



Generation Y's view on print media advertisements: Variances in its perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: Marketing remains a significant factor for business success. One of the most popular means of creating and increasing awareness of a business's products or services, and ultimately increasing business success, is advertising. Throughout the years, the way in which businesses advertise and the platforms on which they advertise have evolved. While print media is not a new concept, it remains a popular and effective medium of advertising. However, there is uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of advertisements placed in the different types of print media. Given that Generation Y students are perceived to be the future big spenders, it is important to understand which print media are most effective in targeting these consumers, so that businesses can alter their advertising campaigns to reach this market more effectively. The purpose of this study is to determine whether differences exist in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements placed in the different types of print media.

Design/methodology/approach: The study followed a quantitative research approach, using a descriptive research design. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 500 Generation Y students registered at two universities in Gauteng, South Africa. The statistical analysis included frequency analysis, descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).



Findings: The findings of the study revealed that advertisements in newspapers, magazines and flyers are similar in terms of their informativeness, credibility, irritation and value; however, advertisements in magazines are perceived as more entertaining than flyer advertisements.

Recommendations/value: When targeting Generation Y consumers, it is recommended that marketers use print media advertising platforms that are entertaining in addition to being informative and credible, such as magazines.

Managerial implications: To ensure successful advertising campaigns, marketers require insight into the most effective and valued advertising platforms and an understanding of the similarities and differences between them.

Keywords

Advertising value; Credibility; Entertainment; Generation Y; Informativeness; Irritation; Print media; South Africa

JEL Classification: M37, M31, M30

1. INTRODUCTION

For decades, the marketing of a product, service or business has been known to immensely affect business success. This is because awareness of a product, service or business is required for a business to grow, and ultimately improve its success. Businesses have realised that one of the easiest ways to achieve this is through effective advertising (Patel, 2010; Olawale, 2018; Nelson, 2023). Advertising refers to a paid form of communication to create awareness for a product, service or business (Belch & Belch, 2015). Throughout the years, the way in which businesses have advertised and the platforms on which they advertised have evolved (Gallegos, 2016; Drummey, 2021). Advertising can be classified into two categories, namely traditional advertising and digital advertising, with the latter being the latest development. Traditional advertising includes advertisements on platforms such as radio, television and print media (Linton, 2018), whereas digital advertising includes web and social media advertising (Clow, 2016; Drummey, 2021).

Evidence of the first advertisement was found in a newspaper in the 1700s (Lodge, 2011; Joshi, 2022). Since then, print media has evolved and advertisements were published on various platforms such as magazines, newspapers, flyers, and billboards (Linton, 2018). These platforms are normally used with the aim to reach a large number of consumers (Forbes Agency Council, 2018). The options that businesses have in terms of the different sources or platforms for newspapers, magazines and even flyers are endless (Miksen, 2020). Magazines are a type of print media advertising that allows for marketing to a specific target audience.

However, it can also be used to target a broader audience. For example, magazines, such as *Cosmopolitan*, provide the opportunity to advertise to the female market specifically, whereas *People* magazine is a more general magazine in terms of its target audience (Cant & van Heerden, 2017; Klein, 2021). Based on the literature, magazines are found to be effective when targeting specific consumers given that consumers have the tendency to be loyal to a magazine and re-purchase the same magazine on a monthly or quarterly basis (Koekemoer, 2014; Surbhi, 2020). Newspapers can also be used to market to a specific target audience; however, they are usually based on a region or could be classified as an international or national newspaper (Layton & Wilson, 2019). Given that newspapers are published more frequently compared to magazines, it can create urgency with the consumer and allows a marketer to advertise in real time (Gartlan, 2021). Furthermore, a newspaper has different advertising sections, which allows marketers to market their business in the most relevant section of the newspaper, for example, sports stores' advertising will be posted under the sports section (Cant & van Heerden, 2017; Flemming, 2020). For both magazines and newspapers, there are two ways of advertising. The marketer can either have an already created advertisement and choose a space in the magazine or newspaper to advertise (Bruce, 2014; Surbhi, 2020), or the advertisement can form part of editorial content, for example, an article explaining something about the business or creating awareness of an engagement with the community (Koekemoer, 2014; Cant & van Heerden, 2017). Contrary to most magazines and newspapers, flyers are free to consumers and easy to get into the consumer's hands. A flyer can be easily read by the consumer as it is not cluttered by other advertisements, and if set up correctly, will grab consumers' attention (MegaFormat, 2021). Owing to the advancement of technology, there are several software available to assist marketers with creating colourful and attractive flyers (Bajiya, 2022).

