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THE EFFECTS OF CONSUMER'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ADVERTISEMENT ON CONSUMER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD BRAND: THE ROLE OF BRAND FAMILIARITY

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Abstract

Advertising still plays an important role in influencing consumer attitude and also builds positive attitudes towards the brand, therefore, companies still spend huge budgets on advertising because of its importance. Many previous studies used the variables of attitude toward advertising and attitude toward the brand because of their strong connection to each other. This theoretical study attempts to use them to determine the effect of consumer's attitude toward advertising on consumer's attitude toward the brand when variable of brand familiarity play as a moderator. This study will use communication theory, and elaboration likelihood model (ELM) as predictor to explain the relationship between variables. Also, try to put some propositions serve the aim of this study.

Keywords: Advertisement, Prior Attitude towards Brand, Attitude towards Advertisement, Attitude towards Brand, Brand Familiarity



INTRODUCTION

In trying to understand what triggers consumer's behavior, the role of attitude has been explored by many researchers on which its importance has already been acknowledged. Today, research on attitude has been expanded to include attitude that relates to product advertisements and brands found in the marketplace as can be found in consumer behavior and communication literature. Consumer's attitude towards one object for instance is said to affect his/her attitudes towards another object with which it is associated. As Hoyer et. al. (1997) explain, consumer's liking and affection of an advertisement (the liking can be due to any reason or reasons known to) will eventually be transferred to the product's brand.

In this study, we attempt to investigate if consumers' attitude towards advertisements that they are exposed (Aad) to have an influence over their attitude towards brand (Ab). Although previous studies have found linkages amongst the three variables (Aad-Ab), the said relationships were found to be casual in nature. Another reason for why this study is conducted is because previous studies focus only on developed countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the attitude toward advertising constitutes a measurement of the effectiveness of advertising in the distinct media (Falcao et al., 2020). Many studies considered attitude towards advertisement (Aad) as the main input of attitude towards brand (Ab) they found out that the relationship was strong and direct between these two variables (e.g. Gardner, 1985; Gresham, 1985). Prior attitude towards brand (PAB) plays as a function and representative of brand familiarity which plays as moderating variable in the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) and the following sections will discuss the relationship between these variables:

Attitude towards Advertisement and Attitude toward Brand

Attitude is an individual's internal evaluation of an object such as a branded product, and has been an important concept in marketing research since 1960s. There are two major reasons for this long-term interest. First, attitudes are often considered relatively stable and enduring predisposition to behave in particular way (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Consequently, they should be useful predictors of consumers' behavior towards a product or service. Second, social psychology has provided several theoretical models of the attitude construct; especially

through studies by Fishbein and Ajzen (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) that have stimulated much of attitudinal research in marketing.

Attitude also has been defined as “relatively global and enduring evaluation of an object, issue, person, or action” (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997). Oskamp (1991) cited from Wu (1999) stated that there are many academic writers and researchers who have written on attitude dimensions. Most of them indicated that attitude is considered as a good predictor to understanding consumers’ intentions and behaviors.

Previous studies have referred attitude towards specific dimensions such as attitude towards advertiser (Lutz, 1985), attitude towards advertisement and attitude towards brand (Rajeev et al., 1986). The present study is focusing on two of them, which are, (Aad) and (Ab).

Attitude towards advertisement (Aad) has been defined as a predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure situation (Mackenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986; Biehal, Stephens & Curlo, 1992). (Ab) is defined as a predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular brand after the advertising stimulus has been shown to the individual (Phelps & Hoy, 1996). Previous studies indicated that (Aad) and (Ab) are not considered as one variable as they are different from each other, and had been used as separated variables (e.g., Goldsmith et al., 2000; 2002; Wahid & Ahmed, 2011; Ahmed & Wahid, 2012). The difference between the both (Aad) and (Ab) is very clear as appeared from their definitions above.

It is understood that messages in advertisements affect the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab), specifically when consumers are unfamiliar with the advertised brand due to their lack of prior knowledge on which to base their (Ab). Thus, they are more likely to rely on (Aad) in forming an (Ab). Consumers with prior brand familiarity, by contrast, are more likely to draw on their existing brand knowledge, attenuating the influence of attitude towards specific advertisement (Aad) on (Ab). Therefore, the effect of (Aad) on brand evaluations should be greater when the advertisement is for an unfamiliar rather than a familiar brand (Machleit & Wilson, 1988; Machleit & Madden, 1993; Campbell & Keller, 2003).

