Factors Affecting Student's Attitude towards Mobile Advertising

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Abstract

The study has been conducted to analyze of the students attitude towards mobile phones. 300 students from different universities and colleges of Islamabad / Rawalpindi were taken. They were of various age groups, academic level, gender and the variables measured are; information, entertainment, irritation and credibility. There were 70% males and 30% female students. According to age there were 29% in the range of 16-20 years; 46% were in the range 21-25; 17% were in the range 25-30 and 9% beyond 30. According to education about 11% are Intermediate, 51% Graduation, 36% Masters and 1 % students are of MS/M-Phil level. The data compiled on the basis of questionnaire shows that almost 53 % students enjoy the SMS and take it as entertainment, 51% receive only specific information as and when required basis. 39% feel irritation by receiving any SMS on their mobiles phones, whereas, 40% even don't bother to read the full text message, received on their mobiles. Overall 59.7% like mobile advertising. It can be concluded that the students generally have positive attitude towards mobile advertising.

Keywords: Attitudes, SMS Advertising, Information, entertainment, Irritation & Credibility

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Introduction

Mobile Advertising offers great opportunities for businesses. Marketing activities supported by mobile devices allow companies to directly communicate with their consumers without time or location barriers. If marketers want to use this communication channels that mobile media provide in an efficient way, they need to understand how mobile consumers perceive and evaluate mobile devices as a source of advertising.

In everyday life, devices and systems based on mobile technologies have become a commonplace in most developed countries (Balasubramanian, Peterson & Jarvenpaa, 2002). The growth of mobile advertising has opened a new area for research. For instance, given its limited textual presentation, will this new medium have the same effect as other media? What do consumers think about SMS-based advertisements? What mechanisms would be more effective for advertising? The rising popularity of SMS has created a new channel for advertising, called mobile advertising. Advertisement are turned into as short textual messages and sent to mobile phones.

According to Baber, (2008) mobile web and mobile advertising audience in Pakistan are maturing and growing day by day. This is impressive, given the difficult economic conditions and high taxation policies in Pakistan. A mobile advertising company, and shows that the number of impressions (views of advertisement) from Pakistan took an 80% jump in September, 2008 and in the previous month, the impressions showed 300% growth. Pakistanis have always been big time fan of mobile games, ring tones and other fun downloads a trend consistent with the mobile users worldwide. Now the public is moving from WAP sites to surfing the web and portals on mobiles. As long as the marketers follow an ethics guideline and provide relevant ads, the mobile advertising will take off and become mainstream. Here is a summary of the some trends which point to growth of mobile advertising:

- 91 million user base
- Near 100,000 mobile data users (estimate)
- Good EDGE services (in terms of options and coverage) by mobile operators
- More wireless broadband services - such as Zong USB Internet
- Growth of smart phones as a percentage of overall handsets
- Preference to browse web on the phone

- Acceptance of mobile ads - as shown by ad impressions
- Emergence of local mobile ad players such as mKhoj (a web based portal)

Many different factors that affect consumers' attitudes towards advertising have been identified in the prior studies. However, it is assumed that only a limited number of these factors can be applied to explain the consumers' attitudes toward advertising. Thus, it is necessary to construct a framework, which explains consumers' attitudes toward mobile advertising and its relationship with behavioral intention. Based on the theories of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), Technology Acceptance Theory (Davis, 1989), and theory of Planned Behavior framework of factors affecting consumers' attitudes toward mobile advertising) is proposed, which consists of three main factors: (1) message characteristics, (2) technology characteristics, and (3) demographic characteristics, this study will answer following research questions:

(i) How do consumers (student) perceive mobile advertising?

(ii) What are the most important factors affecting attitudes towards mobile advertising?

Following are the some important characteristics which describe the features of various advertising media and their contents.

- **Attitude toward the message**
  Public Opinion, attitudes, perspectives, and preferences of a population toward events, circumstances, and issues of mutual interest. It is characteristically measured by the sample survey or public opinion poll.

- **Behavior**
  Behavioral Sciences, fields of study that is primarily concerned with the understanding and control of behavior, especially those types of human behavior that develop out of interpersonal relations.

- **Entertainment**
  Entertainment is a crucial factor for mobile marketing. It is essential that the message is short and funny, and thus immediately captures consumers' attention. Entertainment may increase customer loyalty and add value for the customer. As most people have a natural playfulness, providing games and prizes via text messaging (SMS) yields high participation.

- **Information**

  Information is gathering, manipulating and organizing of data in a way that adds to the knowledge of the receiver. In other words, it is the context in which data is taken. Information delivered to customer by mobile sms also needs to show qualitative features like accuracy, timeliness, and usefulness for the consumer.

- **Irritation**

  In humans, it is a form of suffering, often with anger about the suffering; in particular, if applicable, anger at the person who caused it. Mobile advertising may provide a collection of information that confuses the recipient and can be disturbing with information. Consumers may feel confused about them and react negatively.