With print media, marketers are able to portray an advertisement as big as a full-on newspaper page, which allows for a great deal of information to be included (Houston, 2021). Furthermore, with magazines, newspapers and flyers, consumers have the physical advertisement in their hands, which allows them to share the information with other consumers or to keep the information to refer to again in the future (Wroblewski, 2019). This increases the recall potential of the advertisement, since the consumer will be looking at the advertisement with more attention to information and detail. Furthermore, print media is one of the platforms with the least reading or usage interruption. As a result, it increases the possibility of influencing the consumer's final purchase (Bean-Mellinger, 2018). If a business needs to communicate more complex information, print media is considered to be more

effective (Bruce, 2015). The information provided on different advertising platforms is processed differently and that is why businesses use print media for more complex information (Becker, 2015). Furthermore, print media advertisements can be kept for a longer time period; for example, in a front office of a business, whereas digital advertisements are changing constantly (Nelson, 2018). Some authors suggest that print media advertisements are more trustworthy and credible than digital advertising. This could be because digital advertisements can take the form of pop-ups, which consumers do not find reliable (MarketingSherpa, 2017). As such, print media advertising could have a greater influence on the final purchase decision (Bruce, 2017) and is still considered as one of the most effective ways to advertise (Cheetham, 2014; NartakMedia, 2022).

No industry goes without its challenges, and the print media industry is no exception. This industry has taken a great hit with publications and selling printed publications (Miksen, 2020). A decline in the readership of print media has been recorded, while some circulations in South Africa have decreased by up to 20 percent. The most prominent cause is the shift towards digital media. While this shift started before the COVID-19 pandemic, the pandemic accelerated the process as consumers were unable to go to stores to purchase print media. As a result, consumers familiarised themselves with digital engagements such as online shopping and accessing information and content online (NartakMedia, 2022). Consequently, newspapers and magazines were highly impacted and a few South African publications closed down (The Red Zone, 2022). However, there were a few print media businesses that moved to digital media, as it allows the news and information to be available to the audience much quicker and easier (Newman, 2022). These businesses still include advertisements in their magazines and newspapers, but present it in digital format (Harmiden, 2021). Given that well-known media houses have established a trustworthy reputation among their readers, their news and information will still be perceived as credible, even though it is presented on a different platform (The Red Zone, 2022). Another shift in the media industry is the movement towards niche markets, which is now known as niche print. Niche print refers to magazines and newspapers that focus on certain markets or certain news; for example, only local news, which in this case, means that international news is excluded (Houston, 2021). This shift has its benefits, as it could lead to improved brand loyalty, credibility and trust. Furthermore, it could reduce the competition to a business as the advertisements are more targeted and do not disappear in the clutter (Harmiden, 2021). However, to achieve success in niche marketing through print media, it is imperative to know your business's products and, more importantly, to understand the market to be targeted (Moon, 2014).

Generation Y consumers, more specifically students, are a well-sought-after target market as they are perceived to be the future big spenders, due to their education and associated future earning potential (Elkins, 2017; Jörg, 2017; Josephson, 2018). Hagen (2017) found that even though Generation Y consumers are exposed to the digital era, they pay more attention to print media advertisements. This is a result of the perceived credibility and trust in print media (BusinessTown, 2016; Bruce, 2017). Generation Y consumers are known to be information seekers (Fallon, 2014), which makes print media and particularly its ability to convey complex or large amounts of information one of the preferred advertising media among these individuals (Culclasure, 2016). Culclasure (2016) further explains that an advertisement's trustworthiness, ethical consideration, and humorous appeal of the message are important to Generation Y individuals. In addition, the timeliness and relevance of the information that is being communicated are considered just as important (Prendergast *et al.*, 2009). Generation Y consumers are usually more comfortable making a purchase when the product or service is referred to by a peer or a friend (Parets, 2019). As such, with print media, advertisements can easily be shared among family and friends.

