

CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS MOBILE ADVERTISING IN THE
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

By

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

We hereby grant the approval of this dissertation report. The student has compiled the dissertation work as per the requirements of the University.

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CERTIFICATION OF OWN WORK

I hereby declare that this dissertation report submitted is my own work and effort and that it has not been submitted to any other institution for any award. I have acknowledged all sources of information.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

Today the field of advertising is going through fundamental changes. Primarily, rapid technological development has led to the digitalization of media. This digitalization has resulted in new types of media such as the mobile phone, which offers richer possibilities to reach consumers and interact with them. Since the mobile phone is a relatively new channel for advertising, academic research in this field has been, to a large extent, inconsistent and fragmented.

Public attitudes toward advertising have been a focus of attention for a long time. Earlier researchers found that consumers have a positive attitude towards general advertising but a few later researchers found that consumers have a negative attitude towards mobile advertising. In order to bridge this gap it was necessary to study the attitudes of Saudi consumers in depth as no research was done on the Saudi consumers specifically.

The study conducted has relied on two main sources, namely secondary sources and questionnaire. The secondary sources helped get a better insight of the consumer attitudes towards SMS advertising in general. The questionnaire helped to get a better understanding of the market that exists mainly in Jeddah, how consumers perceive SMS advertising in context of entertainment, informativeness, irritation & credibility and what are the antecedents that exist for purchase intentions. It also looks into what can be done to improve this channel of advertising.

From the results, the researcher was able to conclude that the majority of the Saudi female consumers considered SMS advertising to be informative and credible but are not willing to receive SMS advertising in the future. The study will further explain the reasons why the Saudi consumers are not willing to receive SMS advertising.

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INTRODUCTION

The high penetration rate of mobile phones has resulted in the increasing use of handheld devices to deliver advertisements for products and services. Short Messaging Service (SMS), in particular, has been very successful. A series of surveys conducted by A.T. Kearney indicates that the use of mobile information services and SMS has increased dramatically since 2001 [1]. Smartphone have become an indispensable part of our daily lives. Smartphone penetration in Saudi Arabia [2] is at 60. of the population and these Smartphone owners are becoming increasingly reliant on their devices. 66% access the Internet every day on their Smartphone and most never leave home without it.

Today the field of advertising is going through fundamental changes. Primarily, rapid technological development has led to the digitalization of media. This digitalization has resulted in new types of media such as the mobile phone, which offers richer possibilities to reach consumers and interact with them. However, in order to fully exploit the potential of the mobile phone as an advertising channel, marketers must understand the unique characteristics related to it and the ways that consumers interact with this channel. Organizations today operate in an environment that is characterized by constant change and an increase in competition as a result of globalization. Zyman [5], suggest that the biggest change in the market place is that consumers have a greater selection with regards to products and services and those organizations should become more conscious of their advertising efforts. Organizations now view advertising as an investment and tend to value over-communication with consumers, resulting in greater budgets for advertising departments than in the past [5].

Smart phones have changed the way consumers shop in Saudi Arabia. Smart phones have become critical shopping tools with 76% having researched a product or service on their device. Smartphone research influences buyer decisions and purchases across channels to an extend that 25% of Smartphone users have made a purchase on their phone [2]. Moreover, the research stated that mobile ads are noticed by 93% of Smartphone users and that Smart phones are also a critical component of traditional advertising as 70% have performed a search on their Smartphone after

seeing an offline advertisement. This without a doubt proves that Smart phones are helping advertisers connect with consumers.

Since the mobile phone is a relatively new channel for advertising, academic research in this field has been, to a large extent, inconsistent and fragmented [3]. Leppäniemi (2006) notes that mobile marketing research has mainly focused on studying factors related to the consumer. Specifically consumer attitudes toward mobile marketing have received a considerable amount of attention [4].

Public attitudes toward 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 [6]. At the same time, however, Internet advertising seems to generate positive consumer attitudes [7]. This is because Internet advertising is often thought to be informative and entertaining. Nevertheless, the results of these studies have been contradicting which suggests a need for more profound research concerning attitudes. In addition, current research has mainly focused on the antecedents of attitudes such as entertainment, informativeness and credibility of mobile advertisements [4]. However, the influence of attitudes toward mobile advertisement on consumer behavior and especially purchase intentions has been studied less. This study will look into the relationship between attitudes and purchase intentions with the purpose of gaining more understanding concerning mobile consumer behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the theoretical foundation for this study will be established. Attitude theory has its roots in social psychology and therefore the literature review will begin with research from this area. Next the concept of consumer attitudes in advertising will be discussed. The literature review will then continue with the consumer view of mobile marketing [3]. In this context the mobile will be defined as a medium of advertising in addition to consumer perceptions and their purchase intentions towards SMS advertising.

2.1 Understanding Attitudes in the Advertising Context

In today's cluttered and fragmented advertising environment, it is increasingly difficult to stand out from the crowd. In addition, consumers easily ignore advertising and consider it to have little value [8]. Also, as media costs are high advertisers are more and more concerned about the factors that contribute to effective advertising. Petty and Cacioppo (1983) state that the goal of advertising is to influence consumer behavior. This statement has important psychological implications since as Percy and Woodside (1983) note there is a strong connection between advertising, consumer psychology and social psychology. In order to design advertisements that ultimately lead to intended behavior, it is first important to understand how advertising works and the main psychological processes related to it.

2.1.1 Attitude towards Advertisement

Attitude toward advertisement can be thought of as an indicator of advertising effectiveness. In effect, studies concerning advertising effectiveness have demonstrated that advertisements influence brand attitudes by modifying consumer beliefs regarding product attributes. For example MacKenzie (1983) states that when people see an advertisement they develop an attitude toward it which influences the measures of advertising effectiveness such as brand attitude and purchase intentions.

Further studies concerning attitudes and purchase intentions have showed that brand attributes may not be the only variables influencing brand choice [18]. A study was aimed to validate Fishbein's proposition regarding attitude formation [12]. Indeed

they found that brand attribute beliefs act as a mediator to attitude formation. However, they discovered that, in effect, attitude towards ad seemed to explain brand attitude formation. Mitchell and Olson's (1981) preliminary findings on ad suggest that it accurately reflects a subject's overall evaluations of an advertising stimulus. Further, Mitchell and Olson state that the ad construct should be kept conceptually distinct from brand attribute beliefs and brand attitude. Mitchell and Olson's preliminary findings on ad and its relationship to brand attitude and purchase intentions is depicted in Figure 1.

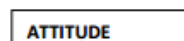


Figure 2.1. Observed mediators of advertising content on cognitive variables (Mitchell & Olson, 1981)

By understanding the general attitude towards advertisement, it will be helpful in understanding how important it is to correctly identify attitudes towards specific advertisement formats. This study will distinguish how the attitudes of consumers will affect the purchase intentions.

H1: Attitude toward mobile advertisement has a positive effect on attitude towards advertised brand.

2.1.2 Consumer Perception of Advertising

Over the years, it has been suggested that attitudes toward advertising have become more and more unfavorable [15]. Calfee and Ringold (1994) attempted to find a consistent majority view of advertising perceptions over a period of six decades. An inspection of survey data revealed that on average two thirds of consumers thinks that advertising is untruthful and that it persuades people to buy things that they do

necessarily need or want. Thus, consumers find that advertising should be more strictly regulated. However, at the same time consumers tend to find that advertising is informative [8]. Moreover, when consumers were asked to indicate whether they considered advertising to be more informative or unreasonably persuasive, most respondents chose persuasion as a descriptive characteristic of advertising. Still, respondents seemed to feel that the benefits of advertising outweigh the negative aspects. Cheung [15], reports that three quarters of the respondents in their study had either positive or neutral perceptions of advertising. In accordance to Calfee and Ringold's (1994) results presented above, the study reveals that to a large extent attitudes are mixed. At the same time consumers consider that advertising is both entertaining and offensive. What is more, over half of the respondents say that in general they do not trust advertising since they recall having been previously misled by advertising claims. Still more than two thirds seem to use information from advertising to help guide purchase decisions. This doubt whether consumers consider SMS advertisement entertaining or untrustworthy will be made obvious in this study.

