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COMPONENTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD ADVERTISEMENTS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Abstract

Attitudes are part of our reality, our followers on every moment, leaders of our decisions. According to Allport (1935) by attitude we understand the formed mental readiness based on experience, which directly and dynamically influences the reaction of individuals on objects or situations they are in contact with. The decision making process could not be imagined without the three basic elements of attitude: emotional, motivational and behavioral. The consumer behavior means “a form of attitude which consumers manifest while searching, purchasing, using, evaluation of products, services and ideas by which they fulfill their needs (Wänke, 2009).

This paper examines the relation between attitudes (attitude components, emotional, motivational and cognitive). The research is conducted on November-December 2010.

The sample test is conducted on 237 subjects. The subjects sample is dichotomous, actually consists of two subsamples: student – young adults and their parents.

While selecting the sample of students i.e. young adults, these criteria were considered: age, gender, study program and monthly income. On the parents sample selection: age, gender, occupation, level of education and monthly income.

The age-groups included in the research are: young adults (students) 18-23 average age, and parents average age is 35-55.

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The results achieved through statistical analysis respectively Pearson Correlation, variances analysis and T-test show that the structural components of the attitude lead to consumer behavior but with differences between components, for example the emotional component is more present in female subjects while the motivational component is more present in male subjects.

Key words: attitude, consumer behavior, attitude component, emotional, motivational, cognitive.

Introduction

The attitudes of a person are not isolated from each other; they form organized structures with other attitudes which lead to behavioral patterns of the person. Thus, according to this definition, the attitudes are associations among individuals, ideas, situations or events and their assessment.

Even though the attitudes are studied in detail by professionals of social psychology and marketing psychology, the researchers could not agree on a single definition of this concept. Generally, the researchers agreed in the direction that the attitude reflects the response of the individual towards an object. For example, many authors emphasize that an attitude is in general a sustainable evaluation of a concept, object, person or a brand or service. Shiu (2009) points out that attitude are states of mind, constructs that we cannot observe directly.

Attitudes and consumer behavior

Thurstone (1928) was the first researcher to define attitudes. According to him, attitudes represent the sum of feelings towards a given object. Later, Allport (1935) equipped this concept

by a definition richer in content by emphasizing: “An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon an individual's behavior”. The first definition suggests that attitudes are affective responses toward different objects, while other definitions stress the importance of the cognitive system.

Triandis (1971) on the other hand, combined both previous definitions and proposed that attitudes in fact consist of three components closely related to each other:

1. Cognitive: consumer's beliefs towards the attitude object
2. Affective (emotional): consumer's feelings towards the attitude object
3. Behavior: consumer's intention and the actual behavior by watching the attitude object.

The three-component attitude model was absolutely accepted in the psychology of marketing. Ruiz and Sicilia (2004) argue that the affective and cognitive systems are interrelated, but they can function individually as well. As a consequence, consumers behavior towards certain objects depends on their tendency to use these systems in processing information.

Muehling and McCann (1993) classify the attitude definition in two categories: one-dimensional and multidimensional. According to the one-dimensional model, attitudes are a function of a determinant. In other words, the attitudes are also formed based on the affective and cognitive system. The abovementioned definitions of Thurstone and Allport are examples of the one-dimensional model. In his definition, Thurstone emphasized the importance of the affective response, while according to Allport attitudes are formed through the cognitive system.

The research conducted according to Triandis (1971), on the other hand, presented the multidimensional model, and according to him the cooperation between the cognitive, emotional and behavioral elements is significant in the attitude content. Peter and Olson (2008) stress that in modern research attitude is generally seen as a one-dimensional concept. Furthermore, they emphasize that the cognitive and behavioral elements seem to be related to the attitude but are not part of the concept itself. In this study, the one-dimensional model of attitude is proved false. However, according to Peter and Olson (2008) it is highlighted that the cognitive and behavioral elements are closely related to each other.

