The Psychological Manipulation of Advertising in the Modern World: A Discussion of Revealing Advertising as Manipulative or Informative

A. Dissanayake*, N. Jayasinghe

Marketing is a universal management process that identifies, anticipates and satisfies customer requirements profitably. Advertising is used as the core of marketing in the present context. This paper focused on the topic that the advertising as information or manipulation and proving the fact that the modern advertising techniques are manipulative. The topic has narrowed down to sub topics such as advertising, the importance, characteristics, advantages and disadvantages, the highest advertising investments and the ethical aspects. The paper has collected qualitative and quantitative data; primary sources including the views of experts, interview sessions, observations and the secondary sources through the measurements of advertising growth. The modern advertising methods has restricted the freedom of choice of consumers by the power of manipulative advertising. The psychological techniques are being used including creating a subconscious motivation via conveying a subliminal message, creating perception through selective attention, selective distortion, selective retention and priming. The learning techniques are being persuaded through repetition including operant conditioning through positive reinforcement, classical conditioning through celebrities and brand ambassadors. The consumer behavior is influenced in related with AIDA concept & PLC through psychological manipulation and emotional appeal. The purpose of this paper is aware the target audience to realize the techniques of manipulative advertising by their free choice of decision making. The customer has to choose the best product or the service through realizing the disadvantages it can cause to the community and avoid the influence of harmful products and services. The unethical manipulative advertising will effect physically, financially and socially. The mechanism of investment in advertising and the impact of economic growth will be discussed. The ethical aspects of manipulative advertising depends on the service or the product and relies on the theme of the company. The customer should realize the product or service which is harmless to him by differentiating its’ value to the society. Manipulative advertising is not unethical but it depends on the factor which the product is harmful or harmless to the society.

Keywords: Advertising, Psychological manipulation, Subconscious motivation, AIDA concept

---

* Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy *anuradha93dissanayake@gmail.com