H2: Consumers' positive intentions to receive mobile ads affect their behavior after receiving mobile ads.

2.1.3 Advertising Regulations

There are moral principles in any society that govern actions of individual and groups [17]. In Saudi Arabia the ministry of culture and information is the one set out the rules and the regulations that advertiser needs to adhere to them in national media. Alcohol, Cigarette, sexual scenes are illegal for neither broadcasting nor publishing in Saudi Arabia. The ministry forms a committee to receive claims and complains about any ad cross the rules or contains disturbing message to social ethics (info.gov.sa, 2009). Although, these regulation are not strictly applied in the open sky broadcasting there are still moral ethics of the society which actively used.

2.2 Understanding the Consumer View of Mobile Marketing

Rapid technological development has led to strong media fragmentation which in turn has given rise to digital advertising channels such as the mobile phone. Even though present discussion indicates that the mobile channel is a cost effective method [3] for communicating with customers marketers have not yet been able to fully

embrace its potential. This section will look at the mobile marketing from the consumer viewpoint suggested by Leppäniemi [3]. Thus the following chapters will concentrate specifically in areas such as acceptance, perception, responsiveness and attitude. These areas of mobile advertising are essential, since in order to use the mobile channel in a profitable way, advertisers need to understand how consumers perceive and evaluate the mobile phone as an advertising channel.

2.2.1 Defining Mobile Advertising

During recent years, the popularity of text messaging (SMS) has grown exponentially, which has led to the rise of the mobile advertising phenomenon [6]. Chang and Villegas (2008) argue that the mobile phone has tremendous potential for delivering advertisements because of its high penetration rate. In fact, it is the only advertising medium that consumers carry with them almost anywhere they go. The ubiquity of the mobile phone extends the time and space aspect of the traditional mass media advertising [18]. Mobile advertisements can be delivered to consumers without limitations concerning time and space.

In its simplest form, mobile advertising can be defined as advertising and adverts that are sent to and received on mobile devices such as mobile phones and personal digital assistants (PDA) in the form Mobile Web Banner (top of page) or Mobile Web Poster (bottom of page banner), SMS advertising, MMS advertising, advertising within mobile games and mobile videos, during mobile TV receipt, full-screen interstitials. Typically, the term mobile advertising is used interchangeably with SMS or text message advertising, where marketing messages are sent via mobile phones in text format. This is perhaps because SMS advertising is the most popular form of mobile advertising globally [18]. But when it comes to Saudi Arabia, just under half of the consumers find text ads trustworthy [23]. However, mobile advertising offers many different options for implementing advertising campaigns.

When defining mobile marketing a further distinction can be made between push and pull marketing campaigns. As described [4][5] push marketing as company centric marketing strategies that push the benefits of company offerings to specific marketing segments. Pull strategies, on the other hand, are seen as marketing tactics that encourage the consumer to be active. Further, pull marketing combines information and advertising which blurs the line between marketing and service [4].

In effect, the success of pull marketing lies in its ability to give power to the consumer [17]. The elements of mobile marketing discussed in this chapter have been summarized in figure 2.2.

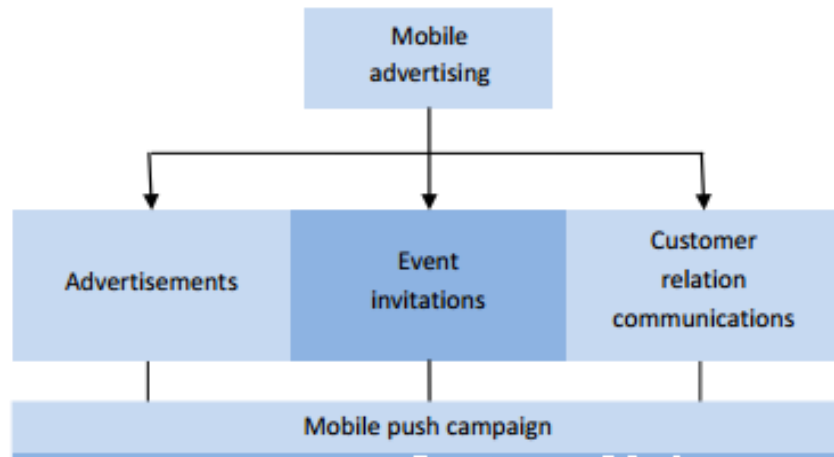


Figure 2.2. The Elements of Mobile Advertising

In order to thoroughly understand how consumer attitude is related to the purchase intentions, it is important to initially have a deep insight of what actually mobile advertising is. A deep understanding of the most common marketing campaigns via SMS advertising is necessary to be able to discover how it affects the costumer.

2.2.2 Mobile as an Advertising Medium

Traditionally, the purpose of advertising has been to communicate brand messages to consumers. In order to understand the communication process behind advertising, Shannon's (1948) mathematical theory of communication has been widely used. Shannon's theory is based on the sender who plans and sends the

message to the receiver through a chosen channel. During message transmission noise may occur which influences the understanding of message content. The proposed communication theory represents a one way communication process where the company is seen as the active party and the consumer is the passive recipient [19].

When compared to traditional advertising channels, such as the television, print and radio, the mobile phone offers possibilities for an entirely new consumer experience. Sultan and Rohm [20] divide marketing approaches along two dimensions: 1) the interactivity enabled by advertising channel and 2) the degree of location specificity offered. According to Sultan and Rohm [20], the value of the mobile channel comes from its ability to allow both interactivity and location specific marketing communication (see figure 2.3).



Figure 2.3. A Comparison of Marketing Communication approaches [20].

Moreover, the mobile phone offers the possibility for accurate targeting as well as highly personalized content, characteristics that are typical to the internet as well [21]. However, in the mobile context these characteristics have a more significant impact because identification is facilitated by the personal mobile phone number. Salo and Tähtinen (2005) argue that mobile advertising should only be used to deliver advertisements that are different from the traditional ones. This means that as the mobile phone allows interactivity and customization the most successful campaigns are those that exploit these special features. Salo and Tähtinen (2005) specify that traditional advertising is designed for a certain target group or segment, whereas mobile advertisements are targeted to an individual [21].

Before we actually start to uncover the antecedents of mobile advertising, we should know whether mobile advertising in the form of SMS is accepted generally or not.

2.2.3 Consumer Attitude towards Mobile Advertising

Attitudes toward advertising have been studied widely because as discussed earlier, they have a considerable impact on the effectiveness of advertising. A study by Mehta (2000) reported negative attitudes toward advertising due to the increasing amount of advertising and commercial clutter [13]. However, other studies have found that consumers, in fact, like advertising. In specific consumers feel that advertising is helpful in guiding purchase decisions [7]. Also, it seems that attitudes towards advertising are strongly dependent on the advertising channel. For example, Schlosser [7] found that attitudes toward advertising on the internet are more positive when compared to advertising in general. More specifically Schlosser demonstrated that as opposed to advertising in general, internet advertising was considered informative, trustworthy and entertaining. This complex nature of advertising attitudes suggests a need for understanding consumer attitudes towards advertising on the mobile channel.

Tsang studied attitudes toward SMS advertising and their impact on intentions to receive further mobile advertisements. Tsang presented a framework (see figure 2.5) that presents the factors affecting attitudes and the relationship between attitudes, intention to receive mobile advertisements and user behavior. In Tsang's framework behavior refers to the extent to which the mobile advertisement would be read and the timing for reading the message after it has been received [4].



Figure 2.4 Consumer attitudes toward mobile marketing (Tsang, 2004)

The results of the study by Tsang (2004) indicate that in general consumer attitudes toward mobile advertising are negative unless prior permission has been obtained. In addition, the results demonstrate that entertainment, informativeness and credibility are positively correlated to overall attitude whereas irritation results in negative correlation. Further, it was found that entertainment was the main factor contributing to overall attitude followed by credibility and irritation. The study also specifies that consumers with a positive attitude are more willing to accept mobile advertisements. Moreover, those who intended to receive further mobile advertisements tended to read the immediately read the entire message. In addition, it seems that incentive-based advertising is positively related to intention.

