

Effect of colour and relative product size (RPS) on consumer attitudes

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Abstract

Colour and visuals are used extensively by the advertisers of different product categories to attract consumer attention and create favourable attitude. Based on this premise, the present study aimed to explore the effect of colour and relative product size on the consumer attitudes incorporating the moderating role of product familiarity. An experimental design was used, with a sample size of 420 respondents of 18-25 years in a 3 (Product Size: Large/Med/Small) X 2 (Ad Colour: CL/BW) X 2 (Gender: Male/Female) full factorial design. The dependent variables were attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention with product familiarity as the moderating variable. Colour scheme of the ad was not found to have any effect on the consumers' attitude, while medium size of the product relative to the ad size was found to be the most preferred option. Product familiarity was found to have significant moderating impact. Females were more influenced by the colour and picture size as compared with males. Implications for practitioners in designing ad content and layout are discussed.

Keywords: Colour and product size, advertisements, consumer attitudes, product familiarity, India.

Introduction

Colours have high impact on the consumers' mind set. Different colours have various effects and meaning on the consumers such as, red grabs attention and is considered exciting & stimulating, it aspires the consumer to buy; blue is tender, soothing & has inspiring effect; purple is seen as dignified & stately colour; yellow is associated with joy & happiness; black is a powerful, strong & masterful colour that signifies sophistication (Wexner, 1954: 434); green symbolizes peace, gentle, pleasant, fresh, and beautiful (Madden, et al., 2000: 99). Colours increase the excitement level of the consumers by raising their blood pressure and causing pupils to dilate. Combinations of different colours are also used to grab the attention of the consumers. For example, Pepsi uses red, white and blue, Coca Cola uses a red and white combination to create

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eye-catching appeal. Colour can be related to a particular product or service. For example, Green Giant uses a white background and a mesmerizing green logo to emulate freshness and natural beauty (Madden, et al., 2000: 99).

Moreover, there are few research papers on colours and consumer attitudes which also focus on the other aesthetic components such as light. The effect of colour exaggerates when the light intensity is appropriate. It also affects the consumer attitude towards the product as they get attracted towards the visual component and spend more time with the product (Summers and Hebert, 2001: 147). Babin et al., (2003) has found that the effect of colour can be enhanced with optimum level of light such as orange can be made more alluring with a soft light and red can be exciting with the lights which has low brightness (Crowley, 1993: 68). Furthermore, along with the colour, light, visual images, odour and aroma are equally important to influence the consumer perception about the product (Michon, et al., 2003: 578).

Visual images are also equally important for effective advertising. Different visual elements are incorporated in advertisements to affect the overall belief, attitude and intention of the consumer (Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17). The various forms of visuals in advertising include product picture, logo, text and slogan (Decrop, 2007: 505). Among all these visual elements, picture of the product allures the consumer at first sight and attracts them towards the advertisement (Ogilvy, 1985). The size of the product increases consumers' memory responses (Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17). The other element, colour, is also an effective visual component as there are claims that colour advertisements in print are more effective than their black/white counterparts (Kelly and Hoel, 1991: 64). Lastly, product familiarity also plays a vital role in shaping consumers' preferences. In-depth understanding of product identification of features, benefits and threats, enable consumers to make appropriate decisions (Zhou and Nakamoto, 2007: 53). Although previous assimilation efforts have been researched upon various visual elements independently; there is still no comprehensive study that assorts all the visual elements together and finds its effect on consumer attitude, for both male and female consumers. Considering gender is important, as it exists in advertisements and affects ad-responses.

Therefore, to fill this gap, the current study focuses on the effectiveness of two key elements that is colour and product size in concert with moderating effect of product familiarity and thereby analyzing the different gender responses. The main objective of the study is to identify the effect of colour and relative product size on the consumers' attitudes along with the moderating effect of product familiarity. Gender differences would also be investigated in the study.