- **Credibility**

  Advertising Define credibility as "consumers' perception of the truth and believability of advertising. Degree to which a communicator or communication is believed by the recipient. Credibility is particularly important when the message to be conveyed varies substantially from the recipient's current beliefs or attitudes.

  The mobile phone is a very personal device that allows an individual to be accessed virtually any time and anywhere, mobile advertising must be more personalized and may take different forms. Based on different strategic applications, wireless marketing can be either permission-based, incentive based, or location-based.

  Public attitudes towards advertising have been a focus of attention for a long time. Although some earlier literature reported positive attitudes toward advertising, most of the more recent researchers have found that consumers generally have negative attitudes toward ads. At the same time, however, Internet advertising seems to generate positive consumer attitudes. This is because Internet advertising is often thought to be informative and entertaining. Given the difference between consumer responses to general advertising and to advertising over the Internet, it is unclear how consumers feel about advertising messages on their mobile phones and how their attitudes affect their behavior.

Hypothesis

Two sets of hypotheses can be developed from the framework:

Hypothesis 1: Consumer perceived entertainment, informativeness, irritation, and credibility of mobile advertisement affect the attitude toward mobile advertising.

Hypothesis 2: The mobile advertising affects the relevant demographic variables.

Literature Review

Kotler (2003) defines advertising as "any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor". Public attitudes towards advertising have been a major issue in advertising research for a long time.

Bauer & Greyser, (1968); Gallup, (1959) suggested public's positive attitudes toward advertising, recent studies (Bracket & Carr, 2001; Ducoffe, 1996; Schlosser, Shavitt, & Kanfer, 1999) recommended that consumers generally have negative attitudes towards advertising. Given the clear decline in positive consumer responses to advertising, it is unclear how consumers perceive advertising messages on their mobile phones, what would make consumers perceive mobile advertising differently, and how their attitudes affect their behaviors. Accordingly, it is worthwhile to explore whether consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising attitudes will lead to positive or negative behavioral intentions (i.e., click/call through mobile advertising messages or ignore it).

There has been little study about attitudes toward mobile advertising, many empirical studies of attitudes toward mobile advertising (Tsang et al., 2004; Okazaki, 2004; Leppäniemi et al., 2005) borrowed the factors from Internet advertising to predict customers' attitudes towards mobile advertising. Tsang & Liang (2004).Mobile advertising shares many features with Internet advertising. Both are emerging media used to deliver digital texts, images and voices with interactive, immediate, personalized, and responsive capabilities.

This technology system allows increased mobility and extended services even to remote areas. Due to wireless communication system, mobile phone users are able to access their e-mails, search, order and buy products and services from everywhere without computers (Yen & Chou, 2000; Aungst & Wilson, 2005). Besides the Internet and personal computers, the mobile phone is the key to marketers because it is extremely popular and offers people the opportunity of mobility now. Through the introduction of data services, Short Message Services (SMS), Multimedia Message Service (MMS), Mobile Internet, etc., the mobile phone is rapidly becoming a viable commercial marketing channel. Even though companies are investing heavily in mobile commerce and mobile marketing, the nature and implications of this

channel have yet to be fully understood and studies need to be performed to gain an insight into how to utilize it best Bauer et al., (2005).

According to Becker, (2005) mobile marketing adoption and acceptance is on the rise in these days, but marketers would have little ability to consistently generate profits without a clear understanding of the elements driving consumer acceptance. Yuan and Cheng (2004) emphasize that mobile marketing is getting increasingly popular because mobile phone is a personal device used in marketing.

Scharl et al., (2005) defined mobile marketing as using a wireless medium to provide consumers with time and location-sensitive, personalized information that promotes products, services and ideas, thereby benefiting all stakeholders. Shortly, mobile marketing refers to marketing activities and programs performed via mobile phone in mobile commerce. Mobile commerce driven by wireless communication technology is also generating interest from marketers (Aungst & Wilson, 2005). Therefore, the penetration of this new technology has suggested changes in advertising, retailing and shopping in marketing and companies wishing to make business in mobile markets should be ready for mobile marketing and mobile commerce.

Siau et al., (2001) defined mobile commerce as a new type of e-commerce transaction conducted through mobile devices using wireless telecommunication networks and other wired e-commerce technologies.

(Sadeh, 2002) explained the forces behind the emergence of mobile commerce are as (1) creation of mobile devices, (2) convergence of mobile telecommunication networks and Internet, (3) transition to 3G (Third Generation Mobile System), and (4) the emergence of broad set of highly personalized location applications and services. Especially, the topic of advertising via mobile devices is of major interest. It addresses consumers with individualized advertising messages via mobile devices. The results will indicate that advertising value and advertising message content have the largest impact on attitude toward advertising via mobile devices.