It is considerably important to learn about the consumer attitudes as it has a significant effect on the effectiveness of the advertisement. Moreover, attitudes help us to know more about the purchase intentions.

H3: Consumer attitudes are different for permission-based and general mobile advertising.

2.3 Antecedents that Influence Consumer Purchase Intentions

Purchase intentions are personal action tendencies relating to the brand. Intentions are distinct from attitudes [34]. Whereas attitudes are summary evaluations, intentions represent “the person’s motivation in the sense of his or her conscious plan to exert

effort to carry out a behavior” [34]. Thus, a concise definition of purchase intentions may be as follows:

Purchase intentions are an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand.

The attitude as per Theory of Planned Behavior -TPB [24] has background factors of the consumer like personal-demographic-psychological motive aspects, psychographics, the social factors like family/ref groups/sub cultural aspects and intervening factors like situational aspects and environmental-market aspects like 4Ps. These drive the interacting behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs and control beliefs which in turn lead to the Attitude Towards Behavior (ATB), Subjective Norms (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) respectively, which sum up to form the BI to culminate in the consumer behavior. Thus the accultured individuality of modern consumer is deeply influenced by the personal and social factors.

2.3.1 Normative Beliefs to Gain Social Recognition

Attitudes are evaluations of any aspect of the social world. Often attitudes are ambivalent; the consumer evaluates the product/brand both positively and negatively. Attitudes are often acquired from other persons through social learning. Genetic factors also influence attitudes. Strong attitudes do predict behavior. Attitudes influencing behavior are explained by Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The TPB suggests [28] that the decision to engage in a particular behavior is the result of a rational process in which the behavioral options are considered, consequences or outcomes of each are evaluated, and a decision is reached to act or not to act. That decision is then reflected in Behavioral Intentions (BIs), which strongly influences overt behavior. The TPA is an extension of the above, suggesting that in addition to the attitudes towards a given behavior and subjective norms about it, consumers also consider perceived behavioral control (their ability to perform the behavior) [27]. Several factors like attitude towards a given behavior/subjective norms concerning that behavior and perceived ability to perform it, determine Behavioral Intentions (BIs) concerning the behavior. Such intentions in turn are a strong determinant of whether the behavior is actually performed. Attitude influences behavior in different ways. When the consumer gives careful thought to his/her attitudes, intentions derived from his/her attitudes strongly predict behavior.

Situations in which the consumer cannot engage in such deliberate thoughts, the attitudes influence behavior by shaping the perceptions of the situation. Attitude change is influenced through credible persuasion methods; however, attitude change depends on the strength of arguments in the persuasion messages and the presence of persuasion cues which trigger heuristic processing. Cognitive dissonance is a tool for beneficial changes in behavior; and when the cognitive dissonance is strong, the attitude change is large [27].

2.3.2 Product Specific Knowledge or Awareness

The level of a consumer's product knowledge may affect his/her information and decision-making behavior [25][26]. The consumer [32] The IUP Journal of Management Research, considers each product through a bundle of salient attributes. Also consumers develop a set of brand beliefs about where each brand stands on each attribute/ brand image. A consumer is assumed to have a utility for each attribute. The utility function describes how the consumer expects product satisfaction to vary with different levels of each attribute. The consumer arrives at attributes (judgments/preferences) towards the brand alternatives through some evaluation procedure [27].

2.3.3 Personal Aspects / Lifestyle

The psychographic variables like lifestyle and personality, self-image of a person, influence his/her attitude profoundly. Lifestyle involves classifying people according to their values, beliefs, opinions and interests. Lifestyle is a pattern of living that determines how people choose to spend their time, money and energy, and that reflects their values, tastes and preferences [29]. Consumers often choose goods, services and activities that are associated with a certain lifestyle. Analysis of consumer lifestyles is important in producing insights into consumer behavior/ attitude [29]. Lifestyle is also defined as the means by which people live and spend time and money, mirroring a person's activities, interests and opinions, as well as demographic variables [29]. Based on Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles (VALS2), the identified self-orientation and the amount of available resources, consumers can then

be placed into one of the eight lifestyle categories: actualizers (affluent, successful consumers with a wealth of available resources), fulfilleds (satisfied, comfortable consumers who tend to be practical thinkers and look for functionality), believers (conservative consumers with strong beliefs in established codes and values), achievers (consumers who strive to achieve control in the many aspects of their lives), strivers (consumers who seek approval of others and the image of success), experiencers (young, impulsive consumers who like risk taking), makers (consumers who focus on independence and live within the context of family and work), and strugglers (consumers with little or no available resources whose goals often involve achieving basic survival needs) [29].

This study will investigate if the general lifestyle of the consumers affect their purchase intentions.

2.3.4 Social Aspects / Family Values / Reference Groups

The social influences affecting the attitude of a consumer are largely due to the family and the social reference groups. The social reference group influence relative to a brand selected is strong for a public-visible and conspicuous luxury product but weak for private necessities consumed by a family. The purchase behavior/ attitude are influenced by the Family life cycle (FLC) stage/needs and the lifestyle adopted. Socialization of consumers is a process by which people learn the social roles and behaviors they need to participate effectively in the society [30], of which the family is the most powerful socialization influence on the consumer. Family core values influence attitudes. Consumers buy key benefits of the products and are based on beliefs leading to attitude formation. For a large size family, the priority would be on more efficient use of disposable income, perceived risk reduction, higher information search, and while for a higher income family time is the most valuable resource with less information search and lower brand loyalty. Attitudes are affected by situations [30]. The various inhibiting factors for a favorable attitude are high perceived risk, poor confidence level, little frequency of purchase, non-availability of the preferred brand even when money is available, and not enough money/time available, situational factors like terms of unattractive sale / unfavorable moods of consumer.

Attitudes are learnt through interaction with others like the family and the peer groups [27].

2.3.5 Post-Purchase Reactions – Dissonance/Complaints

The post-purchase (after sales) behavior is also important for a consumer. When the perceived performance is greater than the minimum desired expectation, satisfaction (brand loyalty/repeat purchases) results; and when the minimum desired expectation falls short of the perceived performance, dissonance sets in (complaint behavior). Cognitive dissonance is a post-purchase phenomenon arising because of the conflicting actions with regard to the self-image of the consumer, in a bid to maintain cognitive consistency. Cognitive dissonance influences future attitude owing to the behavioral experience preceding it. Past behavior is a useful addition to TPB for a wide range of behavioral domains [31] as a predictor of attitude-BI.

H4: Attitude towards mobile advertisement has a positive direct effect on purchase intentions

Informativeness

Entertainment

Attitude

Intention

Behavior

Credibility

Irritation

Figure 2.5 Research Framework

The above framework is used to validate the results. The research will be focusing on these 4 antecedents of attitude and if these antecedents influence the purchase intentions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology helps in making the strategy or plan of action that links methods to the outcomes. “Methodology” implies more than simply the methods you intend to use to collect data. It is often necessary to include a consideration of the concepts and theories which underlie the methods.

The research mainly revolves around the question that “What are the consumer attitudes towards mobile advertisement and how can those attitudes affect the purchase intentions or behavior?” The research mainly focuses on the antecedents of

consumer attitudes. We hypothesize that mobile advertisements via SMS have limited effect on purchase intentions and that consumers barely regard SMS advertising as informative or persuasive. A study that highlights the factors influencing the purchase intentions helps us assume that mobile advertisement does not play a major role while making purchase decisions; rather norms, culture, benefits, prior knowledge and post-purchase reactions play an essential role.

3.1 Three Approaches to Research

The three main approaches are summarized below:

- A quantitative approach is one in which the investigatory primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge (i.e., cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation, and the test of theories), employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistics data.
- Alternatively, a qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives (i.e., the multiple meanings of individual experiences meanings socially and historically constructed, with an intent of developing a theory or pattern) or advocacy/participatory perspectives (i.e., political, issue-oriented, collaborative, or change oriented) or both. It also uses strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded

theory studies, or case studies. The researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data.

