THE ROLE OF UNSOLICITED SMS MARKETING IN DRIVING CONSUMERS' BUYING BEHAVIOR THROUGH CONSUMER PERCEPTION

Muhammad Saleem[1]

Muhammad Bilal Mustafa[2]

Abstract*: In last few decades, increasing advancements in technology and extensive usage of smartphones has increased the trend of unsolicited SMS marketing. Hence, organizations consider this marketing technique as an opportunity to boost their marketing efforts and to influence customers to make purchases. However, still there is vague understanding in the contemporary literature that how such marketing activities lead consumers' perception toward buying behavior or to make purchase and repurchase. The idea behind the study is to identify that how unsolicited SMS marketing create consumer perception to purchase certain products and how this perception affect consumer buying behavior. For that purpose, we distributed 500 questionnaires to a random sample of those consumers who make extensive usage of smartphones. Although we used PLS-SEM to analyze the relationship of independent and dependent variables. Our findings suggest that unsolicited SMS marketing is a fundamental technique and has positive and significant impact on consumer perception to make a purchase of certain goods. However, once a consumer perceive that he/she will make this purchase then it will ultimately lead the consumer to reflect buying behavior and to make that purchase. Additionally, our findings also reveal the puzzle that unsolicited SMS marketing also has indirect effect on consumer buying behavior through consumer perception.*

Key Words: *Appeal, Irritation, Unsolicited, Consumer perception, buying behavior*

[1]Author is Lecturer in School of Business & Management Sciences at Minhaj, University, Lahore; E:Mail: saleemucp@gmail.com

[2]Author is Lecturer in School of Business & Management Sciences at Minhaj, University, Lahore Minhaj University, Lahore E:Mail: bilalmustafa0000@gmail.com

Introduction

It is observed all around the world that a company's marketing efforts have a lot to do with its sales and success (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013). In Pakistan there are numerous ways that companies use in order to advertise, promote, to create positioning in customers mind and to carry off various other objectives of marketing to boost the sales and generate profit (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013). Mobile or Online marketing is expected to have huge growth as the mobile marketing industry grew from 4 billion US dollars to 16 billion dollars from 2003 to 2005 and it has been predicted to grow even more in the coming years (Amy Carroll, 2007). Recent surveys that have been conducted in Europe show that 36% of marketers used SMS advertisement for more than a year and additional 39% also started using this medium for advertising purposes. However, this trend is expected to grow to 62% worldwide (Ul Haq, 2012). The emergence of social media and easy access to mobile phones. Many companies use SMS to reach out to customers to create awareness of their products. Previously conducted studies show that SMS marketing can provide companies with different opportunities to engage with customers and it was found that it is indeed an effective tool for their existing customers (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013).

Similarly, now a day airline industry is one of the most growing industry meanwhile the competition is very rich in the airline industry (JR, MO, CA, & AJAYI, 2018). Similarly, JR and his colleagues (2018) argue that airline brands are coping with the new tactics to create customer value and try to adopt such marketing campaigns through which they could deliver maximum customer value. As, cell phone technology can help companies identify and understand the behavior of their customers and better understand the dynamic perception of the customer and their purchase pattern (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013). Dynamics of customers' perception is more complex in case of new customers as they have different views about the unsolicited messages received from the companies. (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013). Similarly, many airlines use unsolicited SMS marketing to target their customers to create awareness and to offer them diverse offering (Schulze, Schöler, & Skiera, 2015). Although, Schulze and other (2015) argue that there is paucity of studies who empirically investigate that how unsolicited SMS marketing shape the consumer perception about purchasing which will ultimately lead the consumer to make a purchase and might repurchasing. Hence, this research is guided by the recent calls of above discussed studies and the broad research question of this study can be formulated as; how SMS marketing builds consumers' perception and finally contributes to the purchasing behavior, particularly of new customers. This study will investigate consumer perception of unsolicited messages and possibly develop clear understanding of consumer behavior towards SMS marketing. The previous literature and conceptual frameworks provide insights on the success of mobile marketing however only a few studies have been tested or generated models from a consumer's perspective (Aslam, Batool & Ulhaq, 2016).

Hence, this research begins with the literature review and hypotheses development section. Additionally, authors of this study discussed the instrumentation, sample, population, sampling framework and data collection techniques.

Furthermore, a detailed chapter of data analysis and findings has added in which the results of the hypotheses have discussed in detail. Finally, this research lightened with the glimpses of a detailed discussion, conclusion, research implications, limitations and future research.

Literature Review

Recent developments and advancement in the mobile phone technology have greatly increased the mobile phone advertising, research has been conducted addressing this issue that how companies are taking advantage of this facility for advertising purposes and also to reach their customers. (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013). A most useful attribute of short message service is that it the most popular source of data service (Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy, & Scharl, 2004). SMS marketing is a low-cost method of advertising content and generating profit. It is also a medium for the customer to enjoy the relevancy of content served to them at greater convenience. Moreover, mobile marketing ensures a stronger relationship between the customer and business through customized messages (Barnes, 2004).Users cannot stop receiving SMS messages; at least, they see snippets of the message before declining or removing them. this forced exposure is said interrupting effect on the general viewing process of the consumers.(Phil Edwards & Kwan, 2002).

Generally, it is observed that mobile SMS marketing has a negative impact on customers, they usually tend to accept the message only from the senders they have given permission to (Mohammad Aamir & Zaman, 2013). There are many factors that can affect consumer perception, such as Appeal, Product involvement, irritation, Entertainment of unsolicited messaging (Ul Haq, 2012).