Hence, there is a general agreement shows that (Aad) affects (Ab) when unfamiliar brands are tested. But when brand familiarity is tested, the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) is different and next section will explore the relationship.

Brand Familiarity

Brand familiarity is defined as individual's familiarity with a brand on which if a person is familiar with the brand, then the familiarity will reduce the need for external information. Whereas the unfamiliarity with the brand will increase such need (Oliver & Bearden 1985).

Prior attitude towards brand (PAB) is considered as a function of brand familiarity, so, it plays an important role in changing the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) and making it significant or insignificant. Previous studies used (PAB) as a moderator between (Aad) and (Ab) (e.g., Machleit and Wilson 1988; Phelps & Hoy, 1996). Thus, (PAB) refers to individual's response to the brand before being exposed to the advertising stimulus (Phelps & Hoy, 1996).

If a consumer has a positive (Aad), he would directly or indirectly form a positive (Ab) that is available in the advertisement. Previous studies also confirm that (Aad) has a strong relationship with (Ab) and this is consistent with DMH, which stresses direct and indirect relationships between (Aad) and (Ab) (Shimp & Gresham, 1985; Mackenzie & Belch, 1986; Brown & Stayman, 1992).

The primary focus of the earlier literature has been on assessing the effects of (Aad) on (Ab) and evidence from previous studies strongly supports a positive relationship between the constructs (Machleit & Wilson, 1988). Furthermore, previous studies have primarily focused on attitude towards advertising of unfamiliar or hypothetical brands. This was particularly true, in the early 1980s, where there have been many studies that had demonstrated an association between attitude towards advertising and attitude towards brand by using unfamiliar or hypothetical brands. However, by the end of the 1980s, subsequent studies had included both familiar and unfamiliar brands to provide more insight into the differences in response that are elicited by familiar and unfamiliar brands (Machleit & Wilson 1988; Machleit, Madden & Allen, 1990).

Attitude towards Advertisement (Aad) and Attitude towards Brand (Ab) when Brand Familiarity is tested

(Aad) and (Ab) may be expected to be more divergent in the case of familiar versus unfamiliar brands (Campbell & Keller, 2003). It is understood that messages of advertisement affect the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab), especially when consumers are unfamiliar with a brand. This could be due to their lack of prior knowledge about the brand on which to base their attitude towards the brand. Therefore, we could conclude that, firstly, consumers are more likely to rely on attitude towards advertising before forming their attitude towards the brand.

Consumers with prior brand familiarity, by contrast, are more likely to draw on their existing brand knowledge, attenuating the influence of attitude towards the specific advertisement on attitude towards the brand. Therefore, the effect of (Aad) on (Ab) should be greater when the advertisement is for an unfamiliar rather than a familiar brand (Machleit & Madden 1993; Machleit & Wilson, 1988; Campbell & Keller, 2003). Hence, there is a general agreement that (Aad) affects (Ab) when unfamiliar brands are tested (Batra & Ray, 1985; Phelps & Hoy, 1996). Table 1 summarizes the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) when unfamiliar brand is tested as follows:

Table 1. Relationship between Attitudes towards Advertising (Aad) –
Attitude towards Brand (Ab) When Unfamiliar Brand Is Tested

| Study | Aad-Ab Relationship | Result |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Campbell & Keller (2003) | Direct relationship | Significant |
| Homer (1990) | Indirect, through brand cognition. | Significant |
| Machleit & Sahni (1992) | Direct relationship | Significant |
| Homer & Yoon (1992) | Direct relationship | Significant |
| Biehal & Stephens & Curlo (1992) | Direct relationship | Significant |