The theories on learning through conditioning see attitudes as learned responses towards special stimuli and the focus of these theories is the identification of stimuli's nature which makes us create and maintain specific attitudes. Commercial advertisements based more or less on such forms of attitude formation influence our psychology: an advertised product is related to a positive feeling or event thus creating a conditioned reflex. When such a product appears in front of your eyes, the accompanying feeling or event creates a positive emotional state and belief in its value that urges you to buy it. Such form is the product presentation and advertising by renowned singers or actors. A way of learning attitudes is through indirect learning or based on others' experience. The advertisement that presents a good refreshing drink featuring people, who enjoy drinking it on screen, represents a way of learning whose effect is imitation of the other's attitude to gain the same pleasure. Bandura (1977), one of the most renowned representatives of the theories of learning, has approved this through various examinations and experiments. Regarding the attitudes towards advertising and their impact on the success of advertising itself, according to the research of Abhilasha Mehta, Gallup & Scott C. Purvis, 1995, in most cases it is our attitude that determines which product we are going to buy. The general consumers' attitude toward advertising, whether positive or negative, will mediate the effectiveness of any type of advertisement.² It is said that the attitude toward advertising in general is an important determinant for attitudes towards certain ads (Aad, Lutz, 1985). Attitudes towards advertisements are defined as "learned predisposition to respond favorably or not to advertising" (Lutz 1985, p. 53).

For an advertisement to be successful in context of the environment of today's media, the advertisements should penetrate, be notable and get our attention. After the attention is gained, the conviction of the consumer should follow³.

When we talk about attitudes in marketing and advertising it is important to make a distinction between the attitude toward advertising in general and attitudes towards

²Abhilasha Mehta, Gallup & Robinson, Inc "When attitudes towards advertising in general influence advertising success", Conference of the American Academy of Advertising, Pennigton, 1995, f. 20

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advertisement. Although it was found that attitude towards specific ads acts as an advantage when it comes to advertisements. In general, the attitude toward the advertisement seems to act on customer behavior. According to Mehta (1995), attitude toward advertisement is defined as "a learned predisposition to respond in the consistently favorable or unfavorable manner to advertising in general".⁴ Later, the same stress that the consumer predisposition towards advertising in general influences on how are they going to react towards any advertisement. In addition, people who have more positive attitudes toward advertisements are generally attracted by a larger number of advertisements immediately after watching the advertisement and have created more clear conviction after facing them. Research has shown that attitudes toward advertisements are in general an important advantage for advertisements and then advertisements generally have a significant impact on the success and effectiveness of advertising. However, it is thought that the consumer appreciates more the advantages of advertising than its negative aspects. Shavitt et al. (1998), report that 25% of the subjects in their study had either neutral or positive attitude towards advertising. According to the study of Calfe and Ringold (1994) customers point out that advertising is fun and attacking. Further, more than half of respondents stated that, in general, they don't believe advertisements because they recall they have been misled by advertisements' statements before. However, two thirds seem to use the advertisement information as guides while deciding to purchase.

We know that the consumer is in the center of the marketing concept, not without a reason. Without consumption, there would be no production, thus production is as a consequence of human needs and consumption is as a consequence of the desires to satisfy needs. Accordingly the customer is an individual with special features, although they resemble one another; each customer is original in his or her needs and the approach to fulfill the same⁵.

⁴ Abhilasha Mehta, Gallup&Robinson, Inc "When attitudes towards advertasing in general influence advertasing success", Conference of the American Academy of Advertasing, Pennigton,1995, f.25

⁵ N. Veseli, Bazat e Marketingut, Alma, Shkup, 2009, f. 41.

Consumer behavior has to do with: mental and physical acts (behavior), including motives and the reasons of individuals and groups with regard to orientation, purchase, use, maintenance, disposal and production.

Consumer behavior is not an act, but a process that begins with the feeling of desire or need and ends with the feeling of fulfillment of these needs during the consumption of the particular product. It as well represents a form of behavior, which is manifested by the customers as a request for purchase, use, possession of products, services or ideas by which we expect fulfillment of their needs, demands and desires.

Consumer behavior presents "a summary of all activities that people undertake when buying and consuming products and services in order to fulfill their desires and requests"⁶.

According to various theorists, consumer behavior is defined in different ways, but their orientation is the form of attitudes and actions of people throughout the consumption of various products.

The consumer behavior means "a form of attitude which consumers manifest while searching, purchasing, using, evaluation of products, services and ideas by which they fulfill their needs (Wänke, 2009).

Research methodology

Sample and application

Based on the relevant theories, on one hand, and relevant studies related to attitudes towards advertisements and consumer attitude, the subject of the research can be determined as a **tendency to prove the nature of the relationship among attitude components towards advertisements and consumer behavior.**

⁶ <http://glossary.econguru.com/economic-term/consumer+behavior>

Testing is conducted on a sample of 237 subjects in total. The sample of the subjects is dichotomous, respectively consists of two subsamples: student – young adults and their parents. While selecting the sample of students i.e. young adults, these criteria were considered: age, gender, study program and monthly income. On the parents sample selection: age, gender, occupation, level of education and monthly income.

