

The Influence of Marketing and Communication in Changing Consumers Expectations



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ABSTRACT: The main purpose of the present study is to highlight as well as analyze the use of different documentation in the specialty literature and also the influence that communication and marketing have on changing consumer behavior. The objective of the study is to analyze the implications of marketing and communication on consumer behavior and attitudes and how they influence the business market. Consumer expectations are always considered one of the most crucial factors because of the difference they make in the decision-making process before and after purchase. This always helps to determine customer satisfaction post-purchase. The information provided to the customers about each product or service has to be very well explained and cause excitement so that the customers want to buy it. Recently, marketers have understood the implication of the phrase "*exceeding the expectations*" in the business world, as it is one of the most important factors when it comes to satisfying consumers. A brief description of the study method is included in the literature survey to assimilate the data collection methodologies for better understanding. The main purpose of the present paper is to provide an illustration of the role of marketing as well as communication with segmented consumers. The impacts could have been much more effective if the marketers were able to categorize the customer segments from narrow to wide generalizations. Also, the relevance of effective marketing strategies and communication modes must be acknowledged and well implemented by millions of marketing experts worldwide. The strategic implementation of these measures could play a significant role for the organizations when it comes to meeting their customers' expectations in the best way possible. In the long term, this could result in businesses generating substantial market revenues.

KEYWORDS: Communication, Marketing, Customer segmentation, Customer behavior, Customer satisfaction, Market and communication.

INTRODUCTION

Marketers need to study and fathom the behavior of consumers in order to better understand as well as analyze the market opportunity and also in order to target the right customer segmentation in decision making and, as a result, to achieve the objectives that each company has set. According to Fill & Hughes, an individual's attitude can be depicted by the expression and feelings towards the product, organization, and the given service (Curtin, 2019). Consumer expectations as well as segmentation play a crucial role in marketing and communication.

Consumer expectations can be depicted as the set of actions or behaviors that individuals anticipate at the time of interaction with an organization, a service, or a product. Customers used to set standards mostly about the fair pricing of the products and the high quality of the services, but nowadays the field of interest among consumers has expanded as they also have different kinds of expectations that are more difficult to satisfy, such as personalized interactions, proactive services, and connected experiences over the channels. Information plays a significant role in the case of marketing and communication as this can influence the perception of the consumers, which can be defined as the basic mantra of the cognitive process, and can change the expectations as well as the behavior of the customer towards different brands (Curtin, 2019).

The influence is quite effective as communication and marketing can affect the decision-making as well as the behavior of the customers towards the products. This can help the marketers to narrow down the customer segments that they want to address from the generalized customer crowd.

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Human beings always adapt themselves to their environment. This usually includes the consequences of the actions, which lead to expectations of certain outcomes following the particular action. The expectation is nothing but anticipation based on prior experience as well as the current circumstances. The main factors that impact customer satisfaction are prior customer experience, communication between customers and marketers, loyal cultivation, expertise, monitoring the market, and narrowing down the customer segments.

Research on this particular topic has neglected the different communication platforms as well as the marketing strategy in order to meet the expectations of the customers. According to 70% of consumers, the connection process, such as seamless handoffs and contextualized engagement following previous interactions, is critical for winning customers' hearts (Patti et al., 2017). 59% of customers agree that tailored engagement based on prior interaction is critical to winning the business. According to previous research that has been done on this subject, whenever the person responsible for the marketing strategy doesn't do their job properly, it affects negatively the behavior, the expectations, and the decision-making of the customers. The success of the business depends on the ability to provide high quality services to the customers that not only meet the commitments but also exceed the service expectations of the customers.

In this study, the focus is on the effects of marketing as well as communication in changing the expectations of the customers, and how acquiring external information has become ubiquitous in the case of providing quality services and exceeding customer expectations.

Study Rationale

For any business, marketing strategy and communication with the customers are considered as the main factor as it can influence the attribute called customer satisfaction. In today's world, customer expectations are changing along with the different marketing strategies and the communication platform, and the factors which can help the organization to exceed the need of the customers are also emerging highly. But according to previous journals while the organizations are thinking that they are meeting the needs of the customers the reality is quite different. To understand as well as mitigate the issues regarding customer services and expectations are investigating areas of displeases, quality improvement of the customer services. The new strategy includes the reduction of the gap between customer expectations and the physical as well as digital interactions (Pažėraitė & Repovienė, 2018).

This study topic mainly focuses on the problem of the gap in between the changing customer expectations and the marketing strategy as well as communication of the organizations and how it is impacting the business while taking reference of the different customer needs.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD

In context with the aforementioned study topic, the qualitative research method can be considered as the appropriate one. *Qualitative research* includes collection as well as analysis of the non-numerical data for understanding the opinions and concepts. This type of study can help in gathering in-depth insights into a problem and is used to generate ideas for research purposes (Rezapour, 2018). Under the qualitative research study *secondary method* has been chosen for the study topic.