Visual images in advertising

Visual images are very influential in advertising. Every product has at least one visual image in advertising. Some visual images have less verbal messages to gain more attention of the viewers. Primarily the print and outdoor rigorously uses photographic images in advertising. It can be mentioned that verbally oriented advertising is used very rarely (Po-lin and Juan, 2008: 1). It was stated by many studies that when verbal messages are used with visuals in the advertising then consumers are able to recall the advertisements easily and develop more positive attitude towards the advertised brand or product than the verbally oriented advertising (Childers et al., 1986: 137; Childers and Houston, 1984: 643; Kisielius and Sternthal, 1984: 414; Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17). It was also found in other studies that consumers observe the visuals at the first strike and then interpret the verbal message in relation to the visual image in advertising (Houston et al., 1987: 359). Therefore, it can be stated that visual image is very crucial component of advertising as it grabs the consumers' attention and enhances the recall of the advertised products (Po-lin and Juan, 2008: 1).

Many studies in cognitive psychology explored the impact of visual images on consumers' memory. They found that the consumers were able to recall the advertising information when it was highly conducive towards the mental image as compared to less conducive (Anderson, 1978: 249; Slee, 1978: 7). Studies were undertaken to examine the effect of explicit and implicit messages (Gregory et al., 1982: 89), actual and conceptual words (Lippman, 1974: 385), pictures and words (Bugelski, 1983: 72). These studies helped in developing the multiple code theory (Paivio, 1986). It stated that visual images activate multiple encoding processes and when the several retrieval ways are activated by the visuals then the recall is initiated by the consumer mind set.

Visual images were also studied extensively in the consumer behaviour domain. Studies have found three elicitation approaches namely; instruction for image, words and pictures. It was found that the effect is moderated by the information processing style (MacInnis and Prices, 1987: 473). Visual images increase the involvement level of the consumers towards the advertisement products. They also interpret the messages if the visual images are appealing. Positive influence of the visual images increases the involvement level of the consumers towards the advertised product (Po-lin and Juan, 2008: 1).

There are several studies on visuals in advertising in the last decade (McQuarrie and Mick, 2003: 579). The recent developments in market such as high usage of internet and outdoor technology have increased the importance of visuals in advertising. Visual images facilitate in delivering the advertising messages across a geographical area (An, 2003: 1). Magazine advertisements extensively use visuals to grab the attention (Bulmer & Buchanan-Oliver, 2004: 1). Visuals are also very popular in cross cultural markets and their us-

age by multinational organizations is growing rapidly (Schroeder, 2002; Sadler-Trainor and Sadler-Trainor, 2005: 7).

Effectiveness of visuals

In the last one decade researchers investigated many aspects of advertising styles in which visuals have a dominant role (Mothersbaugh et al., 2002: 589; McQuarrie and Mick, 2003: 579). Visual messages are processed very easily as it quickly captivates the attention (Rossiter, 1982: 101). It generates more curiosity than the verbal messages (Wells et al., 2003). Visuals not only help in delivering the message but also help in making the purchase decision (Smith, 1991: 13). Hirschman and Solomon (1984) found that visuals provide aesthetic and emotional appeal to the advertising than the verbal messages which are perceived to be rational. Visuals also provide information and helps in delivering the persuasive message (Pracejus, 2003: 174). There is a complex and dual nature of visuals and the complexity issue was raised by Callow and Schiffman (2002). The research cited that the complexity of the visuals can be defined according to the level of implicit and explicit information which is required to interpret the meaning from the ad message. Therefore, simple images are used when brand awareness needs to be increased. A complex visual is associated with the implicit meaning which is embedded in the visual (Philips, 1997: 77). The recipients have to interpret the complex visual image according to their prior knowledge about the product and advertising (Philips, 1997: 77). In copy theory, pictures are considered to be natural and realistic and dimensions such as graphics, layouts etc. are considered to be independent of the message (Scott, 1994: 252). Dondis (1973) stated that colour, tone, texture, line and proportion decide the visual structure which helps in delivering the visual message.