While several studies in the literature have investigated the factors that drive the value of advertisements on different platforms such as television, social media, web advertising and traditional media (Ducoffe, 1996; Wilon & Korgaonkar, 2003; Zabadi *et al.*, 2012; Lukka & James, 2014; Aslam *et al.*, 2016; Ferreira & Barbosa, 2017), little research has been conducted on the value of print media advertisements, while no study in the literature conducted a comparison to determine whether there are differences in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, value, irritation and credibility of advertisements in the different print media platforms. With the developments and increased availability of different advertising platforms and the decrease in print media, it is unclear whether print media advertising is still valued, particularly by the Generation Y student market. Moreover, it is unclear which of the print media advertisements are the most valued and deemed most informative, entertaining, credible and the least irritating. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to determine whether differences exist in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements placed in the different print media, namely magazines, newspapers and flyers. The empirical objectives formulated for this study are:

- Determine the extent of Generation Y consumers' print media usage and exposure.
- Determine the extent of the perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of print media advertisements among Generation Y consumers.

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- Determine whether differences exist in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements in different print media, namely magazines, newspapers and flyers.

This study will provide unique insight into the relevance and value of print media advertisements to Generation Y consumers. By understanding which print media advertisements are most valued by Generation Y students, and what the differences between the print media advertisements are, businesses can alter their advertising campaigns to reach this target market more effectively. As such, this study provides insight into this aspect, which will enable businesses that target Generation Y consumers to employ the most effective print media in their marketing campaigns.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The value of an advertisement is a precursor of a consumer's behaviour, perception and attitude toward an advertisement (Deraz, 2018). This is because the value of an advertisement reflects the consumer's subjective evaluation of the advertisement. Ducoffe created a model in the 1900s to explain the determinants that influence the value of an advertisement. The model included determinants such as informativeness, entertainment and irritation, which have proven to influence advertising value (Ducoffe, 1995). This model drew the attention of other researchers such as Brackett and Carr (2001), who explored the model further and found another determinant, namely credibility, to influence advertising value. Several studies in the literature have validated that informativeness, entertainment and credibility have a direct positive influence on advertising value (Ducoffe, 1996; Brackett & Carr, 2001; Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001; Jung *et al.*, 2016). However, irritation is considered a negative determinant, since it can influence advertising value and consumers' attitudes toward the advertisement negatively (Ducoffe, 1996; Brackett & Carr, 2001; Aktan *et al.*, 2016).

Informativeness refers to the information communicated through an advertisement (Ducoffe 1995; Kokemuller, 2019). To guarantee the maximum success of an advertisement, Kaasinen (2003) and Frost (2016) emphasises that it is necessary to provide information relating to the business, product or service in the advertisement. Advertising has proven to be an effective means of conveying information as it provides the audience with regularly updated information about products (Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Van-Tien Dao *et al.*, 2014). Previous studies have reported that consumers often seek advertisements on different media platforms when gathering information on a product or service (Eighmey & McCord, 1998; Mir, 2021). Although print media advertisements are often used to provide more complex information (Becker,

2015), it is important to ensure that the information included in the advertisement is applicable, relevant and useful to the audience (Milne & Gordon, 1993; Siau & Shen, 2003). This is because the information will likely play a role in the consumers' purchase decision-making process (Varshney, 2003). In the study conducted by Freiden *et al.* (1998), it was reported that information about a product, service, or business makes a significant positive contribution towards the purchase decision of a consumer. Furthermore, the informativeness of advertisements could have a positive influence on consumers' attitudes toward various advertising media (Ducoffe, 1995; Ducoffe 1996; Tsang *et al.*, 2004; Chowdhury *et al.*, 2006; Aydin & Karamehmet, 2017; Firat, 2019).