For this topic, the secondary data collection method can strengthen the research persuasion and can help in fostering a very strong conclusion. The secondary method always includes a plethora of books, articles, magazines, literature, online reports, and peer-reviewed journals collected from authentic sources (Corti, 2018). The journals and the articles are always cited from credible databases like Google Scholar, PubMed, etc. Relevant literature has been collected from keywords intertwined with topic relevancy. The time limits of the literature are between 2016 to 2020. The latest literature has helped in reviewing the latest dynamics of business communication on the performance of adult trainees.

For this study interpretivism research philosophy has been chosen as the current study that can help in interpreting elements and factors of the topic under investigation and establishes the factors that can be attributed in the context of the study goal. For any study, the research approach is defined as the most essential part of the study and it helps to framework the pattern of the study. The inductive approach is the appropriate one for the current study as inductive reasoning objectifies at the development of the theory and moves from the observations from narrowed place to wide generalizations (Azungah, 2018). The main goal is to study as well as highlight the research nature and how it can help facilitate a better understanding of the aforementioned study topic. However, for the better comprehension of the study, an exploratory research design has been selected. It critically unfolds multifaceted aspects of a research problem and strengthens the current understanding of the issue.

Importance of Consumer Segmentation

Marketing experts often segment a target market when their products or service line comprises multiple buyers. A consumer's base that can be classified into individual groups having more or less similar demographics, interests, and spending habits is referred to as consumer segmentation (Risius, Hamm & Janssen, 2019).

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Most business owners that integrate effective marketing and communications strategies essentially believe that customer expectations can only be increased if you target them appropriately. Therein lays the relevance of consumer segmentation in a marketing scenario. It enables a market to categorically allocate all its marketing resources in the distinct groups of customers effectively. As a marketer, the initial communication essentially raises customer awareness of their products and services.

Consumer segmentation fosters the better implementation of communication networks and strengthens their awareness of the benefits of the products. Also, it helps a marketer to strategize his business operations as per the varied customer choices. This, in turn, helps a broad group of consumers to differentiate the products of a particular business from the potential competition and establish a preference of their own (Sarti, Darnall & Testa, 2018). Through consumer segmentation, a marketer also increases the accountability of their service through regular feedback. All these elements are considered to be some of the vital attributes of effective marketing strategies in changing customer expectations.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS

In any business, marketing experts often integrate segmentation in marketing communications like advertising to target particular consumers (Hun & Yazdanifard, 2014). Amongst segmentation, generational segmentation is often the most basic category with multifaceted marketing benefits. In all aspects, consumer segmentation has been an effective approach to develop credible marketing targets in any business. While different generations have varying values, beliefs, and expectations, it is worth mentioning that using well-built communication channels, makes it easier for a marketer to understand consumer perception and strategize things accordingly.

Nowadays consumers invest a considerable part of their earnings on products and services of their choice. Thus, it becomes crucial for marketers to implement strategies that focus on enhancing the expectations of the costumers as well as serving their needs in order to build consumer loyalty.

At the same time, it is pertinent that modern-day customers are very conscious of their surrounding environment. Most advertisements that succinctly appeal to health awareness messages would potentially attain humongous success in the present generation. Also, it has been noted that generation X customers are more family-driven and prefer leading a casual lifestyle. Balance and career perspectives are very important for millennials on today's date (Kalogiannidis et al., 2022). Thus, any product, service, or advertisement that sells family-values will majorly attract more and more customers in this generation. In the end, it is to be believed that, one cannot accomplish business success by integrating effective marketing strategies; he needs to win over the target audience over other parameters to boost business sales and revenues (Hun & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Hence, even when a company has defined consumer segmentation, it must prioritize consumer expectation by means of which it can communicate the qualitative features that make its products and/or service enticing to the target group of customers. In fact, the expectations of modern-day consumers have been based on activities they value as significant while they interact with a business.

The Implication of Marketing and Communications on Consumer Behavior

Marketing and communication play a crucial role in the case of changing the behavior of the customers and influence the attitudes because generally, the customers are having different attitudes that can be positive or negative (Kalogiannidis et al 2021). Attitudes are usually erudite from previous experiences that can relate to the existing product itself (Curtin, 2019). The behavior of the customers could not be fathomed directly but very easily could be detected by using marketing research methodologies. The main components of the different kinds of behaviors are *affective feel* which depicts the feeling towards the product or the service, *cognitive feel* which depicts the acknowledgment of the target customer towards the products and *conative do* which depicts actions taken following the feelings and knowledge of the customers.