Size of the product relative to the ad space plays a significant role while selecting a product if the consumer has multi-attribute attitude (Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17). Picture size affects the visual stimulus and the memory responses thereby enhancing the recognition and recall (Kosslyn, 1980). A relatively large picture of the product usually deters competing images from entering consumer minds (Kosslyn, 1975: 341) and is also known as “image carryover” phenomenon. Therefore, picture size can be used to affect mostly the belief based attitude rather than affective attitude for the product (Percy and Rossiter, 2001, 17). Thus first hypothesis is that:

Large-sized picture of the product in the advertisement would have a more favourable impact on the consumer attitudes namely Attitude towards the Advertisement (AD), Attitude towards the Brand (AB) and Purchase Intention (PI) than the medium-sized picture or small-sized picture of the product **(H1)**.

Effect of colour

Some psychologists have explored the effect of colour on the preferences (Guilford, 1934: 342), change in the behaviour (Garrett and Brooks, 1987: 39) and anxiety (Jacobs and Suess, 1975: 207). It was found that meanings that are associated with color and their preferences vary across the cultures (Madden, et al. 2000: 90). Moreover, it was also found that bright colours (such as red) generates more arousal and quickly seeks the attention as compared to the cool colours (such as blue) (Birren 1978; Schaie and Heiss, 1964). Cool colours generate relaxation and develops pleasurable environment than the warm colours (Guilford and Patricia, 1959: 487; Jacobs and Suess, 1975: 207). It was also found that if the background colour varies with the text colour then the effect is likely to be high (Fernandez and Rosen, 2000: 59; Hall and Hanna, 2004: 183; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1995: 121). Cooler colours generate favourable response than warm colours (Bellizzi and Hite, 1992: 347; Gorn et al., 1997: 1387). It was mentioned by some studies that if the contrast between text and the background increases then the readability also increases (Wang, et al. 2003: 93). Attitude towards the advertiser is positive when the contexts are congruent than the incongruent contexts (Meyers-Levy and Tybour, 1989).

In the traditional literature of print advertising it was found that colour positively affects consumer behaviour and financial component of the consumer which includes attitude towards the advertisement and buying willingness (Lohse and Rosen, 2001: 73; Fernandez and Rosen, 2000: 59; Lohse, 1997: 61; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1995: 121; Gronhaug, et al., 1991: 42). Some research studies have stated that use of colour enriches the image of the advertisement and the brand. It also develops more favourable attitude towards advertisement as compared to non-coloured advertisements (Lohse and Rosen, 2001: 73). Moreover, there were several studies on the effect of colour and picture on consumers (Schlosser, 2003: 184; Miniard et al., 1991: 92; Lohse and Rosen, 2001: 73) and it was further found that the advertisements that used premium print technology had more positive influence on the consumers as compared to conventional advertisements (Hampel et al., 2012: 118).

Colour has the potential to evoke appropriate imagery from the advertisement (Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17) and has a very high impact in the evaluation of the objects (Pallak, 1983: 158). Colour also attracts the attention towards the advertisement and the product appearance. Colour ads have been found to influence the affective and emotional responses of the consumer (Percy & Rossiter, 2001: 17; Dooley and Harkins 1970: 851). Moreover, components of colour ads can be processed in a higher pace than B/W ones (Lohse, 1997: 61; Treisman, 1982: 194) thereby affecting ad processing. When these components manifest the verbal ad information then it affects the persuasiveness towards the ad (Fernandez and Rosen, 2000: 59). Thus the second hypothesis is that:

Colour advertisements would have a more favourable impact on consumer attitudes namely AD, AB, and PI than black/white advertisements (**H2**).

