PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CONSUMER’S AND THE ADVERTISE IN TERMS OF FACTORS THAT LEADS TO CONSUMER’S DECISION MAKING

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Abstract

The present article holds forth consumer and advertise psychology with regard to factors which control the decisional behavior of a potential consumer. The aim of this article was that of inquiring factors which can govern decisional behavior of a potential buyer starting with a series of facts which are present in consumers psychology as well as in the advertise psychology. This article forged into the scientific literature approaching two complementary topics. On one hand the decisional behavior was approached with regard to consumer’s psychology and on the other hand it was approached with regard to advertise psychology. The article is targeting an investigation of the scientific literature with regard to consumer’s psychology from the perspective of the decisional process, the theory of cognitive dissonance, the impulse of shopping as well as the perspective of cognitive and emotional aspects which are involved in the potential consumer’s decision. Another inquiry was made from the perspective of advertise psychology with regard to a series of aspects as those of the strategies used to elaborate advertises meant to generate emotions responsible for the consuming decision. An emphasize was also laid upon the use of advertises that appeal to the sexual sensors and their consequences. Some ethic aspects of different types of advertise were also discussed as well as the attitude presented by a potential consumer with regard to an advertise as well as his disposition. To conclude the article investigated a series of aspects which are particular for consumer’s and advertise psychology with regard to different factor which can influence decisional behavior.

Cuvinte cheie: psihologia consumatorului, psihologia reclamei, factori decizionali

Keywords: consumer’s psychology, advertising psychology, decisional factors.

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1. **CONSUMER’S PSYCHOLOGY**

Consumer’s psychology is taking concern in the study of consumer’s behavior with regard to psychological, physiological and decisional perspectives but also with regard to some other elements which are easy to notice and they are related to the acts a consumer performs when he/she is about to buy a product. This field studies in particular the way in which we choose to distribute our resources in order to purchase some products or some services. Consumer’s decision is influenced to a great extent by his/her motivation to buy or not to buy a certain product. Potential buyer’s behavior is influenced by a series of psychological, cultural, social and economical factors which concur to the final decision in becoming a buyer, consumer and user of some products and services.

(Kotler, 1999) thinks that the decisional process is composed of many details which start from looking for information up to the after-purchase behavior. Therefore behind the decision there are a series of fundamental behavioral mechanisms. A first theory which tries to explain the after-purchase behavior is the theory of cognitive dissonance. This theory considers that a potential buyer is taking action in the sense of reducing cognitive dissonance between behavior and his/her way of thinking (Festinger, 1957). Theory tells us that at the very moment when a potential buyer is on the verge of perceiving an internal cognitive dissonance he/she will change his/her actions, opinions, attitude in order to reestablish his/her inner balance. The author states that a potential buyer in the middle of the purchase process of a product can come across several kinds of cognitive dissonances along the way. Cognitive dissonances can be internal and refer to a product, they can emerge within the relation product-seller but also within the relation product-image. Studies of Heider (1946, 1958) and the theory of cognitive dissonance offers at present a series of explanatory models of the purchase process, models which are generally based on human tendency of searching for equilibrium. Heider (1958) considers that because of the lack of balance, the cognitive dissonance phenomenon will create a state of tension. Croyle & Cooper (1983) mention that the cognitive dissonance state is easy to detect from a physiological and physiological point of view because of the electric conductivity and the tickling of the skin.

Another factor which can influence consumer’s behavior is related to the impulse of purchasing some goods or products. Thus the vast majority of people, as Rook (1987) also states, following their desire to find solutions for the problems they encounter, they are pushed by a purchase impulse especially for solving their state of inner psychic tension. Within the decision of a potential consumer to purchase a product, a series of factors may emerge, factors which can be related to the impulse of acquisition, family and friends influence, publicity agencies, mood, the state they face in general and last but not least their emotions. These factors can offer a wider image of a consumer’s behavior, combining cognitive and emotional aspects involved in the decision taken by the consumer (Kanuk and Schiffman, 2000). Factors which thus influence the purchase decision of a potential buyer are divers and complex. For a better understanding of consumer’s decision we need to
keep in mind the way in which these factors co-operate and also we need to identify motivations which influence this decision.

2. ADVERTISE PSYCHOLOGY

Advertise psychology needs to be understood from its double perspective, as a process and as a product. From the perspective of a product the advertise has a declared purpose, that of selling ideas, goods, products. In the advertise elaboration process we need to make a call upon the techniques, methods and theories which constitute the foundation of elaborating the final product. The success of an advertise or the advertise strategy depends at present on the scientific fundaments used in elaborating it.

Advertises often use a series of strategies meant to trigger those emotions and feelings responsible with the consume desire. On the other hand, the messages the advertises send have as main target to catch attention of the potential consumers. One of the most used instruments in catching attention is the presence of sexual stimuli in the advertise.