The information provided in advertisements is not necessarily what makes an advertisement memorable or influential, but rather the way in which the advertisement entertains the audience. Entertainment can be described as the enjoyment that consumers experience when they interact with an advertisement (Vorderer *et al.*, 2004; Bates & Ferri, 2010; Van-Tien Dao *et al.*, 2014). This pleasure that consumers experience greatly affects the entertainment value of the advertisement (McQuail 2005; Wang & Sun, 2010; Firat, 2019). Furthermore, the feeling of enjoyment will affect consumers' attitudes toward advertising (Shavitt *et al.*, 1998; Eid *et al.*, 2020). Within the context of print media, it is challenging to incorporate the entertainment element, since video or radio advertisements have been found to be far more entertaining (Bruce, 2014; Firat, 2019; Leonard, 2022). However, different advertising appeals can be used to entertain the audience (Clow, 2016). In previous studies, it was reported that when a consumer feels entertained, it can increase customer loyalty (Dickinger *et al.*, 2004; McQuail, 2005). According to Logan *et al.* (2012) and Jung *et al.* (2016), it is for this reason that entertainment serves as a basis for the perceived value of an advertisement.

With the evolution of advertising, there was a proliferation of advertising platforms that led to an increase in the amount of advertising that consumers are exposed to. While this increases the likelihood that the audience would become aware of a product, service or business, it is not always well received by the audience. Consequently, it can lead to a negative outcome, such as irritation (Aydin, 2016). Excessive advertising could cause consumers to develop a feeling of discomfort, which likely could lead to irritation. This can easily be achieved as different advertising media and businesses use different platforms to communicate with consumers on a daily basis (Ducoffe, 1996; Aydin, 2016; Firat, 2019). However, irritation could have severe consequences. Irritation can negatively influence consumers' general perception of an advertisement. Moreover, the irritated feeling that is created by an advertisement could

decrease the value of the announcement (Ducoffe, 1996; Tsang *et al.*, 2004; Cortes & Vela, 2013; Aydin, 2016; Firat, 2019). As such, the greater the perceived irritation, the greater the probability that the announcement will fail (Aaker & Bruzzone, 1985). This is supported by several studies that found irritation to negatively influence the value of an advertisement (Taylor *et al.*, 2011; Bevan-Dye, 2013; Aydin, 2016; Firat, 2019). Subsequently, the irritation could also negatively affect consumers' attitudes to advertisements (Logan *et al.*, 2012).

For an announcement to be successful, advertisements should be perceived as credible. Credibility refers to the extent to which consumers perceive the advertisement as truthful and believable (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989; Chen & Shupe, 2019). If incorrect or dishonest information is provided in an advertisement, it can negatively affect the credibility of the announcement (Prendergast *et al.*, 2009). Although several factors, such as creation and reliability, and influence credibility, play key roles in the credibility of an advertisement, other factors, such as the informativeness of the announcement, play just as important a role (Prendergast *et al.*, 2009). In addition, Sindhya (2013) emphasises the role of selecting the advertising platform in enhancing the credibility of the announcement. In a study conducted by Yang (2003), it was reported that print advertisements are perceived to be more credible than internet advertisements. A number of authors found that credibility positively influences advertising value (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989; Brackett & Carr, 2001; Chen & Shupe, 2019). Moreover, when the credibility of an advertisement is high, the consumer's attitude towards that advertisement is likely to be positive (Martín-Santana & Beerli-Palacio, 2013; Van-Tien Dao *et al.*, 2014; Chen & Shupe, 2019). Bart *et al.* (2005) advise that the credibility of the information in the advertisement can be enhanced by making use of a credible media platform.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research approach was employed for the empirical part of the study. Furthermore, a descriptive research design was followed using single cross-sectional sampling to determine Generation Y students' perceptions of print media advertising in South Africa.