Product familiarity

Consumer familiarity with a product category can influence the attitudes towards marketing communication and product preference (Brucks, 1985: 1). In case of unfamiliar product category, consumers have very little knowledge and less information available in their memory that can assist them (Coupey, et al., 1998: 459). Zhang and Markman, (1998) identified that products that have enhanced traits are likely to generate positive evaluation. However, it was also found by Zhou and Nakamoto, (2007) that these positive effects of the enhanced traits may be acquired even when consumers are unfamiliar with a product category, which in turn may be able to develop positive consumer responses (Carpenter, et al., 1994: 339). Thus the third hypothesis is that:

Product familiarity would have a moderating effect on the relation between ad content (colour and product size) and the resultant consumer attitude (**H3**).

Gender and advertising

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Gender has a strong influence on the self-identification of an individual and research studies have found that gender meaning has affected the preference of the brand (Bellizzi and Milner, 1991: 72). Literature in consumer behaviour stated that gender is a primary dimension as there are several differences between the males and the females. Gender affects several components such as purchase behaviour (Prakash and Flores, 1985: 231), judgments about the products (Kellaris and Mantel, 1994: 514, Meyers-Levy and Sternthal, 1991: 84), processing of information (Meyers-Levy, 1989). Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1991) stated that gender affects the consumers judgment and defines the key parameter that was considered by the consumer while evaluating the product.

Recent studies have found that females have the higher ability to even identify visually incongruent products which are promoted with the competing products than the males (Noseworthy, et al. 2011: 358). Gender differences have vital influences on the effects of advertising and on marketing strategies (Darley and Smith, 1995: 41; Myers-Levy and Sternthal, 1991: 84). When research papers from 1970-2002 on gender and advertising research were studied and carried out synthesis analysis and found that males and females process advertising differently as females process the advertising very comprehensively with emphasize on product risk level and other salient features. Males process only selective information with the salient cues from the advertising. Advertisers use graphics, sound, logo, colour etc. to portray the

gender of the brand and thus communicate the brand gender through advertising (Wolin, 2003: 111).

Gender differences and information processing

Studies in the preceding years have stated that there are gender differences in traits and tasks that are undertaken by an individual. In advertising research it is very important to comprehend how males and females process the advertising information (Po-lin and Juan, 2008: 1). Broverman et al., (1968) has mentioned clearly that the males are very logical and analytical in processing the information. Furthermore, Poole (1977) found that males comprehend the information with the help of physical traits whereas females are very evaluative in processing the information. Subsequently, Hass (1979) stated that female language signifies imperative mode which includes subjective and evaluative parameters whereas male language reflects selective approach which is based on easily available information. Moreover, Darley and Smith (1995) provided insights on attention styles of males and females in information processing. It was found that males have positive influence of physical attributes that are displayed by the visuals but females have significant effect of emotions in advertising.

The studies on the gender and information processing were undertaken comprehensively by selectivity model (Meyers-Levy, 1989). This model mentioned that males have very selective processing of information as they do not engage in comprehensive processing of information to develop their judgments. Several research studies have also supported the selectivity model. Wolin (2003) carried out Meta-analysis of 76 papers and found that males and females have different approach in processing the advertising messages. Females are more systematic recipient of the advertising than the males as they process several product characteristics and even respond to the subtle cues (Carsky and Zuckerman, 1991; Brunel and Nelson, 2003: 330). Research from the various disciplines has found that females process the information in a systematic sequence with proper depth as compared to males who have impulsive approach (Klinterberg et al, 1987: 683; Pogun, 2001: 195). Females assimilate the cues in an “effortful, comprehensive and itemized analysis” of the entire information (Darley and Smith, 1995:43). Research has also found that females have higher mental imagery than males (Anastasi and Foley, 1949). Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1991) cited that females even process the incongruent cues present in the information whereas males focused on the themes and the schemas of the information. It was found that there was high readership for the complex ads by the females (Chamblee et al, 1993: 23). Putrevu (2004) found that females had positive attitude towards the ad, brand and purchase intention was also high for the informative ads. This happens because the brain functions in a different manner for the same information in case of males and females. When emotionally aroused incidents occurs then

right hemisphere of males activates whereas in case of females left hemisphere activates. It is a well-established fact that right hemisphere processes the central aspects of the information and left hemisphere works on the finer cues of the message (Cahill, 2005: 40). However, the complete processing of the entire information is very difficult as there is limitation towards the human nature (Graham and Graham, 2008: 205).