Some factors influence the consumer's buying behavior. Culture always plays a significant role in the case of shaping the customer's choice and always depicts a wide set of values, rules, and behaviors which is common in the society in which we reside. As an example, it can be shown that today many fast-food organizations enter the market field with the prior knowledge of the customer tastes so that the offered products can satisfy the need of the customers and can even exceed the expectations (Figiel & Kufel, 2016). Social class affects the buying behavior of the consumer. Family, colleagues, friends, informal social groups influence the attitude and behavior of the customers. Personal information of the consumers like age, sex, occupation, the economic condition can also affect the buying attitude. In nutshell the factors which impact customer behavior are

- **Psychological** which incorporates motivation, learning, perception, attitudes, and beliefs
- **Personal** which includes occupation, lifestyle, age, sex, personality, and economic conditions (Customerthermometer.com, 2020).
- **Social** which incorporates family, friends, reference group, etc
- A culture that encompasses social class and culture

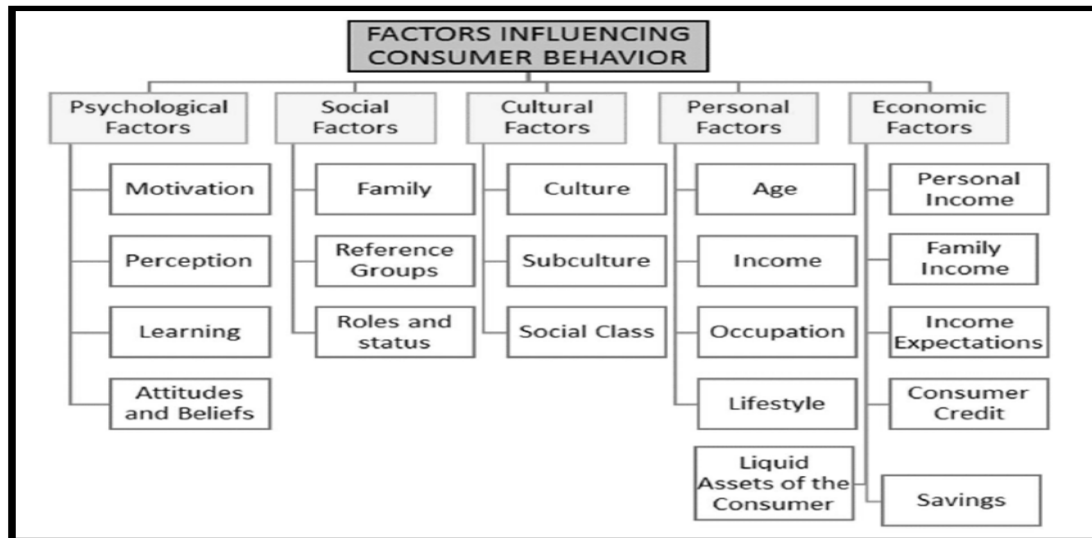


Figure 1: Factors affecting consumer behavior
 (Source: Customerthermometer.com, 2020)

Communication strategy also encourages the customers in case of making responses by purchasing products or requesting information (Hänninen & Karjaluoto, 2017). The effectiveness can be improved by building a great understanding with the consumers following the needs and preferences. The communication strategy affects the awareness, choice, preference, accountability, and personalization of the customers.

Theoretical Understanding

While marketing and communication are two of the fundamental bases of consumer behavior, this domain can be better illustrated using the *consumer behavior theory*. This is a simplified theoretical framework that highlights how individuals make a relevant decision while purchasing. This comprehensive theory helps marketers to succinctly capitalize on such behavioral patterns by predicting when and how a buyer would make a purchase (Indahingwati et al., 2019). It also helps in identifying the attributes that influence such decisions and highlight strategic approaches to manipulate these behaviors proactively.

As a matter of fact, marketing and communication help to influence the psychological parameters of a customer in terms of their perceptions, situations, and attitude. Acquiring a thorough understanding of what goes on in a customer’s mind is the most intricate task for a marketing expert (Kalogiannidis et al 2021). Therefore, the only way to understand this closely is by observing their behavioral and buying patterns and apply marketing strategies accordingly. This theory highlights certain factors influencing the behavioral pattern of buyers. These include personal, social, psychological, and more.

With respect to marketing and communication strategies, the theory of consumer behavior is of utmost importance as it allows businesses to grab a stern understanding of the target audience and craft their product lines or services to meet their expectations and influence their buying habits (Gilal et al., 2019). Also, it enables a business to succinctly understand how the market environment influences the behavior of the customers. In this regard, they also develop the appropriate marketing messages, communication approaches, and also pricing strategies that the customer’s best respond to.