3.1 Sample

The target population of the study included female and male individuals who were full-time registered students at a higher education institution (HEI) located in Gauteng, South Africa. These individuals were between 18 and 24 years old, and therefore form part of the Generation Y cohort. Gauteng was selected as it is the province that accommodates the largest portion of the South African population (Stats SA, 2022) and the most HEIs

(Universities South Africa, 2023). From the sampling frame, two HEIs were selected by means of the non-probability judgment sampling approach. As such, one traditional university and one university of technology were selected. Thereafter, a single cross-sectional non-probability convenience sample of 500 students, 250 students on each campus, was selected. The sample size of 500 was deemed suitable as it is in line with similar studies such as the study conducted by Aydin (2016) (sample size of 500) and Brackett and Carr (2001) (sample size 500).

3.2 Measuring instrument and data collection method

A self-administered, structured questionnaire was used to gather the data concerning Generation Y students' perceptions regarding the informativeness, entertainment, credibility, irritation and value of print media advertisements. The questionnaire included a cover letter that explained the purpose of the study. The first section of the questionnaire collected the students' demographic information. Section 2 gathered information on the students' print media usage and exposure. In the last section, the students' perceptions of print media as advertising platforms were measured. This section comprised five variables: entertainment, informativeness, irritation and value, which were adopted from a scale developed by Ducoffe (1995), and credibility, which was adopted from a scale developed by Brackett and Carr (2001). The students' perceptions were recorded on a six-point Likert-type scale that ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

The questionnaires were distributed to Generation Y students registered at two HEIs by means of the mall-intercept method after the required permission was obtained from the participating HEIs. Fieldworkers approached the students and invited them to participate in the study. The students who voluntarily agreed to participate were handed the self-administered questionnaire for completion. Students were free to withdraw from the study at any point in time. Once the 500 questionnaires were distributed, the questionnaires that were completed in full were included in the data analysis.

3.3 Data analysis

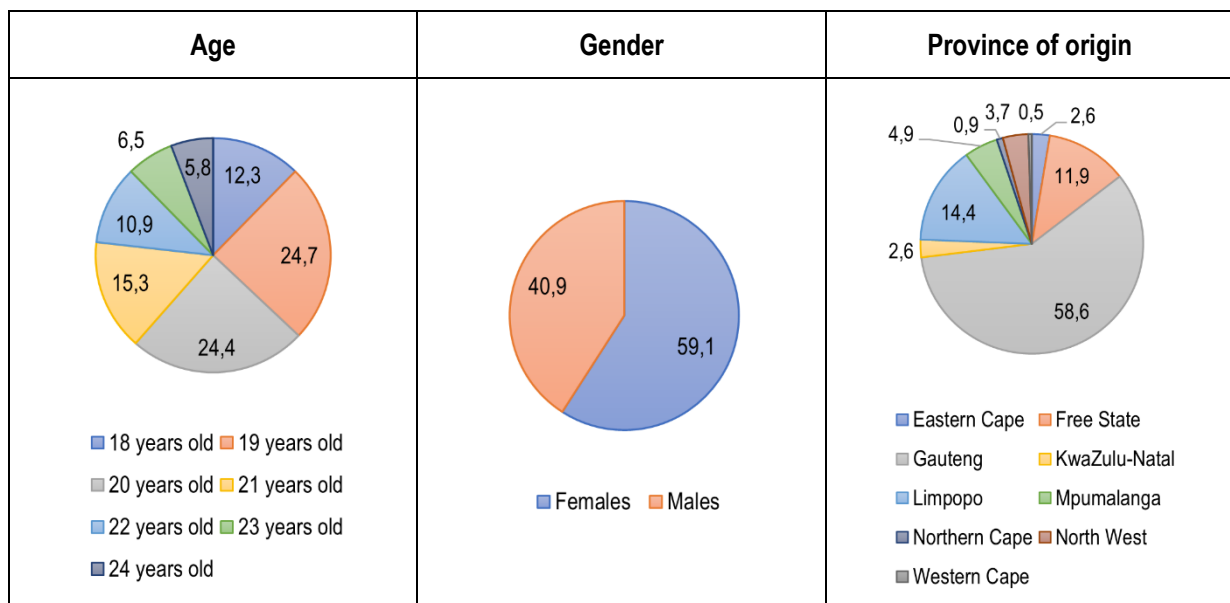
The data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 27 for Windows. The statistical methods that were used in the data analysis included reliability analysis, frequency analysis, descriptive statistical analysis and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The reliability of the scales used in the study was determined by means of establishing internal consistency reliability by calculating the Cronbach alpha values for the variables. Frequency analysis was employed to determine Generation Y students' print media