Males have logical and analytical approach in processing the information whereas females are very subjective and intuitive in their style (Broverman et al., 1968: 23). Males comprehend the information with the physical attributes while females have evaluative approach (Poole, 1977: 233). Darley and Smith (1995) found that males respond favourably towards advertisements pertaining to the physical attributes whereas females respond positively towards emotional descriptors in the advertisements. Effectiveness of the advertising refers to the attitudinal responses to the stimuli and it includes attitude towards ad and attitude towards the brand (Aaker and Williams, 1998: 241; Edelman Burke, 1987: 421; Homer, 2006: 35).

Based on the discussion, the fourth and last hypothesis is that:

Gender differences would create different consumer attitudes towards the advertisements, the product brand and purchase intentions **(H4)**.

Methodology

Experimental design was selected as the methodology to achieve the study objectives. A full factorial design 3 (Product Size: Large/Med/Small) X 2 (Ad Colour: CL/BW) X 2 (Gender: Male/Female) was used for the study. The independent variables in this study were colour (colour and black/white advertisement), picture size (large, medium and small) and gender (male/female) which was more of a control variable. The dependent variables were AD, AB and PI. The scales to measure AD, AB and PI were adapted from several studies conducted in the past (Petty, et al., 1983: 135; Lafferty, et al., 2002: 1; Stafford, et al., 2002: 17; La Ferle and Choi, 2005: 67) and were measured using 3-item semantic differential scales. Product familiarity was measured using adapted versions (5-Point Likert scale: “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”) of the scales from Zhou and Nakamoto (2007) and Coupey et al., (1998). A total of 6 treatments were conceptualized and each treatment booklet and print ads were used as stimuli. Print media was used because of ease of creation and administration and India being second largest print media market in the world with 350 million readers. Mobile phone (a new brand name) was selected as a product because of its universal appeal and growth potential. The questionnaire had two sections. The first section had questions related to product familiarity which had to be filled before exposure to the treatment. The treatment ad followed this. The second set of questions after the ad related to AD, AB and PI. Demographic questions followed in the last section.

Sampling

Youth in India resemble a huge population with more than 240 million mobile owners ("The social," 2009). Moreover, India is one of the countries in the world with a high proportion of young population than most nations worldwide. Thus the target population was respondents in the age between 18 and 25. The experiment was conducted at a reputed university in western India. The university attracts students from across the country and thus offers a diverse range of individuals from different regions and demographic groups. The sample size was calculated by assigning 35 respondents to each treatment X six treatment groups X two gender groups. The total number of respondents for the study was 420. The sampling frame was the student roster of the university. In the first stage of sampling, 250 male and 250 female student names were randomly selected from the roster and invited to participate in the experiment. Once 420 (210 each for males and females) affirmative responses were obtained, the recruitment was stopped. These 420 subjects were randomly assigned one of the six treatment groups. Next, the 35 subjects in each treatment group were invited to a centralized facility where the experiment was administered on group at a time. After a briefing, a questionnaire was distributed to the respondents and they were asked to fill the information pertaining to product familiarity. Then the fictitious print ads were distributed. The researcher ensured that the respondents went through the advertisement for two minutes. When respondents thoroughly understood the advertisement, he/she filled the information pertaining to AAD, AB and PI. The respondents were given around 20 minutes to fill the entire questionnaire. Once the questionnaires were collected, the respondents were debriefed and the sessions concluded.