Using sex in advertises has multiple aspects. In order for an advertise to be successful there needs to be a correspondence between sexual stimuli and the advertised brand. On the other hand specialists in the publicity field need to keep in mind a series of aspects and cultural values of the target population. In the 80’s (Soley&Reid, 1988; Tinkham&Reid, 1988) thought that advertsises with sexual connotation became more and more explicit then how they were some few decades ago. Also in the 80’s some authors (Alexander&Judd, 1986) observed the fact that advertises with erotic content have a positive effect upon the perception of a potential consumer and upon the product, especially when the sexual stimuli make a direct connection to the brand. (Neiss, 1988), thinks that erotic stimuli have a positive effect, which can be translated by the emergence of a tension. Some others authors consider that advertises which make use of those stimuli that are loaded with sexual tendencies must be regarded as a genius kind (Stern&Holbrook, 1994) and they also need to be seen from the perspective of some potential negative effects as: increase of acceptance to premature sexual behaviors, non-marriages (Kalof, 1999). The use of erotic stimuli brought a series of controversial.

In the context in which (Boddewyn, 1991) the problematic of sex is facing a continues change and the things that up to now were considered to be indecent, intolerable they become decent and acceptable. In this current situation a really important part is played by psychologists who work in the advertise companies. When elaborating advertises and using sexual stimuli an important part is played by the perception of a women’s sex-role perception which at present appears to be another dispute (Boddewyn and Kunz, 1991). In another study (Dahl, Sengupta, Vohs, 2009), authors have tried to investigate consumers reaction to sexual publicity with regard to the way in which men and women conceptualize relations
and sexual behaviors. They have proved that women’s spontaneous aversion to this kind of publicity has reduced when the advertise could be interpreted in a sense of men’s commitment to women.

The success of an advertise in which sexual stimuli are used has determined the scale of congruency between product, brand and sexual stimuli. This congruency is thus favorable for positive evaluations (Baker and Churchill, 1977). Some authors consider that an advertise it’s easier to remember when it involves more emotional dynamism while rolling back it’s sequences (Thorson & Friestad, 1984).

(Belch et al, 1981) suggests that women’s attitude towards the use of sexual stimuli in advertise is negative. Some other researchers suggest that the use of advertise with explicit sexual nature can create a favorable attitude which can eventually lead to the intention of a potential consumer to purchase (Severn et al., 1990). (Fetto 2001) tells us that the use of images that promote the idea of attachment, love, might have a better impact upon potential consumers then the use of images which appeal to sexual stimuli. Thus potential consumers are twice more motivated to buy that product.

Some authors suggest that the use of advertises with sexual stimuli was a mean of easily attracting attention in the field of publicity which was already overcrowded. (Reichert, Heckler and Jackson 2001). Advertises which appeal to the sexual stimuli are perceived as lacking ethic and being offensive (LaTour and Henthorne 1994; Tai 1999). In these cases potential consumers can show aversion to it (Henthorne & LaTour, 1995; Zinkhan, 1994). (Gould, 1994) considers this dispute of using sexual stimuli in advertises as being one of interest with regard to ethics. The author states that an answer in this situation can be offered through an investigation of the attitude replies which were either positive or negative given to these advertises from the perspective of ethic and moral theories.

Advertises can prove to be useful and ethic in the context in which they inform the potential consumer with regard to some risks that he/she exposes him/herself. Within this context this kind of advertises can maximize the chances to entail all the needed behaviors (Assael, 1987; Vakratsas & Amber, 1999). Another aspect we can relate with the presence of sexual stimuli in advertises and with the decision of the potential consumer is his/her attitude towards the brand, the product which appears in the advertise. The attitude is most of the times a foreseer of intention of purchase. The potential consumer will associate thus emotional elements with the brand to which the advertise refers (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Some other authors think that regardless of the advertises nature the temper of a potential consumer might represent a good trigger for some positive attitudes which we can relate with the decision of actually buying that product (Batra & Stayman, 1990).
3. REFERENCES


**REZUMAT**

Articolul de față abordează psihologia consumatorului și a reclamei din perspectiva factorilor care determină comportamentul decizional al potențialului consumator. Obiectivul acestui articol a fost acela de a investiga factorii care determină comportamentul decizional al potențialului consumator, pornind de la o serie de date prezente atât în psihologia consumatorului cât și în psihologia reclamei. Articolul a făcut o incursiune în literatura de specialitate abordând două teme complementare. S-a abordat pe de o parte comportamentul decizional din perspectiva psihologiei consumatorului și pe de altă parte, comportamentul decizional din perspectiva psihologiei reclamei. Articolul si-a propus să investigheze literatura de specialitate privind psihologia consumatorului din perspectiva procesului decizional, a teoriei disonanței cognitive, a impulsului de a cumpăra precum și din perspectiva aspectelor cognitive și emoționale care sunt implicate în decizia potențialului consumator. Au mai fost investigate din perspectiva psihologiei reclamei o serie de aspecte precum strategiile folosite în elaborarea reclamelor menite să inducă accele emoții responsabile cu decizia de consum. S-a pus de asemenea accentul pe utilizarea reclamelor care fac apel la stimulii sexuali, pe efecte acestora. Au fost discutate și aspectele etice ale acestor tipuri de reclame, dar și atitudinea potențialului consumator în raport cu reclama, precum și dispoziția acestuia. În concluzie articolul a investigat o serie de aspecte specifice psihologie consumatorului și reclamei din perspectiva factorilor care pot influența comportamentul decizional.