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INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS TEXT MESSAGE ADVERTISING (CASE STUDY: MCI MOBILE SUBSCRIBERS IN SANANDAJ CITY)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between the demographic factors and the factors affecting the attitude towards text message advertising. The research population in this study consisted of all mobile subscribers in Sannadaj city, including 1140000 subscribers till 2015 according to Telecommunication administration report. 400 questionnaires were distributed according to the Cochran formula by random sampling. The study is an applied research in terms of objectives and is descriptive, based on correlation analysis, in terms of methodology. Also, data are collected based on a survey through questionnaires. The results showed that there is no significant difference between the attitudes towards advertising based on demographic variables and responses and views of respondents on the basis of age and gender in terms of exciting, informative, annoying and credibility. Furthermore, there is a significant difference among groups of respondents with different levels of education in terms of exciting, informative, annoying and credibility towards advertising

Keywords: Mobile phones, MCI, Attitude, Text message, Purchase

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, advertising has become a part of modern life and the quantity of advertising appeared in the mass media shows the growing and upward trend in this area. Advertising today is an integral part of social and economic systems known as a critical communication system for customers, as well as for the company. Advertising allows the company to send its message in the best way possible (Sadegh Vaziri *et al.*, 2010) and it can create a brand image for a company or it can contribute to create a useful symbolic appeal for a brand or a company. Though companies invest heavily in advertising, the investment in advertising will be a failure if the consumer is unable to understand the message, fails to notice or to remember it and pick a wrong item at the time of purchase (Nowroozi and Qalandari, 2009). Grown into an infinitely complex form of announcement, advertisement has different methods by which a corporation tries to send a message to the customer. Some methods of advertising include brochures, ads, print media (newspapers, magazines), installation tools (posters, boards, advertising on vehicles) and audiovisual equipment (Farkosh and Haidarbaygie, 2011), nonetheless there is one the type of advertising, which is through mobile or cell phone, that has become fashionable nowadays and known as an important promotional tool. The mobile phone is a new and rapidly growing advertising tool that its capabilities, functions and applications are in a rapidly promoting ground (Sadegh Vaziri *et al.*, 2010). Since using the mobile phone has been sharply widespread in the society and also thanks to the specific features of this device, it has turned into a new but significant method of advertising. Since the number of mobile phone subscribers is a lot in number than fixed line telephone users in many countries, mobile phone, in fact, is a new exciting channel for individual marketing activities, providing effective communication with the target market by creating a two-way relationship between the market and customers (Xu, 2007).

Research Literature

Theoretical Foundations

Attitude is a complex cognitive process that is used to explain consumer' behavior. Attitude is an inclusive and constant assessment regarding people, objects, advertising or topics (Solomon, 2004).

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Whatever attracts subject's attitude is called objective attitude phenomenon. One of the initiators of the theory of modern attitude measurement, Thurstone, asserts that "attitude is the passive or positive/negative feeling of approval or rejection to a stimulus". In other words, there is someone's relatively stable tendency to thing or event appearing in emotion and behavior (Hasangholipour *et al.*, 2009). Public attitude toward mobile advertising focuses on the long term consideration of this media. Despite the results of researches toward positive attitude of advertising, recent studies suggest that consumers show negative attitudes about advertising. However, mobile advertising has been able to curve a positive attitude in the minds of consumers because mobile ads are known as the most informative and entertaining ones (Schlosser, 1999).

However, influencing on consumer attitudes towards mobile advertising is a factor that should be studied in a sense of their purchase behavior (Melody *et al.*, 2004). Consumers' attitudes to mobile advertising have been able to attract the attention of many people for a long time. Previous studies were mainly focused on the attitude of consumers towards mobile advertising influencing on understanding the entertainment, informative and credibility of ads, as well as its evaluation. However, the general attitude to advertising is not only shaped by the perceived value of advertising, but also through the implementation of ads, the advertiser, the agreement between company and consumer, consumer involvement in mobile advertising and mobile advertising experience for purchasing. Hence it could be concluded that, customer and corporate perception of the value of the company strongly effects on the client's attitude towards ad (Liu and Zhang, 2012).