The age-groups included in the research are: young adults (students) 18-23 average age, and parents average age is 35-55.

Table 1. The sample by age and faculty

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Parents</i>	
			<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
Philosophic faculty	20	21	41	41
Economic faculty	19	19	38	38
	39	40	158	
Total			237	

Instruments

From the statistical analysis related to the questionnaire reliability as a whole, from Table 2, we can see that Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is statistically significant 0,832. From the statistics we can conclude that the questionnaire is in total reliable and fulfills the metric characteristics of a measuring instrument.

Table 2. Tabular data presentation on the questionnaire reliability as a whole

		N	%	Alfa Cronbach
Cases	Valid	237	100,0	0,832
	Excluded	0	,0	
	Total	237	100,0	

As two instruments were used in the survey, an analysis on subtest reliability is made as well: attitude towards advertisements and consumer behavior. Table 3. Concerning the subtest attitudes towards advertising, Alpha Cronbach reliability coefficient is statistically significant 0.82, from this we conclude that the value acquired gives us satisfactory reliability. For the subtest consumer behavior, Alpha Cronbach reliability coefficient is slightly lower, 0.52. Since the number of items that measure consumer behavior is smaller than that of attitudes toward advertising, and as the number of items increases or decreases, the reliability coefficient increases respectively decreases. Because the attitude as a concept consists of three elements and therefore the number of items for that variable is bigger.

Table 3. Tabular presentation of data on the subtests questionnaire reliability

	Alpha Cronbach coefficient	No. of items
Questionnaire for evaluation of attitudes towards advertisements	,821	29
Questionnaire for evaluation consumer behavior	,521	11

It was important for the research to see the metric characteristics of sample representativeness.

Table 4. Tabular presentation of Bartlett's test on representativeness

Measuring according to Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin on the appropriateness of samples		,808
Bartlett's coefficient	Average value of Chi square	2580,150
	Df	780
	Sig.	,000

Since the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin 0,808, (Table.4) exceeds the scales of statistical significance; we conclude that the questionnaire has a satisfactory representativeness. On the other hand, the value of the coefficient deriving from Bartlett's Test, respectively the value of Bartlett's coefficient 2580,15 $p < 0,01$, which statistically significant, enables us to conclude that there is a possibility to undertake factorial analysis⁷.

Results

The correlative analysis, as a statistical form of determining the relation of variables, is developed both, for main attitude variables towards advertisements and consumer behavior, and for the structural components of attitude towards advertisements: emotion, motivation and cognition on one hand, and consumer behavior, on the other. The results of the correlative analysis are conducted and presented on table 5.

Table 5. Tabular presentation of the Pearson correlation for structural components of attitudes and consumer behavior

		Motivation	Emotion	Cognitive	Mean Attitude	ConsBehav
Motivation	Pearson correlation	1	,544(**)	,572(**)	,830(**)	,500(**)
	Sig. (2-aněsore)	.	,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	237	237	237	237	237
Emotion	Pearson correlation	,544(**)	1	,558(**)	,838(**)	,479(**)
	Sig. (2-aněsore)	,000	.	,000	,000	,000
	N	237	237	237	237	237

⁷ The results of the analysis will not be presented in this paper due to its character. These findings will be presented as a separate publication.

Cognitive	Pearson correlation	,572(**)	,558(**)	1	,851(**)	,542(**)
	Sig. (2-aněsore)	,000	,000	.	,000	,000
	N	237	237	237	237	237
Mean Attitude	Pearson correlation	,830(**)	,838(**)	,851(**)	1	,604(**)
	Sig. (2-aněsore)	,000	,000	,000	.	,000
	N	237	237	237	237	237
ConsBehav	Pearson correlation	,500(**)	,479(**)	,542(**)	,604(**)	1
	Sig. (2-aněsore)	,000	,000	,000	,000	.
	N	237	237	237	237	237

In table 5, the statistics respectively the values of correlation as well as the scales of freedom to determine the statistical significance of the obtained values of correlation are presented. Based on the correlation values presented on Table 1, it is clear that the reason to develop the statement which emphasizes the presence of the relation between attitude towards advertisements and the structural components of attitude: emotional, motivational and cognitive and the consumer behavior, is reasonable.

To respond to the main hypothesis, we firstly need to test the hypothesis, which encompass the assertion that there is correlation between consumer behavior and structural components of attitude towards advertisements, respectively emotional, motivational and cognitive components.