On the other hand, there is a disagreement as to whether (Aad) influences (Ab) for familiar brands or when they use brand familiarity as a moderator between (Aad) and (Ab) (Gresham & Shimp, 1985; Phelps & Hoy, 1996). Thus, prior attitude towards brand (PAB) is assumed to be playing an important role in changing the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) and makes it a significant or insignificant relationship. Phelps and Thorson (1991), and Edell and Burke (1986), found a significant (Aad-Ab) relationship for familiar brands. On the contrary, Machleit and Wilson (1988), and Madden and Allen (1990) did not find any significant Aad-Ab relationship for familiar brands. In addition, Phelps and Hoy (1996), and Laroche, Kim and Zhou (1996), found that (Aad) has significant effect on (Ab) for both familiar and unfamiliar brands. Moreover, Phelps and Thorson (1991) found a significant (Aad) on (Ab) relationship for familiar brand. In addition, Gresham and Shimp (1985), found significant effects of (Aad) on (Ab) for only six of fifteen familiar brands. Machleit and Wilson (1988), and Madden and Allen (1990), however, did not find any significant effect of (Aad) on (Ab) when brand familiarity is tested.

Table 2. Relationship between Attitudes towards Advertising (Aad) –
Attitude towards Brand (Ab) When Familiar Brand Is Tested

| Study | Aad – Ab Relationship (when Brand Familiarity is tested) | Results |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Gresham & Shimp (1985) | Found significant effects of (Aad) on (Ab) for only six of 15 familiar brands. | Significant and Insignificant |
| Edell & Burke (1986) | Found no role of (PAB) as moderator in the relationship between (Aad-Ab). | Insignificant |
| Machleit & Wilson (1988) | Did not find significant relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) for familiar brands. | Insignificant |
| Madden & Allen (1990) | Did not find significant (Aad-Ab) relationship for familiar brands. | Insignificant |
| Phelps & Thorson (1991) | Found a significant (Aad-Ab) relationship for familiar brands. | Significant |
| Laroche, Kim & Zhou (1996) | Found that (Aad) has significant effect on (Ab) for both familiar and unfamiliar brands. | Significant |
| Phelps & Hoy (1996) | Found that (Aad) has significant effect on (Ab) for both familiar and unfamiliar brands. | Significant |

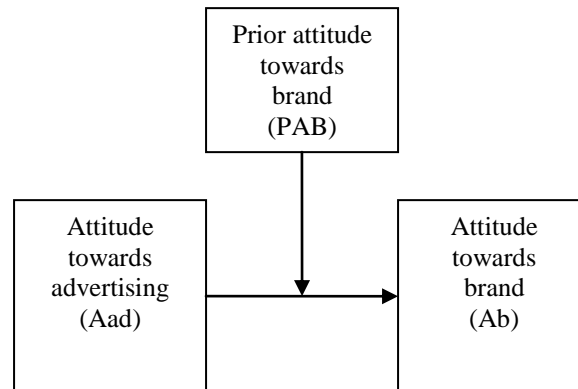
To sum up, there is a general agreement that (Aad) affects (Ab) when unfamiliar brands are tested (Batra & Ray, 1985). Likewise, there is a disagreement as to whether (Aad) influences (Ab) for familiar brands. Phelps and Hoy (1996) suggested that the strength of the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab) may be moderated by a number of factors (e.g., brand familiarity). Their suggestion is based on the contradictory findings of earlier works, and it seems clear that additional study of the moderating effects of brand familiarity and prior brand attitude is needed. Therefore, Machleit and Wilson (1988) and Phelps and Hoy (1996) used brand familiarity as a moderator in their studies of relationship between attitude towards advertising and attitude towards brand. Further, Machleit and Wilson (1988) have cited Edell and Burke (1986) which offered preliminary evidence to support the moderating role of brand familiarity in the (Aad – Ab) relationship. In order to reexamine the use of “brand familiarity” as a

moderator in the relationship between (Aad) and (Ab), thus, the present study made use of (PAB) as a moderator.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on what above-mentioned, this framework has been developed for the study.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework



CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine a conceptual framework, create a positive attitude towards brand by building positive consumer's attitude towards advertisement and to enhance the role of brand familiarity. In addition, the study tries to illustrate the moderating role of brand familiarity between attitude towards advertisement and attitude towards brand. If the study were applied in practice in the future by one of the researchers, the results will inform the company managers how to use attitude towards advertisement well in the long term to improve the concept of brand attitude. In addition, the study will give the researchers idea about the moderating role of brand familiarity.

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