usage and exposure, while descriptive analysis was used to describe Generation Y students' perceptions regarding the informativeness, entertainment, value, irritation and credibility of print media advertisements. Lastly, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there are any differences in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, value, irritation and credibility of the different print media advertisement platforms.

4. RESULTS

Of the 500 questionnaires that were distributed, 430 questionnaires were completed in full and were deemed appropriate for data analysis, which equals an effective response rate of 86.00 percent. The gender distribution of the sample shows that more female (59.1%) students participated in this study than males (40.9%). The majority of participants were 19 years of age (24.7%), narrowly followed by those being 20 years old (24.4%). Regarding the province of origin, the majority of the sample resides in Gauteng (58.6%). Table 1 presents the demographic information of the sample of the study.

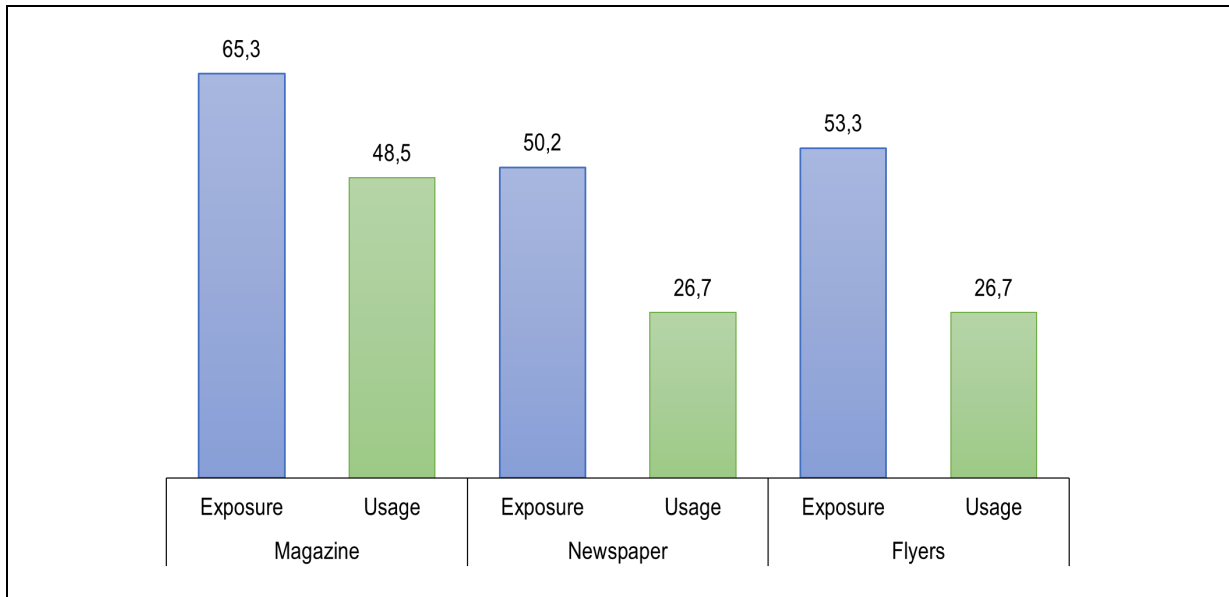
Table 1: Demographics



Source: Researchers' own compilation

In terms of the participants' print media usage and exposure, which is the first empirical objective of this study, the participants indicated that magazines are the type of print media that they are exposed to the most (65.3%) and use most frequently (48.5%). Figure 1 indicates the participants' print media usage and exposure.