Factors Affecting Attitudes towards Advertising

Exciting

Exciting is a stimulating the consumer to feel pleasure in connection with a short message. Games, music and leadership programs in many applications are those mobile advertising used (Faruk *et al.*, 2009). Exciting refers to the ability of mobile advertising in the realization of the needs of consumers in pleasure and emotional distribution. Previous studies proved the critical role of evocative of advertising in pleasing the clients and its positive impact on consumer's attitudes toward advertising (Mitchell and Olson, 1981). Multimedia advertising can promote advertising messages in different forms of media. Since the media have rich audio-visual applications, they can entertain clients and delight them. They can also attract consumers to the brands they advertise and increase their feelings towards mobile advertising (Leung and Cheung, 2004). Consumers' pleasure of an advertisement or a message plays a key role in their overall attitude to advertising (Schlosser and Shavitt, 1998).

Exciting is a key factor in mobile advertising and funny ads can be more effective in attracting consumers to the advertising message. Brief and funny message attracts interest and loyalty of its consumers. A desire to play in human nature, especially in young children and teenagers, is a natural instinct, so consumers show a high level of participation in mobile phone messages containing fun and exciting content (Xu, 2007).

Informative of Mobile Advertising

Informative can be defined as customers' ability to obtain information regarding the product replacement increasing and promoting their satisfaction (Gao and Kofaris, 2006). One of the main objectives of advertising is to provide information to customers. Informative is one of the features that have a positive impact on attitudes and motivation to make purchases (Petrovsky and Marino, 2007). Petrovsky and Marino (2007) in a research in a Bulgaria, which is done from the perspective of the consumer, found out that obtaining information about the products is the most important usage of advertisement affecting the general attitude of consumers. Also, the informative is a significant predictor of advertising value and it is an important factor in the effectiveness of advertising (Ducoff, 1996). Information quality in mobile advertising of a company is important to understand the impact on consumers of the company and its products.

Therefore, information sent via mobile phone to consumers should be sent in time, precise and beneficial to consumers. The informative of the message ad defined as an accurate, relevant, communicative, and easy information. Detailed information can develop and promote consumers' attitudes to brand and help

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them in the correct decision making process when choosing a product or service in the mobile advertisement environment (Leung and Cheung, 2004).

The Annoying Mobile Advertising

Feeling resentment toward advertising is an important factor in shaping consumers' attitudes. Resentment is not only affects the attitude, but also reduces the effectiveness of advertising's inspiration (De Pelsmacker and Van den Bergh, 1998). Annoying ads are those that will annoy the clients. Clients are also annoyed by some of the techniques that advertisers use to attract them. The main reason of critical responses of the clients is the annoyance factor of the advertisements (Sadegh Vaziri *et al.*, 2010). Resentment, outrage, insult and manipulation of advertisements processes would be the main cause for the poor understanding of the marketing activities and annoyance of the clients. Disinformation and diversion of advertising messages are factors, leaving a bad effect on consumers and it can cause developing a negative attitude toward advertising (Xu, 2007).

In short, when the ads are annoying, it can hurt people's attitudes toward the product (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Sending high volume of information in mobile ads could lead to confusion, as well as diverting consumers' positive attitude about a product or service. Thus, if your customers feel confused, they would usually show negative reaction. Ducoff suggests that using the annoying and insulting advertising techniques, and trying to provoke unwanted intrusion on customers would lead to the rejecting the message (Ducoff, 1996). Mobile advertising when containing high volume of information could lead to confusion and to divert consumers. Thus, if customers feel that they are confused, they will show the negative reaction for sure (Xu, 2007) .

Credibility of Mobile Advertising

Credibility is defined as the consumer's perception of the accuracy and reliability of the advertising message. Credibility is the degree to which the consumer perceives claims made about the brand in the ad to be honest and credible. However the main aim of the advertising is to inform the consumer regarding the products and services, it is vital to promote consumer confidence to achieve this goal (Erdem *et al.*, 2004). Research has shown that it is critical to ensure the customers' perception of the value and this influences customers' choices and strengthens the commitment and brand loyalty (Lee *et al.*, 2006). Credibility of advertisement defines as to promote trust to the message as a reliable source of information about the product or service and acting based on this information. In other words, advertisements credible means to develop the sense of trust, confidence and willingness to act based on the information. Clients disbelieve advertising claims shown in internet and mobile rather than the other media of ads as television, radio, newspaper and magazine.