- Finally, a mixed methods approach is one in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g., consequence-oriented, problem-centered, and pluralistic). It employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problem. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information (e.g., on instruments) as well as text information (e.g., on interviews) so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information.

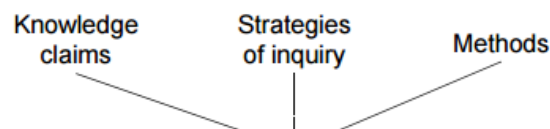


Figure 3.1. Summarized approaches to research

3.2 The Selected Approach – Quantitative Approach

Research methods in education (and the other social sciences) are often divided into two main types: quantitative and qualitative methods. The following definition, taken from Aliaga and Gunderson (2000), describes what we mean by quantitative research methods very well: Quantitative research is ‘Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)’ [33]. Quantitative research is essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon, particular questions seem immediately suited to

being answered using quantitative methods [33]. Quantitative research is comparatively more suited for this study than qualitative research because it is conclusive in its purpose as it tries to quantify the problem and understand how prevalent it is by looking for projectable results to a larger population. Whereas, qualitative research is by definition exploratory, and it is used when we do not know what to expect, to define the problem or develop an approach to the problem. Quantitative research achieves this aim by designing research instruments aimed specifically at converting phenomena that do not naturally exist in quantitative form into quantitative data, which we can analyze statistically. Examples of this are attitudes and beliefs. We might want to collect data on pupils' attitudes to their school and their teachers. These attitudes obviously do not naturally exist in quantitative form (we don't form our attitudes in the shape of numerical scales!). Yet we can develop a questionnaire that asks pupils to rate a number of statements (for example, 'I think school is boring') as either 'agree strongly', 'agree', 'disagree' or 'disagree strongly', and give the answers a number (e.g. 1 for 'disagree strongly', 4 for agree strongly). Now we have quantitative data on pupil attitudes to school. In the same way, we can collect data on a wide number of phenomena, and make them quantitative through data collection instruments such as questionnaires or tests. While quantitative methods have some notable advantages, they also have disadvantages, which mean that some phenomena are better studied by using different (qualitative) methods [33].

Quantitative approach has two strategies or procedures that it follows. They are the experimental designs and non-experimental designs.

- Experimental designs:
 - True experiments with random group assignment
 - Quasi-experiments that use nonrandomized designs
- Non-experimental designs – surveys
 - Longitudinal and cross and cross -sectional studies using studies using questionnaires or structured interviews

To summarize, quantitative approach uses post positivist claims for developing knowledge, employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and

collects data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data. Table 1 clearly explains the knowledge claims, strategy of inquiry and the methods to be used.

| <i>Research Approach</i> | <i>Knowledge Claims</i> | <i>Strategy of Inquiry</i> | <i>Methods</i> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Quantitative | Postpositivist assumptions | Experimental design | Measuring attitudes, rating behaviors |
| Qualitative | Constructivist assumptions | Ethnographic design | Field observations |

Table 3.1: Four Alternative Combinations of Knowledge Claims, Strategies of Inquiry, and Methods

Data collection in this research has been done by the following tools:

- Questionnaire which consists of 13 questions
- The medium used to ask questions was surveymonkey.com
- Sample size consists of 145 respondents from Saudi Arabia.

In order to gather information from the general public, a survey was designed online and distributed via emails and social media in order to collect responses from various parts of Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire was sent to the students of Effat University, Arab Open University and to the general public. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it first inquired about the behavioral aspects of mobile advertisement, transitioning to consumer attitudes and perception and the final section related to the purchase intentions of the consumers.

3.3 Designing the Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a means of provoking feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes of the respondents. As a data collecting instrument, it could be structured or unstructured. A poorly designed questionnaire can have a poor effect on the sample data that is going to be collected. Questionnaire has the ability to influence the

response rate achieved in the survey, the quality of responses obtained and consequently the conclusions drawn from the survey results [33].

The advantages of questionnaires:

- It is practical.
- Large amounts of information can be collected from a diverse group of people.
- It isn't time consuming
- Can be carried out by the researcher or by any number of people with limited affect to its validity and reliability.
- The results of the questionnaires can be quickly and easily quantified by either a researcher or through the use of a software package.
- Can be analyzed more 'scientifically' and objectively than other forms of research.
- When data has been quantified, it can be used to compare and contrast other research and may be used to measure change.
- It is believed that quantitative data can be used to create new theories and / or test existing hypotheses.

3.4 Sample Size and Population

Sampling can be defined as the method or the technique consisting of selection for the study or research. Sampling method is the process or the method of drawing a definite number of the individuals, cases or the observations from a particular target, selecting part of a total group for investigation [33]. Sampling has the following advantages:

- Very accurate
- Economical in nature
- Very reliable
- High suitability ratio towards the different surveys
- Takes less time

- In cases, when the target is very large, then the sampling method is the only practical method for collecting the data.

The sample mainly focused on men and women from above the age of 20 till 55. The purpose was to figure out the attitude of consumers towards the advertisements they receive on their mobile phones irrespective of their gender. The sample size the researcher managed to collect for this research was a total of 145 respondents.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The hypothesis the researcher had formed before conducting the research work was that mobile advertisements via SMS have limited effect on purchase intentions and that consumers barely regard SMS advertising as informative or persuasive. The results of the research showed that the hypothesis was partially accurate, as SMS advertising had limited effect on the purchase intentions but at the same time SMS advertising was considered informative. But this result cannot be applied as a general statement mainly due to the demographics of the respondents, as the majority of the respondents consisted of females with a total of 83.8%.

The survey was arranged in such a way that it inquired mainly about their attitudes towards SMS advertising and the influence on the antecedents of purchase attitude.

Figure 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 aims to find out how frequently the respondents received SMS's per day. As shown below, 85.6% of the respondents said that they did receive a SMS advertisement and 60.80% of the respondents claimed that they receive 1-3 SMS's per day. This tells us that SMS advertising is a popular media amongst the Saudi consumers as 84.8% said that the format of the message was SMS.

Have you ever received an ad message

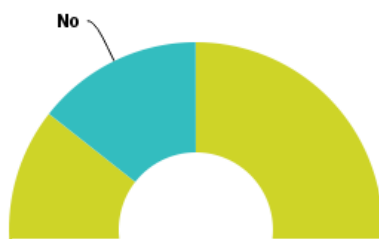


Figure 4.1

How many ad messages do you receive on your mobile phone, per day ?