Main findings

Data were analyzed using statistical techniques of Multivariate Analysis of Variance and (MANOVA) and Multivariate Analysis of Co-Variance. Initially, MANOVA was run on the design without including the covariate effects. The multivariate tests suggested a significant main effect of both the independent variables and the control variable on the consumer attitudes (Table 1). The between-subject effects suggest (Table 2) that all effects were present, statistically significant at 5% level. However, the results changed when product familiarity was added as a covariate. The MANCOVA results indicated the overall effect of colour to be insignificant in the presence of product familiarity (Table 3). Detailed between-subjects effects confirmed the same since the effect of colour on all three attitude variables were found to be insignificant. At the same time, product familiarity was found to have a significant effect on all three dependent variables at 5% level. Interestingly, the colour X product size interaction term was found to have a significant effect on the attitude towards the advertisement. Product size and gender had similar effects as that of the

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previous run. Thus hypotheses 1, 3 and 4 were supported whereas hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Table 1: Overall Multivariate Test

Main Effect	Pillai's Trace	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Colour	.015	3.023	3.000	400	.030
Product Size	.041	2.894	6.000	802	.008
Gender	.052	7.280	3.000	400	.000

Table 2: Tests of Between Subject Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Colour	AAD	5.856	1	5.856	13.587	.000
	AB	4.047	1	4.047	9.389	.002
	PI	2.921	1	2.921	4.473	.035
Product Size	AAD	7.314	2	3.657	8.502	.000
	AB	6.817	2	3.405	7.900	.000
	PI	6.300	2	3.150	4.824	.008
Gender	AAD	7.153	1	7.153	16.642	.000
	AB	4.485	1	4.485	10.395	.001
	PI	9.205	1	9.205	8.905	.003

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Table 3: Overall Multivariate Test

Main Effect	Pillai's Trace	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Colour	.008	1.107	3.000	405.000	.346
Product Size	.035	2.378	6.000	812.000	.028
Gender	.052	7.428	3.000	405.000	.000
<i>Product Familiarity</i>	.037	5.216	3.000	405.000	.002

Discussion

The study found that the effectiveness of colour, as a visual component in advertisements was not significant on the consumers' attitude given the level of product familiarity. This finding does not harmonize with the previous literature (Pallak, 1983: 158; Fernandez and Rosen, 2000: 59; Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17), which suggested that colour ads had a favourable impact on consumers. This finding also contradicts the preceding literature that mentions the positive effect of colour on consumer behaviour which integrates willingness to purchase and attitude towards the advertisement (Lohse and Rosen, 2001: 73; Fernandez and Rosen, 2000: 59; Lohse, 1997: 61). However, it may happen that if a consumer is already familiar with the product then the visual

appeal of colour becomes redundant. Previous studies had found a colour effect in evaluating the objects (Pallak, 1983: 158). But now, because of advertising clutter, consumers want the ads to be different thereby making ads in black and white and without colour stand out. Relative Size of the Product had significant effect on consumer attitudes. This conforms to past literature (Kosslyn, 1980; Rossiter and Percy, 1978: 621).

It was also mentioned in the past literature had large picture sizes were more influential in affecting the attitude rather than the smaller ones (Percy and Rossiter, 2001: 17). However in the present study, medium sized product in the ad significantly impacted the purchase intention. This may have happened because consumers gave more emphasis to the proportion of the product size in the ad. Product familiarity had significant moderating effect on the consumer attitude confirming past literature on the influence of product familiarity on consumer preference (Brucks, 1985: 1). It supports the literature which states that as the consumers have little understanding about the unfamiliar product therefore, they have less information in their memory (Coupey, et al., 1998: 459) unlike the familiar product. Product familiarity also leads to positive evaluation of the brand (Zhang and Markman, 1998: 413) and generates positive responses of the consumers (Carpenter, et al., 1994: 339).