Figure 1: Print media platforms usage and exposure



Source: Researchers' own compilation

The descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the variables. Furthermore, to determine internal consistency reliability, Cronbach alpha values were calculated for each of the variables. Cronbach alpha values can range between 0 and 1; however, values above 0.7 are preferred (Malhotra, 2020). Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations and Cronbach alpha values.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach alpha

Factors	Valid N	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach alpha
Informativeness	430	4.19	0.815	0.814
Entertainment	430	3.62	1.127	0.971
Value	430	4.50	0.947	0.801
Irritation	430	3.08	1.062	0.767
Credibility	430	4.25	1.040	0.795

Source: Researchers' own compilation

The descriptive statistical analysis shows means that range between 3.08 and 4.50. Concerning the second empirical objective formulated for this study, informativeness, entertainment, value and credibility have a mean value above 3.5, which suggests that Generation Y students perceive print media advertisements as valuable, credible, informative

and entertaining. The means score for irritation is below 3.5, which means that it falls within the disagreement side of the scale and that the participants do not perceive print advertisements as irritating. The Cronbach alpha values ranged from 0.767 to 0.971, which suggests acceptable internal consistency reliability. To address the third empirical objective, which was to determine whether there are any differences in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements placed in the different print media, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted.

Table 3: Differences in perceived advertising value in terms of different print media platforms

Advertising value determinants		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Informativeness	Between groups	3.554	2	1.777	2.694	0.069
	Within groups	281.664	427	0.660		
	Total	285.198	429			
Entertainment	Between groups	19.419	2	9.710	7.897	0.000*
	Within groups	525.039	427	1.230		
	Total	544.459	429			
Value	Between groups	2.628	2	1.314	1.468	0.232
	Within groups	382.204	427	0.895		
	Total	384.831	429			
Irritation	Between groups	6.632	2	3.316	2.969	0.052
	Within groups	476.871	427	1.117		
	Total	483.504	429			
Credibility	Between groups	0.027	2	0.014	0.013	0.987
	Within groups	463.787	427	1.086		
	Total	463.814	429			
*Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$						

Source: Researchers' own compilation

As indicated in Table 3, there was no statistically significant difference found in Generation Y consumers' perceptions regarding the informativeness ($p = 0.069 > 0.05$), value ($p = 0.232 > 0.05$), irritation ($p = 0.052 > 0.05$) and credibility ($p = 0.987 > 0.05$) of newspaper, magazine and flyer advertisements. However, there was a statically significant difference found in the perceived entertainment ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) of these advertisements. Consequently, the Tukey HSD was examined to determine where the specific variances lay.

The Tuckey HSD test revealed that in the case of perceived entertainment, differences were found between two print media platforms with significant values of $p < 0.05$. This indicates that there are differences in the perceived entertainment ($p = 0.00 < 0.05$) of magazine advertisements and flyer advertisements and that magazine advertisements are perceived as more entertaining than flyers.

5. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to provide insight into Generation Y students' print media usage and exposure as well as their perceptions regarding the informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements placed in the different print media. In line with the purpose of this study, the first empirical objective focused on Generation Y consumers' print media usage and exposure. The findings of the study revealed that compared to newspapers and fliers, magazines are the type of print media that the participants are exposed to the most and use most frequently. Furthermore, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to address the second empirical objective namely to determine the participants' perceptions of the value, informativeness, entertainment, credibility and irritation of print media advertisements. The results from the descriptive statistical analysis revealed that Generation Y consumers perceived print media advertisements as informative, entertaining, credible and valuable, and do not perceive them as irritating. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Taylor *et al.* (2011), Bevan-Dye (2013), Aydin and Karamehmet (2017) and Firat (2019), who reported that platforms such as mobile advertising, social media advertising and web advertising are perceived by consumers as informative and entertaining. The third empirical objective was set out to determine whether differences exist in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements placed in the different print media. Based on the results of the one-way ANOVA, there were no significant differences found in the informativeness, irritation, credibility and value of newspaper, magazine and flyer advertisements. However, it was found that Generation Y consumers perceive magazine advertisements as more entertaining than flyers. This finding highlight that