The credibility of the mobile advertising claims has a positive effect on people's attitudes toward mobile advertising. The mobile phone is a personal device worldwide and users are concerned about the negative publicity of the ads, thus confident cell phone agencies are preferred and more trusted (Sadegh Vaziri *et al.*, 2013). McKenzie and Latz assert that "credibility of the advertising messages defines as consumers' perception of honesty and trustworthiness of ad". The Advertising message is affected by several factors including the credit of the agency and advertising media. For example, Marshal and Voonbung (2003) found out that internet advertising messages are less reliable than the printed ads unless the message is raised by a reputable brand. Research has also shown that the validity of mobile advertising messages has a positive effect on client's attitude toward advertising through the media. Credibility of advertising refers to the consumers' perception of the honesty and integrity of the ad (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989).

Conceptual Frameworks

Pishva (2010) in a research work entitled " Text Message Advertising: A new tool in marketing" focused on mobile advertising. This survey is the cross-sectional descriptive study and the study population consisted of undergraduate and graduate Allameh Tabataba'i University students majoring in journalism. The population size consists of 380 people and sample size is about 191 people calculated by using Cochran formula.

Using text message as an effective tool in marketing advertising, the results of this study suggest that there are four important factors which should be properly identified considering the target market:

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demographics, attitudes of the target market to text messages advertising, the familiarity of the target market with the brand advertised in the text messages ads and the pertinent degree of advertising messages with the customer. Awareness and use of these four factors sharply increase the desirable response to the advertising text message which is purchasing of goods by the consumer.

Mazlum (2013) tried to investigate the attitudes of journalism students at Allameh Tabatabai University in SMS advertising, as well as their behavior after receiving the text message. This study was conducted by using a questionnaire survey. The study sample population was both undergraduate and graduate journalism student at Allameh Tabatabai University. The sample size consisted of 191 people obtained bus using Cochran formula. The results of this study indicated that such factors as time, the source, number, age and level of education influence respondents' satisfaction and trust to SMS advertising.

Keser and colleagues (2011) conducted a study to determine the different attitudes of youth and adults toward mobile advertising. The study population was youth and adults in Turkey. The statistical analysis was based on 380 questionnaires. This is a descriptive study and the results show that mobile advertising is exciting, informative and reliable and mobile advertising has a positive effect on participants' attitude. The research shows that young people and adults have different attitudes, intentions and behaviors to mobile ads.

Given the above review, the following assumptions are provided:

Male and female respondents' attitudes to mobile advertising (exciting, informative, credible and annoying) are dissimilar.

Respondents' attitudes to mobile advertising (exciting, informative, credible and annoying) vary in different ages.

Respondents' attitudes to mobile advertising (exciting, informative, credible and annoying) with different degrees of education are also varied.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

The research population in this study consisted of all mobile subscribers in Sanandaj City, including 1140000 subscribers by 2015 according Telecommunication administration. Using Cochran 384 subscribers was chosen for unlimited population and sampling error was 0.05. Then, 384 questionnaires were returned out of 400 distributed questionnaires. The research in terms of objective is an applied research and in terms of methodology is descriptive and based on correlation analysis. Also, the method of data collection is a survey and data are gathered through questionnaires taken from Tsang *et al.*, (2004) and Knight and Kim (2007).

Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess questionnaire reliability. Great efforts have been made in the last decade to evaluate the coherent causal relationships between variables. Structural equation modeling using the partial least squares has been used in this study. PLS offers two test methods. The first one, external model, is a measurement model and the second model, the internal model, is a structural equation model. The results showed the acceptable reliability. Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis test was used to measure the difference between demographic characteristics (gender, age, education) indicating in the tables below.