H1.1: There is relation between the emotional structural component of attitude and consumer behavior

The presented results in Table 5, in the results section, as well as the statistical values of the correlation significance, clearly show the presence of correlation between the emotional structural component of attitude towards advertisements and consumer behavior ($r= 0,479$

$p < 0,01$). Based on the value and the height of the of the correlation coefficient $r = 0,479$ $p < 0,01$, we can conclude that there is correlation, which is statistically significant, between the emotional structural component and consumer behavior.

H1.2: There is relation between the motivational structural component of attitude and consumer behavior

As it can be seen on Table 5, the value of the correlation coefficient $r = 0,500$ $p < 0,01$, between the motivational structural component of attitude towards advertisements and consumer behavior is confirmed as statistically significant. This verifies the sub-hypothesis assumption which affirmed the existence of correlation between the interlocked variables in the statement respectively between the motivational structural component of attitude towards advertisements and consumer behavior.

H1.3: There is relation between the cognitive structural component of attitude and consumer behavior

According to the description on Table 1, the relation between the cognitive structural component and consumer behavior can be seen. The correlation value $r = 0,542$ $p < 0,01$ indicates that it is statistically valuable and the assumption stated in the sub-hypothesis about the existence of relation between the cognitive structural component and consumer behavior is justified.

Besides the relation between attitudes towards advertisements and consumer behavior, the correlation between attitude towards advertisements of parents and attitude towards advertisements of young adults, and consumer behavior of both subsamples is also examined. The statistical values will more clearly give us an overview on the existence or non-existence of connectivity.

Discussion

From the findings of the correlative analysis, we will primarily discuss the statements of the sub-hypothesis, so we can interpret more clearly the *relation between the structural components of attitude: emotional, motivational, cognitive, and consumer behavior*.

The results of correlative analysis are statistically valid, and we can freely conclude that the statement in H1 hypothesis and sub-hypothesis is proved, and that there is relation between structural components of attitude: emotional, motivational, cognitive, and consumer behavior. The obtained values show clearly that such a relation exists, and that the structural components are related among them, which is proved also by the research conducted by Ruiz and Sicilia (2004); Dragoti (2000) which argue that the emotional, motivational and cognitive systems are related and function as a whole. Attitudes would have no sense if there was no such relation between the components. By increasing the structural components: emotional, motivational and cognitive, the emergence of consumer behavior is higher.

Regarding the proved correlations, when the advertisement makes us feel good, pleasant, evokes positive emotions, gives sufficient information for the use, benefits, desire, readiness, then these components create a nucleus which stimulates consumer behavior.

Even the research undertaken by Triandis (1971), presents the multidimensional model, and according to him, the interaction between the emotional, motivational, and cognitive elements is important in the composition of attitudes, which is asserted in the main and sub-hypothesis. While the research conducted by Shimp (1981), stresses that the construct of the advertisement has two central dimensions: the cognitive and emotional. The cognitive dimension suggests that consumer attitude towards the advertisement means that a consumer likes advertising because he or she considers that the advertisement is informative or entertaining.

As far as the emotional structural component of attitude is concerned, Bauer and Greyser, 1966, noted that even when the customer criticizes an aspect of advertising they still accept it as part of life and they generally have a pleasant attitude towards advertising which means that the advertisement evokes beautiful emotions and feelings, and the achieved results and values in the

research prove the same (Table 1). Advertisements based on emotions rarely contain factual information about the product, while the emotion can transmit warm feelings and favorable effect; attitudes formed by such processes are stronger and lead to consumer behavior. The emotion as a structural component of attitude leads the subject to memorize the advertisement as a nice feeling and thus gains consumer attention (Moore and Hutchinson, 1983). Coulter's research emphasizes that when people express positive feeling towards advertisements they transfer those feeling on the advertized product. Furthermore, the entertainment in the advertisement incites confidence growth towards advertisements, and at the same time the cognitive component of attitude is strengthened. The relation between the cognitive structural component of attitude and consumer behavior, the achieved values confirmed their relation, Calfe and Ringold (1994) point out that the consumer considers the advertisement as informative and they choose the conviction as the descriptive element for the advertisement. When the advertisement offers the necessary information to the consumer then it enables its proper functioning. Aaker and Norris (1982; 61) found a positive correlation between the cognitive and entertaining function in the advertisement. This means that the form and content which are the concept of the advertisement make it interesting and valuable.

This relation between the structural components of attitude can serve as good information to researchers and help them attract customers, therefore linking advertisements with something that is dear and important to people, makes you feel good and brings positive emotions .

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