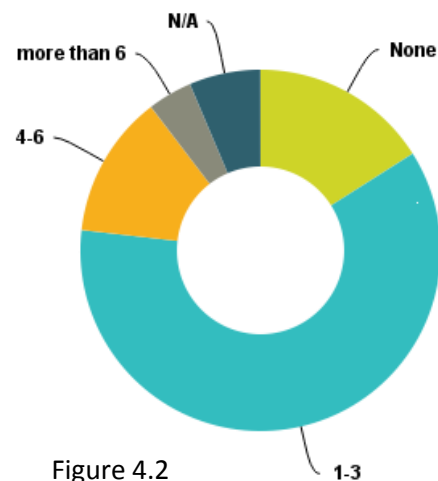


Figure 4.2

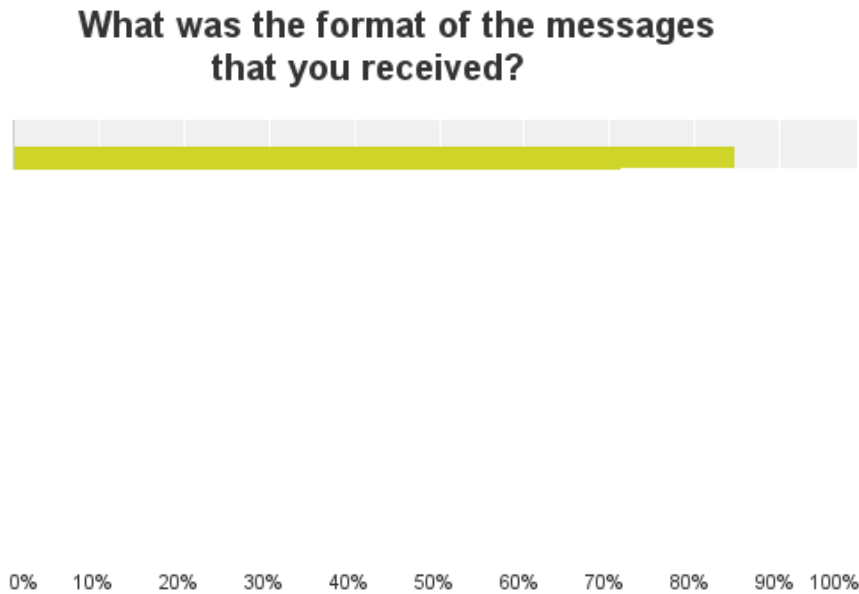


Figure 4.3

As we are now aware that the concept of SMS advertising is not new to the Saudi consumers, we further investigated if the SMS's received by the respondents were read or not. Figure 4.4 shows us that a high percentage of respondents ignored the SMS as soon as it was received. Nearly 32% decided to ignore the SMS followed by 27.2% deleting it without even reading. On the other hand, 20.8% of the respondents read the SMS right away, with an additional 18.4% who read the SMS later. Unfortunately, only 1.6% of the respondents bothered to forward the SMS's.

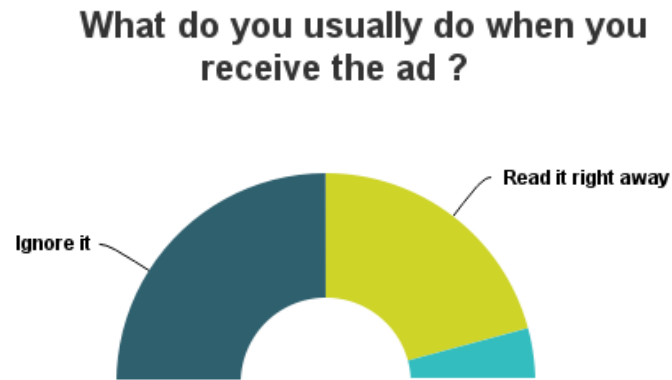


Figure 4.4

These high percentages of consumers who ignore SMS were then asked about the specific reasons to it. The framework presented by Tsang was used to understand the factors that affected the attitudes of the consumers. Figures 4.5 & 4.6 measured the entertainment aspect of the SMS advertising. The researcher had hypothesized that SMS advertising is more irritating to consumers than it is entertaining and the results clearly prove that the researcher's hypothesis was correct. Figures 4.7 – 4.10 shows the measured irritation aspect of SMS advertising in the Saudi consumers.

I feel that receiving mobile advertisements is enjoyable and entertaining.

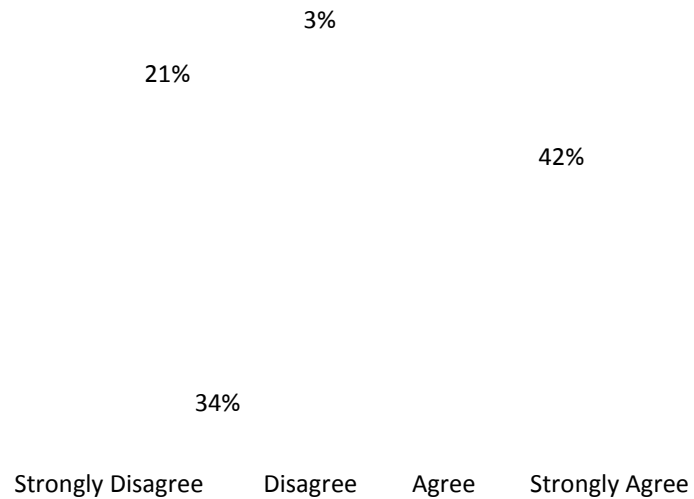


Figure 4.5

I feel that receiving mobile advertisements is pleasant.

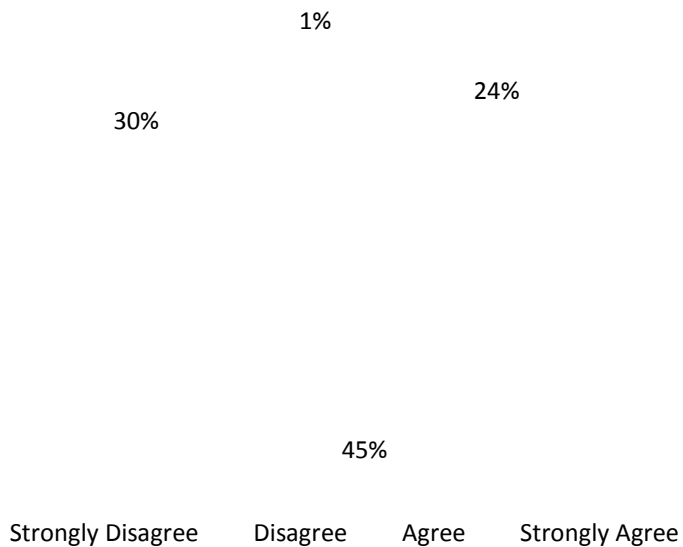


Figure 4.6

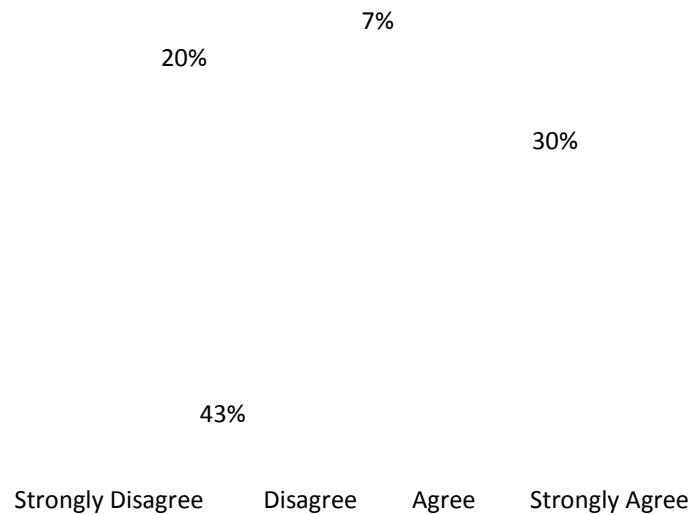
I feel that mobile advertising is irritating

Figure 4.7

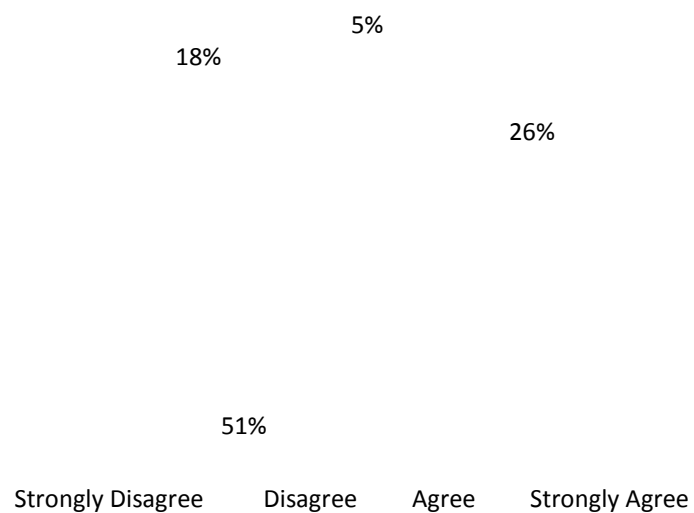
Mobile marketing is more manipulative than it is informative

