gender to evaluate its effect and then it is applied on the factor of household income to know its influence. The level of significance at which the test is executed is 0.05. Chi-Square test for gender given in Fig. ?? reveals that the Chi-Square value is .761 which in comparison to 0.05 is extremely high. The study vividly unravels that there is no association of gender with the effect on the attitude towards mobile marketing.

2 Chi-square test for gender and preference for mobile marketing

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Therefore, when there is a talk about marketing products/services through mobile messages both the genders will react in a similar way. It cannot be deduced or assumed that females in comparison to males will have an impact on their attitude towards mobile marketing and vice versa. The table given in Fig. ?? is related to the evaluation of the attitude of the students of Pakistan with respect to the household income level. The test conducted to asses is again Chi-Square test where the level of significance is 0.05. The p-value in the table of Fig. ?? shows a value of 0.253. This value establishes that there is no effect of household income on the attitudes of the consumers. Organizations or marketers planning to use mobile advertising might consider this study that people at this age are the ones that don't earn for themselves they are students who are mostly just studying. Very few of these students earn for their living. A message that is sent to them for free will have no impact on their attitude. The behavior later on may be effected which means that these students may want to buy the product/service or avail the offer might not be carried out if they don't have enough money with them.

4 CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR INCOME AND PREFERENCE FOR MOBILE MARKETING

As stated earlier there are two objectives of this research other than the hypothesis explained above. We will now discuss these objectives and their assessment in detail.

The objectives are (i) to know whether irritation is caused by mobile messages, and (ii) to know the impact on the brand image of the organizations choosing mobile marketing for their products/services. Below are bar charts giving in percentage the view of the youth regarding the irritation caused by these messages and the impact on the brand image by sending these messages. We have seen that in South East Asia specifically Pakistan, there is a chaos and mental distress due to terrorism, inflation, lesser job opportunities, floods, electric and gas load shedding. These factors are alone enough to change the attitudes, likes, dislikes and preferences to a great extent. To know how people with such a mental state would react to mobile marketing is mandatory.

The chart below is related to the factor of irritation and the response given by university youth. This clearly shows that 41.3% of youth disagrees to the statement that they feel irritated on receiving mobile marketing messages. Whereas, 29.7% of them agree to the statement which is that they do get irritated. The rest 29.1 are the ones who are indifferent about it and have no certain view. The percentages depict that a majority of the youngsters believe that they are ok with the mobile advertising messages and they have no problem in receiving them anyway. This may be suggested that since mobile marketing is an economical way of reaching to the customer, the items that are subject to youth may use this method of marketing.

5 I feel irritated to receive any mobile marketing message

The second objective of this research is to know the impact on the brand image of products/services using mobile marketing. The graph given in fig. 4 illustrates an interesting and important finding. 62.1% of the youth say that using mobile advertising has a negative impact on the brand image of the product/service. They believe that these products/services or the organization is substandard or inferior in comparison to the rest not using mobile marketing.

37.9% of the youngsters of Pakistan believe that it does not have any impact on the brand image and they don't tend to make a negative image of the brand. These studies can greatly help the marketers planning to select mobile marketing in Pakistan in particular to target youth, they may not use this medium of marketing as a large chunk of these young people show a negative attitude towards the brands which are advertised through SMS. The studies conducted previously have been carried out to know the consumer attitude and then depicting their behavior and some have also been discussed the factors such as the general attitude towards mobile marketing and the trends over the years. Our study is different as it is the one carried out for Pakistan's youth; furthermore we have tried to evaluate some other aspects such as irritation and the effect on the brand image.

The data collected from 175 students of the universities have shown important findings regarding the attitude of the consumer. The hypothesis which said that "age and income affects the attitude toward mobile marketing"

5 I FEEL IRRITATED TO RECEIVE ANY MOBILE MARKETING MESSAGE

was proven to be rejected as there is no marked or substantial influence of both these factors on the attitude of the consumer. This conclusion has been deduced from the chi-square test carried out in fig. ?? and fig. ?? for gender and income levels respectively.

The objective of the paper, to know what do consumers feel i.e. whether they get irritated of a mobile marketing message or not has shown a trend towards not getting irritated. As earlier studies have tend to show, carried out in the other parts of the world that there is a trend of not liking these kinds of marketing tactics and marketing in general, are different for the youth in Pakistan.

Second objective concerning impression on the brand image have depicted that there is a large proportion of these students who consider such brands as the ones which are inferior. This data is shown in fig. 4 where it is in the form of a bar chart and the data is given in percentages.

To conclude it can be said that though gender and income levels have no impact on the preference for a mobile marketing message, also it doesn't tend to irritate much of the youth as well but the image of the brand tends to change in a negative way. This importing finding will surely make the marketers and the organizations to think and re-think over the decision of marketing through a mobile phone SMS service. ^{1 2}



Figure 1:

Falah Riaz

[Note: ?, Saad Ullah Khan ? & Muhammad Akram Naseem ?]

Figure 2:

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