Factors Influencing Marketing and Communications

A wide range of factors can influence strategic marketing and communications and in turn consumer expectations. Some of the most common *external factors* include socio-cultural influences. The figure below shows that the peripheral element is the external domain that acts as a basic influencing factor for business marketing and communications.

Secondly, individual determinants include motivation, perception, learning, and other factors. These variables are categorically personal and influence the marketing strategies and communication flows of a business. And, all these variables essentially work through a stern decision-making process. This typically includes problem recognition, evaluation, and managerial implications (Chenini & Cherif, 2016).

Whenever a business exchanges ideas and information via social interaction, it forms an impression on its customers. The above-mentioned factors can promote or hinder customer expectations depending on situations and strategic outputs of the business. In fact, marketing has undergone a humongous development with the advancements of marketing communication.

All organizations consider these factors and figure out the most potent ways to deliver their message to prospective consumers. Therefore, it is very important to scrabble and reprogram these factors to ensure that marketing and communication run simultaneously and facilitate organizations to accomplish their mission.

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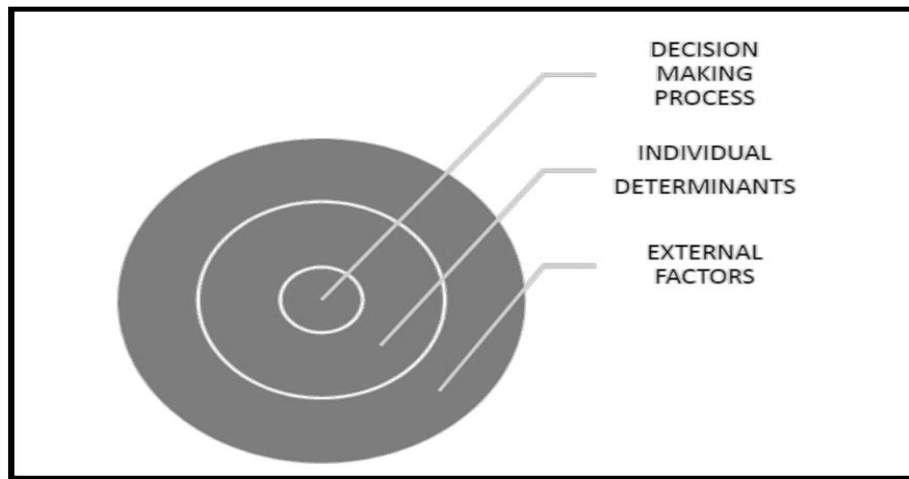


Figure 2: Factors impacting marketing and communications through consumer behaviour
(Source: Hun & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Variants of Marketing and Communication

Marketing and communication are aimed at creating the most seamless consumer experience for a brand. A brand could implement various marketing and communication methods but it needs to ensure its consistency to thrive and sustain amidst the dynamic business environment of today's world. Most consumer marketing surveys promote the concept of marketing communications. Also, it is apparent that most consumers expect more individualized engagement with their choice of businesses.

As a result, marketers need to prioritize consumer preferences and classify their marketing communications into various categories. Of fundamental importance are the *advertisements* in newspapers, television, billboard, and magazines. These are all variants of marketing communications that facilitate consumer persuasion. It instigates a strong emotional connection to stimulate customers' needs (Terkan, 2014). Hence, whether it concerns the content of the messages to be delivered or their frequency, all marketers must disintegrate their product and service promotions through different marketing and communication media.

Secondly, *public relations* are of utmost importance as it helps to generate increased brand awareness among the consumers subtly (Kim, 2020). At the same time, *sales promotions* tend to significantly influence the spontaneous buying decision of customers (Aghara et al., 2018). Discounts, giveaways are some of the most popular categories of sales promotion.

Finally, through *online media*, most companies channelize their marketing communication. To draw the attention of a greater number of audiences, a vast majority of marketers place ads with enticing messages on social networking sites. Many customers also tend to change their buying decisions and opt for a particular company just by seeing the online portals (Kalogiannidis et al 2021).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Numerous research works have been conducted on marketing communications and their association with changing consumer expectations. Effective marketing and communication approaches help to deliver impactful messages to the customers in order persuade them to establish a positive perception about the business. While all marketers need to adhere to stringent marketing communications, it must be ensured that they acquire a thorough understanding of how customers' expectations vary depending on the time and the different situations. Therefore, it is one of the most challenging yet effective jobs of marketing experts to build promising communication strategies so that they can manage to persuade and influence customer expectations.

Informed Consent Statement

Not Applicable.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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