Figure 4.8

Contents in mobile advertisements are often annoying

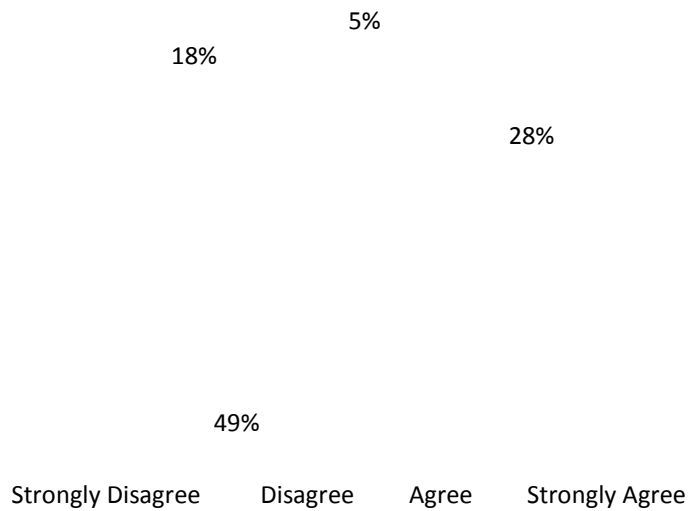


Figure 4.9

Mobile marketing is disturbing

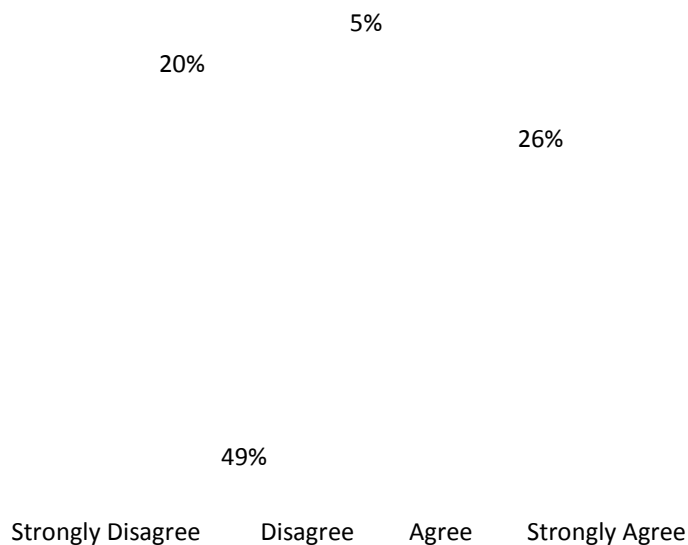
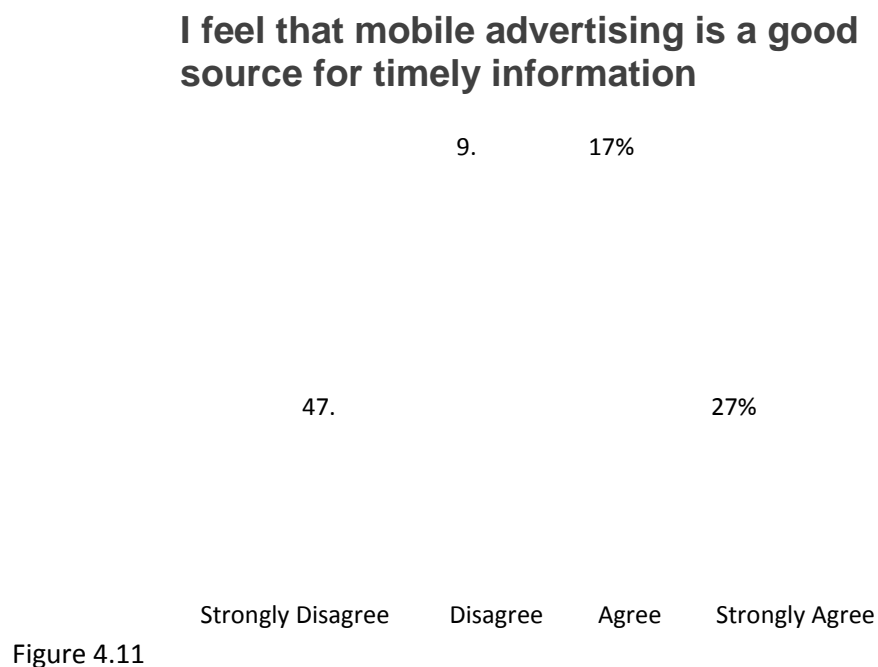


Figure 4.10

These figures above show that the consumers of Saudi Arabia considered SMS advertising more irritating and rather manipulative than informative. SMS advertising was considered a disturbance by almost half of the respondents. These results were not unexpected as previous studies did mention that consumers have a negative attitude towards mobile advertising.

Furthermore, the two other elements of the framework were measured, informativeness and credibility. The results of these two elements were not as predicted; consumers considered SMS advertisements useful and a good source of timely information. Moreover, they considered that mobile marketing helps them keep up-to-date about products and services that they are interested in. Figures 4.11– 4.13 shows the summary of the informativeness of SMS advertising. But with SMS advertisement came the issue of credibility. Are the SMS ads trustworthy? Is the sender appropriate? Figures 4.14– 4.18 depicts that the Saudi consumers felt that the SMS's were credible if it were sent by the mobile network operator or if the SMS contained a company number. Almost 35% said that they used mobile advertising as a reference for purchasing or that they will probably buy the product or service mentioned in the text message or take part in the event.



Mobile advertisements provide the information I need

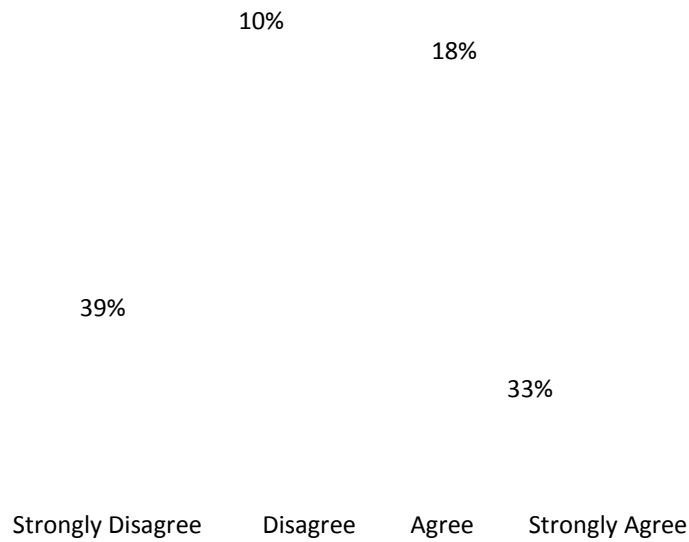


Figure 4.12

Mobile marketing helps me keep up-to-date about products and services that I am interested in