Table 1: Statistics on the Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Frequency Percentage
Male	258	64.5
Female	142	35.5
Total	400	100

Source: Research Data

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Table 2: Data on the Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Frequency Percentage
Below 25	130	32.5
25-35	162	40.5
36-45	69	17.3
46-55	39	9.8
Total	400	100

Source: Research Data

Table 3: Statistics on Respondents' Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Frequency Percentage
Diploma	66	16.5
Associate Degree	48	12
BS	159	39.8
Master Degree	113	28.2
Ph.D	14	3.5
Total	400	100

Source: Research Data

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the obtained results, the following suggestions are offered to improve the attitudes to SMS advertising:

- 1- To create messages for women and planning to send text messages in the hours that they are free to read them.
- 2- To use the right words for each gender and for each special product segment (for example, if goods belong to cosmetics, the type of the words should be different to those used in SPA health products and sports supplements)
- 3- Given that advertising companies will be able to access to some information about the mobile subscriber, they would be able to send a text message to each special group with a certain education level. For example, it seems useless to send message containing ads of university entrance exam classes to graduate levels.
- 4- Companies can determine the age range who is allowed to read the advertising at the very beginning of each SMS. In this way they the age ranges which are allowed to access to the products are determined and negative feedback is avoided.

Conclusion

Mann-Whitney test was used to examine the differences between male and female responses. The results are shown in Table 1. Since the significant difference between the two groups for all 4 studied characteristics is more than 0.5, there is no significant difference between male and female respondents in terms of four studied characteristics including, exciting, informative, credible and annoying.

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Table 4: Test results of Mann-Whitney U Test for Gender Groups

	Annoying	Informative	Exciting	Credibility
Mann-Whitney U Test Statistics	17519	16598	17612	17043
Z Statistic	-0.734	-1.565	-.0657	-1.161
The Significance Level	.0463	0.118	0.511	0.246

Source: Research Data

Kruskal-Wallis test was used to examine the differences between different age ranges responses. The results are shown in Table 2. Since the significant difference among the four age ranges (Less than 25 years, 25 - 35, 36 - 45 and older than 46 years) in all 4 studied characteristics is more than 0.5, there is no significant difference between four age ranges respondents in terms of four studied characteristics including, exciting, informative, credible and annoying.

Table 5: Results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test for Age Ranges

	Annoying	Informative	Exciting	Credibility
Kruskal-Wallis Statistics	4.385	2.408	5.780	5.600
Degree Of Freedom	3	3	3	3
The Significance Level	0.223	0.492	0.123	0.133

Source: Research Data

Kruskal-Wallis test was used to examine the differences in responses between groups with different levels of education. The results are shown in Table 3. Since the significant difference among the four age ranges (less than 25 years, 25 - 35 years, 36 - 45 and older than 46 years) in 2 characteristics (annoying 0.03 and credibility 0.01) is less than 0.5, there is a significant difference between respondents with different levels of education in terms of four studied characteristics including, exciting, informative, credible and annoying. As the mean scores, results are given in the next step, the greatest difference is between respondents belongs to the those with associate degrees (the lowest) in terms of annoying characteristics while those with B.S show the opposite (the uppermost). In terms of credibility, the greatest difference is between respondents belongs to the those with diploma degrees (the lowest) while those with master degree show the opposite (the uppermost).

Table 6: Results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test for Levels of Education

	Annoying	Informative	Exciting	Credibility
Kruskal-Wallis Statistics	10.212	5.816	3.202	12.051
Degree of Freedom	4	4	4	4
The Significance Level	0.037	0.213	0.525	

Source: Research Data

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Table 7: Results of the Mean Scores for Levels of Education

Credibility	Annoying	Informative	Exciting		Variable
Average Rating	Average Rating	Average Rating	Average Rating	No.	Level of Education
178.16	187.36	202.15	217.66	66	Diploma
196.58	182.52	189.57	200.42	48	Associate Degree
188.66	222.80	187.99	189.81	159	BS
230.31	186.60	220.05	204.58	113	Master Degree
213.11	183.04	214.43	208.36	14	Ph.D

Source: Research Data

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