the entertainment element of advertisements is important to Generation Y consumers. This corresponds with the findings of Coulter *et al.* (2001), who reported that advertisements should be both informational and entertaining to counter any negativity such as intrusiveness.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study are valuable to marketing managers who execute and manage print media marketing campaigns as this study sought to provide insight into the various print media advertising platforms and an understanding of the similarities and differences between them. An enhanced understanding of these differences and similarities could assist marketing managers in reaching their target audience more effectively. Although no significant differences were found between the informativeness, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements, except for the entertainment of flyers and magazines, the findings of the study advocate that the entertainment, informativeness and credibility of print media advertisements are important to Generation Y consumers. In addition, the findings indicate that Generation Y consumers perceived print media as valuable and not irritating. In light of this, it is important that marketing managers ensure that print media advertisements are entertaining, informative and credible as it will likely enhance the value of the advertisements to Generation Y consumers. This could lead to a higher recall potential of the advertisement, which leads to higher awareness of the product, service or business and ultimately, could influence the consumers' decision-making and the business's success. It is therefore advisable to incorporate entertaining features such as humour into print media advertisements, in order to keep Generation Y consumers entertained and attracted to the advertisement (Myllyoja *et al.*, 2020). Even though no significant difference was found between the different platforms in terms of informativeness, this is a key feature for any print media advertisement. Therefore, it is suggested that the information provided in the advertisement is complete and that the business's details, including the contact details, are provided so that the consumer can contact the business if necessary. To enhance the credibility of a print advertisement, marketing managers should ensure that the information provided is accurate and not misleading. In addition, businesses could support the statements made in the advertisements by providing supportive facts such as statistics or customer reviews. The credibility of the advertisement could spill over and influence the credibility of the business that is being advertised. While the participants in the study did not perceive print advertisements as irritating, it is important to ensure that the required information, such as the business details, is provided and clearly visible and that the information is not misleading. In addition, the advertisement should be

placed appropriately. Within the context of magazines and newspapers, it is recommended that the advertisement is placed close to an article on a similar or associated topic.

7. CONCLUSION

Advertising, including print advertising, is widely known to be an important element of the marketing of businesses, and consequently, business success. Although advertising is not a new concept, it is constantly evolving and being adapted according to the changes in the business environment. Consequently, there has been a decrease in print advertisements and the readership thereof post-COVID; however, print media is still perceived as valuable and effective, particularly among Generation Y consumers. It is, however, essential to determine which print media platforms would be most effective, particularly in terms of their advertising value. Therefore, the study aimed to uncover the differences in the perceived informativeness, entertainment, value, irritation and credibility of advertisements placed in the different print media. The required data was collected by following a descriptive research design and distributing a self-administered questionnaire to a sample of 500 Generation Y students who were registered at two public HEIs in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. The findings of the study revealed insignificant differences in the perceived informativeness, value, irritation and credibility of advertisements in magazines, newspapers and flyers; however, it was found that advertisements in magazines are perceived to be more entertaining than flyer advisements. These findings can be used as guidance to marketers to adapt their marketing campaigns and more effectively influence the Generation Y consumers that they target. In addition, this study also makes a theoretical contribution as it is the only study that can be found in the literature that investigated differences in South African Generation Y students' perceptions regarding the informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility and value of advertisements placed in the different print media.

As with most studies, this study had its limitations. The sample was limited to 500 Generation Y students and, as such, there is an opportunity to conduct the study on a larger scale and include other generations in the sample. Furthermore, only two public HEIs in the Gauteng Province of South Africa were included in the sample of the study, which offers the opportunity to include private HEIs, HEIs in other provinces, and other countries.

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