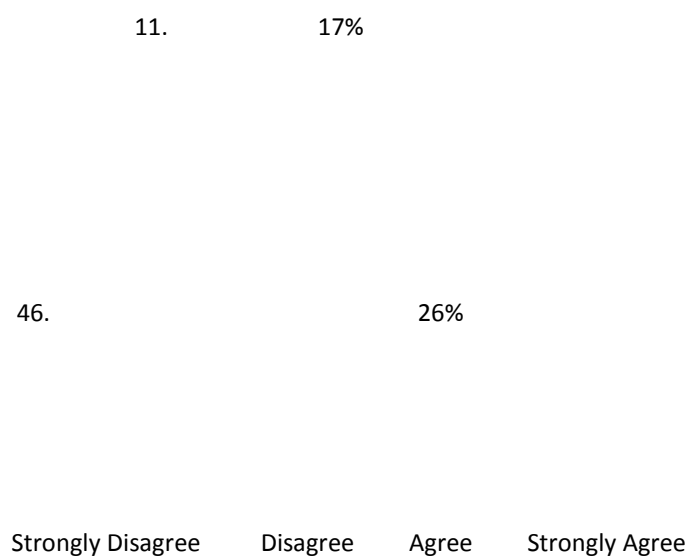


Figure 4.13

I use mobile advertising as a reference for purchasing

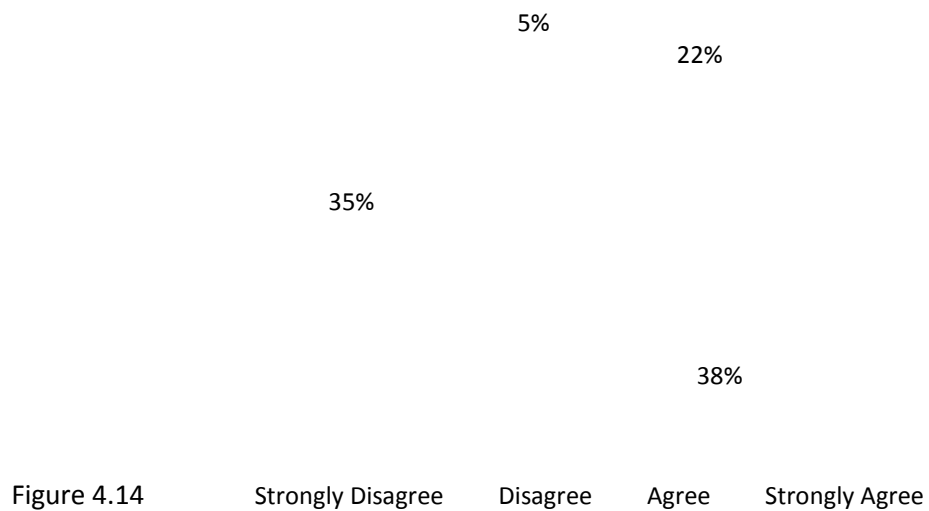


Figure 4.14

I would trust the mobile ad that contains company number

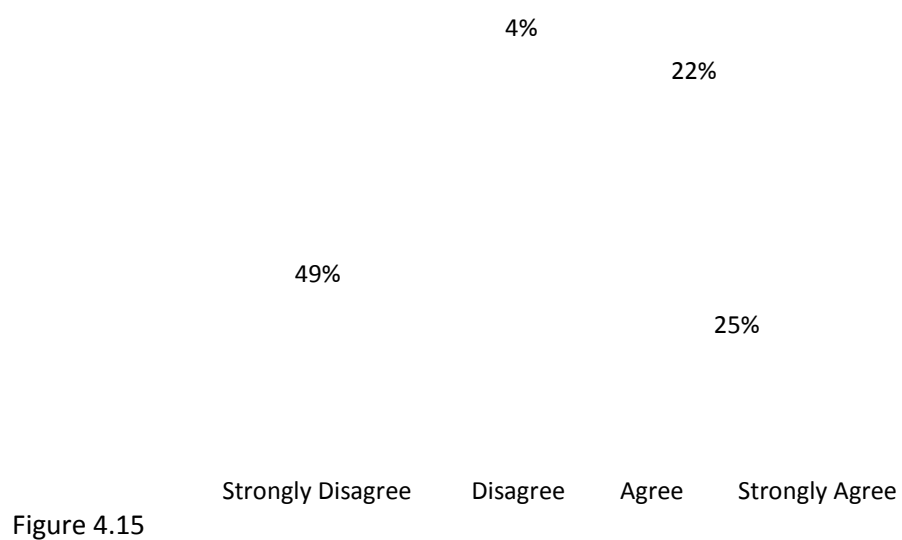


Figure 4.15

I trust mobile ads sent by a mobile network operator (Sawa, Mobily or Zain)

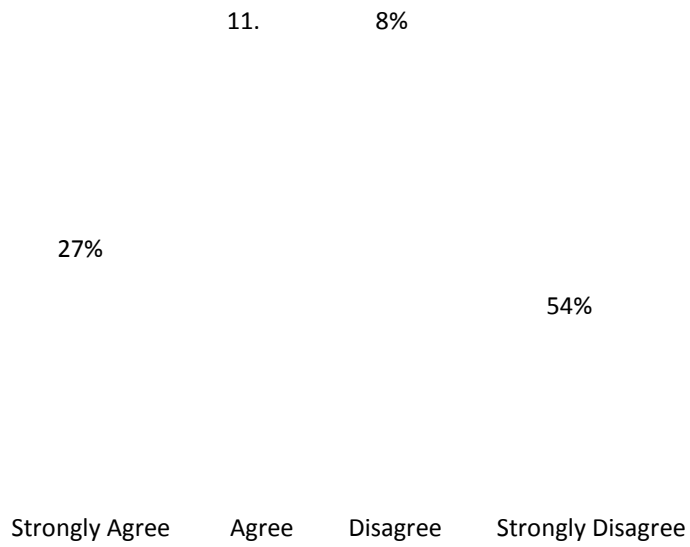


Figure 4.16

I will probably buy the product or service mentioned in the text message or take part in the event

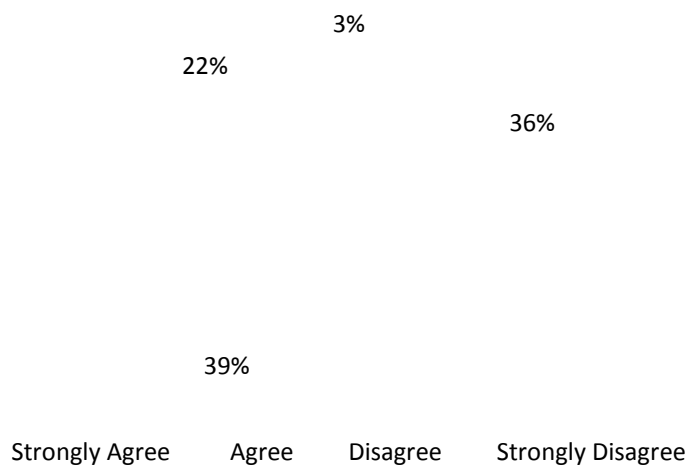
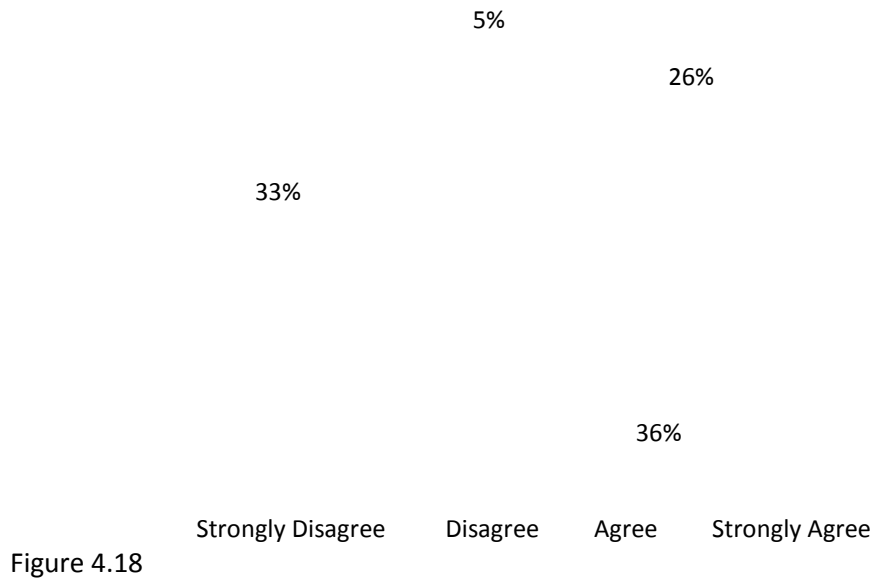


Figure 4.17

I trust mobile advertisements



After investigating the four elements of the framework presented by Tsang, which were entertainment, irritation, informativeness and credibility, we can now state that although the Saudi consumers consider SMS advertising to be irritating they also reckon that it is informative and credible. Nearly 40% said that they did use SMS advertising as a reference for purchasing which shows that mobile advertisement does affect the purchase intentions to some extent and that the Saudi population trusts mobile advertisements. To further investigate the antecedents for purchase attitude/intentions we asked them to rate the fundamental antecedents on the relative influence on their current purchase attitude.

Figure 4.19 shows the ranking of the antecedents according to the total weighted average. The results show that the most influencing factor for purchase attitude is the values/reference group norms with the weighted average of 2.85 while the least influencing factor is the perceived ease-of-use with the weighted average of 2.53.