Table 4: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects (with Covariate)

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Colour	AD	0.952	1	0.952	2.229	.136
	AB	0.418	1	0.418	0.974	.324
	PI	1.060	1	1.060	1.680	.196
Product Size	AD	6.366	2	3.183	7.454	.000
	AB	7.535	2	3.768	8.782	.000
	PI	7.874	2	3.937	6.241	.002
Gender	AD	8.161	1	8.161	19.123	.000
	AB	5.197	1	5.197	12.102	.001
	PI	7.933	1	7.933	12.572	.000
<i>Product Familiarity</i>	AD	3.669	1	3.669	8.592	.003
	AB	4.265	1	4.265	9.942	.001
	PI	9.756	1	9.756	15.466	.000
Colour X Product Size	AD	3.351	2	1.676	3.926	.020

Moreover, in the present study when the responses of males and females were compared, females were found to have more favourable consumer attitudes than males. Females had favourable impact of the colour ads with medium sized product than that of males. The findings supported the selectivity model (Meyers-Levy, 1989; Meyers-Levy and Sternthal, 1991: 84; Meyers-Levy and Mahaswaran, 1991: 63) as it was found that female gave emphasis on sub-

tle and comprehensive cues such as colour and picture size of the advertisement. It was mentioned in this model that females process the information comprehensively and males are selective processor of the information. The finding of the present study supports this model as females processed the ads holistically along with the subtle cues such as colour and picture size and were influenced more than the males. This finding also support the study that found that females have better visual orientation than the males when the group of visuals are been portrayed to them (McKelvie, 1987). It may happen because males process the physical attributes but females focus on interpretive concepts and structural association (Jausovec and Jausovec, 2009: 198). The core reason for processing the information in manner is the roles played by the males and females in the society. Females usually have submissive role and therefore, they relate the subtle cues and are focused on the environmental parameters that affects theme as well others (Shani et al., 1992: 377). Colour affects the emotional aspect of an individual (Dooley & Harkins, 1970: 851) and it was found that emotionally aroused objects affects the right hemisphere of males but left hemisphere of females. Thus, males process the information centrally and females process it with the finer cues (Cahill, 2005: 40) and as a result females get affected with the colours and picture size in the advertisement.

Implications, conclusion and scope

The results of the study have a direct implication on development of ad-campaigns especially in case of colour and picture size. Colour did not have a significant effect on the consumers' attitude for both males and females. One of the reasons behind this may be the ad clutter and since every marketer is using colour ads, the differentiation factor of colour has diminished. In case of a familiar product, the advertiser has an opportunity to effectively use black/white advertisements. This would help in reducing the advertising budget as well as in breaking the ad clutter. However, it also points out to the possible alternatives before the marketer. There is a recent trend in advertising where only parts of the ad are in colour while the rest is in B/W. An advertiser could try out similar options and check the effectiveness. There are many instances where the actual product is not shown in the print and related/unrelated imagery is shown.

The present study findings suggest that for product brands, such a strategy may not be useful. The tangibility element of physical products may be important to the consumers and they would be affected by the look of the product. The present study also points out to the fact that the photograph/picture of the actual product acts to reduce risks for the consumer. With respect to the relative size of the product, the findings suggest that the product should be moderately large in size as that gives emphasis to the image, body copy of the ad and the product brand. The findings also suggest a relationship between product familiarity and purchase intention. Thus the marketer may de-

sign communication campaigns in such a way that consumers initially get familiar to the new product and its attributes. This could be followed by more abstract ads with a mixture of various appeals. This could help the consumers to accept the product/brand easily, especially for technologically oriented product categories such as mobile phones.

The present study has its limitations in the product category and media. Future studies could explore whether the same results hold good for other advertising media such as Television commercials, digital banners, etc. The study could be extended to explore whether there would be differences because of the product being utilitarian/hedonic. It may happen that consumers may like to see the actual size/shape of utilitarian products while they would require more abstract imagery for hedonic products. The present study focused on only a single age group (18-25). Future studies could explore whether similar findings hold good for older age groups. This would add more generalizability to the present study findings. Lastly, the present study did not consider hybrid ads such as majorly colour ads with some areas in B/W or vice versa. An interesting extension could be to investigate similar effects in case of hybrid ads.

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