Materials and Methods

The respondents were students of universities and colleges of Islamabad/Rawalpindi. Total 350 questionnaires were distributed. Self-administered, close end questionnaires were distributed among the

respondents. This questionnaire was divided into seven parts, first part was related to entertainment, informativness, irritation, credibility, attitude, intention and behavior, related to students respondents including age, gender and education and the scale used to measure the responses were nominal. Using 5-point Likert scale anchored by "Strongly Agree (1)", "Agree (2)", "Uncertain (3)", "Disagree (4)" and "Strongly Disagree (5)".The questionnaire was distributed among three hindered and fifty respondents randomly and it took twenty-five days to get them filled. Out of total 350 distributed questionnaires, only 300 were completed in all respects and were included for analysis. Before giving, the questionnaires all the questions were explained to the respondents, so that they can understand and fill the questionnaires easily. Before getting the questionnaire filled it was briefly introduced to every respondent. In order to perform analysis, descriptive statistics were done and for this purpose SPSS was used. The content of the questionnaire has been adapted from Tsang et al, (2004), for use to explore the view of students' attitude towards mobile advertising.

The attitude data were first tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The results are shown in Table 1. According to Hair (1998), most research method guides treat a value higher than 0.7 as acceptable. The values in the Table-1 is 0.768 which indicates that the data collected from the survey are reliable and suitable for further analysis

Table 1
Reliability of data

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of Items
.767	.768	13

The frequency distribution of different variables is given in Table 2.

Table 2
Frequency distribution of variables

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Level of Agreement (%)

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
ENTERTAINMENT					
* I feel that receiving mobile advertisements is enjoyable and entertaining.	19	57	7	13	4
* I feel that receiving mobile advertisements is pleasant.	21	50	22	14	1
INFORMATION					
* I feel that mobile advertising is a good source for timely information.	21	62	11	5	0
* Mobile advertisements provide the information I need.	15	39	19	22	4
IRRITATION					
* I feel that mobile advertising is irritating.	4	17	3	39	10
* I feel that mobile advertisements are almost everywhere.	3	38	16	35	9
* Contents in mobile advertisements are often annoying.	4	32	23	34	8
CREDIBILITY					
* I use mobile advertising as a reference for purchasing.	13	41	14	25	7
* I trust mobile advertisements.	9	43	22	18	8

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Level of Agreement%

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
ATTITUDE					
* Overall, I like mobile advertising.	12	60	12	10	6
INTENTION					
* I am interested in receiving mobile advertisement messages.	12	42	22	19	5
BEHAVIOR					
* I read almost all the advertisement messages I receive on my mobile.	12	40	17	23	8
* I usually study most of the text covered in the body of advertisement messages.	10	41	23	5	0

The Table 2 indicates that on the basis of questionnaire which shows that almost 53 % students enjoy the SMS and take it as entertainment, 51% receive only specific information as and when required basis. 39% feel irritation by receiving any SMS on their mobiles phones, whereas, 40% even don't bother to read the full text message, received on their mobiles. Overall 59.7% like mobile advertising. It can be concluded that the students generally have positive attitude towards mobile advertising. The correlation matrix for different variables is given in Table 3.

The correlation analysis given in Table 3 indicates that the correlation between Ent1 & Ent2 = 0.588 and is highly significant and indicates they are very highly correlated, similarly the correlation between Ent2 & Attitude =0.456 which is highly significant and indicates correlation. Ent2 & Irr3 =-0.28 shows negative correlation with each other. Info1 & Attitude=0.381 is highly significant and indicates they are highly correlated and similarly Info1 & Irr1=-.078 shows the negative correlation. Info2 & Attitude=0.488 is highly significant and indicates they are highly correlated and Info2 & Irr1=-0.109 shows the negative correlation. Similarly Irr1 & Irr3 =0.380 are highly significantly correlated and Irr1 & Attitude=0-.021 show the strongly negatively correlated with each others.   Irr2 & Irr3=0.249 is highly significantly correlated whereas Irr2 & Beh1 = -0.068 having negatively correlated. Irr3 & Beh2 =0.177 are highly significantly correlated whereas Irr3 & Cred1=-0.011 are negatively correlated. Cred1 & Cred2=0.499 whereas Cred1 & Beh1=0.219 both are highly significant and correlated with each other. Cred2 &   Attitude = 0.416 and Cred2 & Beh1=0.299 both are significantly correlated. Attitude, Intention and Behavior are significantly highly correlated with each.

Conclusion & Recommendations

This results shows that the entertainment was the most significant factors affecting students' attitudes, followed by credibility and irritation. Attitude is positively highly correlated to the intention to receive mobile ads. Intention is affected by the incentive. The respondents were more willing to accept incentive based mobile advertisement. Finally, intention broadly affected that how and when the respondents read the message or simply ignored it. Generally it is clear that mobile advertising is going to be the future trend in Pakistan.   So, it is concluded that the students generally have positive attitude towards mobile advertising, which expresses correlation among the students' attitudes and behavior. Furthermore, this study also provides executive inference and offers suggestions for mobile advertisers and open new door for advertisement. Hence, advertising companies and different mobiles companies are advised to carefully design their mobile advertising messages and also design their mobile advertising campaigns and   specially target groups carefully.

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Citation of this Article:

Farooq, A. (2017). Factors affecting student's attitude towards mobile advertising. *Pakistan Journal of Distance and Online Learning, 3*(1), 61-74.