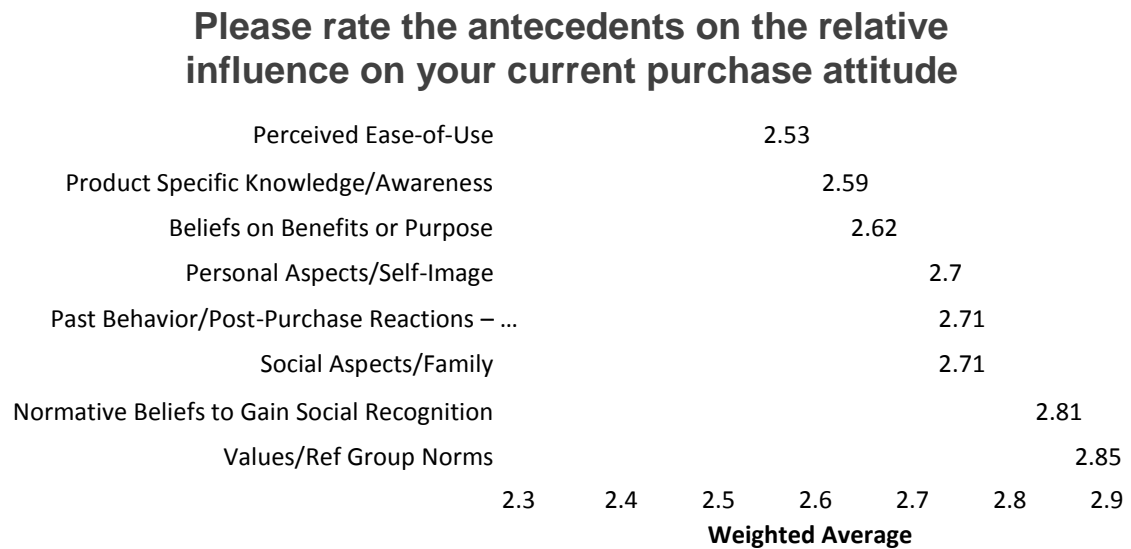


Figure 4.19

The above figure helps us conclude that consumers in Saudi Arabia consider the norms or values very important while making a purchase decision. Followed by the beliefs to gain social recognition which proves that social recognition is an essential part to the Saudi consumers and that they believe is an important factor while making a purchase decision. On the contrary, perceived Ease-of-use of the product, product awareness or the benefits and purpose of the product are to the lower end on the influencing scale. Surprisingly, the most prime factor, past behavior/Post purchase reactions were ranked at the fourth position in line with social aspects/family. This roughly proves that the Saudi consumers care more about the society or their recognition due to the products they use. Overall, when asked if the Saudi consumers would want to receive advertisements via SMS their response was predictable! Figure 4.20 below shows the responses.

I am willing to receive advertisements via SMS in future

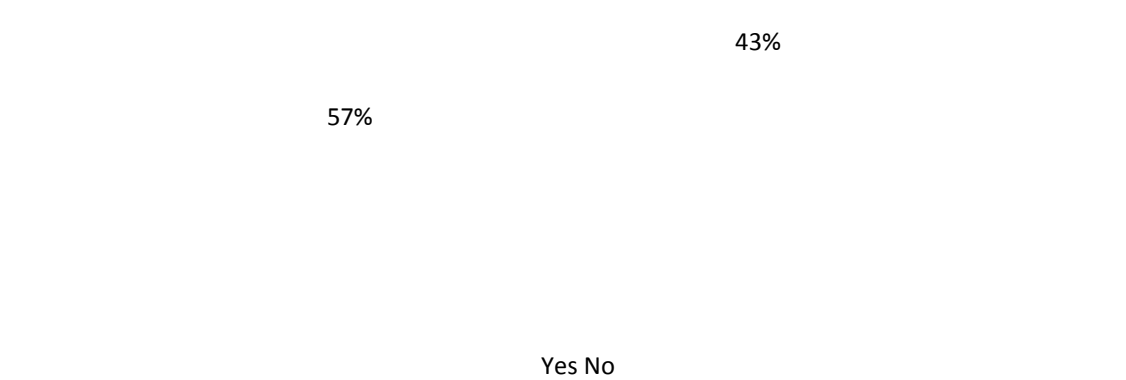


Figure 4.20

Through figures 4.21– 4.23, the researcher can conclude that most of the respondents were in the age range of 15-35, mainly consisting of females who lived in Jeddah city. This age range does cover an important demographic range since almost 50% of the Kingdoms population comprises of the youth.



Figure 4.21

Which part of Saudi Arabia do you belong to?

Jeddah Makkah Madinah Taif Riyadh Others

Figure 4.22

By looking at figure 4.22 the research can see most of the responses are female. The female responses clearly have out beaten the male response. This is due to the fact of limited time available to collect the results.

Gender

16%

84%

Male Female

Figure 4.23

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

There is quite a few research works that has been conducted on the consumer attitudes and purchase behaviors, but none of them were focused on the Saudi consumers. The penetration rate of smart phones in Saudi Arabia was comparatively the highest amongst the GCC countries which made the population extremely dependent on their mobile phones. This change caused the advertising industry to focus on advertising via mobile and reaching a far larger target market much easily.

The purpose of this research was to investigate the influences of attitudes towards mobile advertisement and the relationship between consumer behaviors and especially purchase intentions as they had not been studied much about. This research helped in identifying why the Saudi consumers behaved negatively towards SMS advertising and to what extend were those advertisement useful in making a purchase decision.

The results showed that majority of the Saudi female consumers considered SMS advertising to be informative and credible but are not willing to receive SMS advertising in the future. The main reason for not wanting to receive SMS ads in the future is that they believe it is irritating and disturbing. Apart from the consumer attitude towards SMS advertising this research found out that the fundamental antecedent for making a purchase decision are the norms and value of reference groups or the people they surround themselves with. It is important that the product they are considering to buy helps in making them recognizable in the society. Product benefits or the ease-of-use were not considered essential.

In conclusion, there is still a lot of scope in mobile advertising industry as the consumers in Saudi Arabia are highly dependent on their mobile phones and conduct a search before buying anything they need. This research paper consists of a few limitations which the future researches can try to avoid. An important limitation of the study is related to the collection and processing of data. Regarding the external validity of the results, because majority of the data reflects only the perspective of young female adults who are mainly university students from the Jeddah region, it is quite possible that relationships found in this study do not apply to other types of consumers exactly as presented. Regarding the data collection procedure, although effort was made to make it clear what mobile marketing was and what was being

evaluated, some respondents might not have had a full grasp of the concept before answering the questionnaire, which might have jeopardized the quality of information collected. Regarding the analysis procedure, due to the time constraint a very basic and common method of analysis was used which has caused the research to be deprived of quality results.

Future research may also explore other scales for the constructs or constructs that are conceptually similar, comparing results with those here obtained. Finally, it would be interesting to investigate possible moderating effects that certain demographic variables (e.g. gender, income, age) might have on the relationships observed in the model.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Consumer's Attitude Towards Mobile Advertising

This survey aims at the consumer attitudes and their purchase intentions based on the advertisements that they receive on their mobile phones.

*** 1. Gender**

- ☒ Female
☐ Male

*** 2. Age**

- ☐ Under 15
☐ 15 - 25
☒ 26 - 35
☐ 36 - 45
☐ 46 - 55
☐ 56 and above

*** 3. Which part of Saudi Arabia do you belong to?**

- ☐ Dammam
☐ Jubail

Section A**Behavioral Aspect towards Mobile advertisement**

*** 4. Have you ever received an ad message on your mobile phone ?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

*** 5. How many ad messages do you receive on your mobile phone, per day ?**

- ☐ None
☐ 1-3
☐ 4-6
☐ more than 6
☐ N/A

*** 6. What was the format of the messages that you received?**

- ☐ SMS
☐ MMS
☐ Both
☐ N/A

Other (please specify) _____

*** 7. What do you usually do when you receive the ad ?**

- ☐ Read it right away
☐ Read it later
☐ Forward it
☐ Delete it

Section B**Consumer Attitude & Perception***** 8. Entertainment**

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I feel that receiving mobile advertisements is enjoyable and entertaining. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I feel that receiving mobile advertisements is pleasant. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

*** 10. Irritation**

Section C