The irritation is the negative reaction of the customer to unwelcomed messages. Customers' perception of the irritating SMS messages has a negative relationship with their attitude towards SMS marketing (Van der Waldt, 2009). Irritation can be defined as tactics that annoy, insult, offend or over -manipulate the customers (Tsang, 2004). The marketing experts crafted and designed advertisements; those advertisements sent too often that might be frustrating for consumers who have subscription to SMS (Bruner II & Kumar, 2007). Message ads could be perplexing for consumers, when advertisements start to divert consumers by inundating them by information that might lead to customer's negative response towards ad (Stewart & Palou, 2002). Another reason is potential customers annoyed by unnecessary messages identified as SPAM. Unwanted messages (SPAM) disobey privacy of customers and might collect their private information with no appropriate permission (Dickinger et al., 2004). Customers attitude also have significantly influenced by irritation, information, entertainment and credibility (Tsang et al., 2004). Based on above stated literature, second hypothesis is proposed as

H1: Irritation has a negative and significant effect on consumer perception about purchasing.

The appeal is considered to be the most effective aspect for SMS marketing (Shavitt, 1990). Appeal impels people to act or like towards great. The appeal of SMS marketing has two subsections the rational appeal (informative contents) and the emotional appeal. The rational appeal is linked to the benefits and features of a product which has a positive impact on customers' attitude (Haghirian, Madlberger, & Tanuskova, 2005).

Emotional appeal is defined as an attempt to stir up negative or positive emotions that can influence purchase decisions(Grigaliunaite & Pilelienė, 2016). When a customer is highly engaged with the brand and its advertisement the rational appeal is very effective but when there is little involvement of customers with the brand the emotional appeal is more effective (Baker & Lutz, 2000). Entertainment, Appeal and product involvement have a direct impact on consumers' attitudes towards brand, advertisement and their purchase intention (Drossos, Giaglis, Lekakos, Kokkinaki, & Stavraki, 2007). Pousttchi & Wiedemann (2006) stated that quizzes and contest through SMS append value towards marketing campaigns; furthermore, they are influential in generating an affirmative stance of the customers towards message marketing. In SMS advertising information and entertainment are vital aspects (Bauer, Barnes, Reichardt, & Neumann, 2005). If consumers and advertisers both have win-win position, then mobile advertisement is likely to produce greater results. Based on above stated literature, first hypothesis is proposed as

H2: Appeal has a positive and significant effect on consumer perception about purchasing.

Product involvement can be defined as the commitment of consumers towards certain brands or product types(Ul Haq, 2012). Product involvement is also an important factor to decide the amount of information given to the customers and their response towards the advertisement.

It can influence the level of motivation in customers through information. Higher product involvement, higher chances for customers to process product information (Richard E Petty,

2012). Customers like to have rewards from the marketing campaigns targeted to them (George R. Milne, 1993). Petty & Cacioppo (2012) stated that the flow theory elucidates why people expand massive force to the actions of their personal interest (Petty & Cacioppo, 2012). The flow theory explains the holistic sense that feel by people, when they take action by full connection (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Based on above stated literature, third hypothesis is proposed as:

H3: Product involvement has a positive and significant effect on consumer perception about purchasing.

Entertainment is described by Ducoffe (1996) as; "the potential to accomplish audience's wants for aesthetic enjoyment, diversion and escapism." Entertainment has considerable and affirmative connection among the persons attitude towards the message advertisement (Haghirian and Madlberger, 2005; Salem, 2016). Haghirian and Madlberger (2005) stated that entertainment plays a vital role in shaping the advertisement overall value. In addition, Parreño et al. (2013) described that SMS advertising key factor is entertainment and suggested that S MS advertising should be interesting, amusing and precise in order to attain constructive attention of consumers. UlHaq (2012) stated that entertainment is well-known to construct loyalty of consumers and value addition in support of consumers. When games and prizes are offered via small SMS, it makes better their involvement. Entertainment is significant aspect in SMS; it is well responded and received by the consumers. Involving mobile users by offering interactive games and prizes is a technique to retain and attract consumers. Entertainment service for mobile users also arouses aesthetic delight (Oh

& Xu, 2003). Pleasure as of an ad expands positive stance of consumers towards marketing via SMS. Message should have essentials of entertainment and fun to grasp attention of customers. Entertainment fun essentials connect consumers and create them known with product or services (UlHaq, 2012). The extra amusing the ads of mobile are, that may advance the contribution rate of consumers. The entertainment options to put in ad of mobiles are several; such as jokes, puzzles, competitions, astrology and ring tones. To investigate extra about this feature which forms attitude towards message marketing, the subsequent hypothesis is suggested

H4: Entertainments have a positive and significant effect on consumer perception about purchasing.

After a thorough review of the literature on consumer behavior models and their attitude towards advertising, a framework of research has been constructed to present the factors influencing the attitude of consumers toward SMS advertisement. The research framework also attempts to illustrate association among attitude, intention and actual behavior of the consumers towards SMS advertising. The theory of reasoned action (TRA) presented three major constructs which are attitude, intention and behavior. The model constitutes the psychological process in relation with a person's beliefs, attitude and intention (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Fishbein, Middlestadt, & Hitchcock, 1994), and explains the relationship between attitude and behavior. Permission is deemed to be a major element contributing to attitudes amongst three types of SMS advertisement (Barwise & Strong, 2002; Kavassalis et al., 2003). Monetary benefits such

as, free talk time and SMS are also assumed to affect customers' intentions to accept mobile ads, followed by intention that influences the real behavior to receive advertisement. Attitude can be defined as the extent of favorable or unfavorable response to a given behavior. For instance, an individual with a positive attitude toward SMS advertisement will have a higher probability i.e. intention to accept SMS ads. Contrary to this, an individual with a negative attitude will not have an intention to accept SMS ads (Olofsson & Pietz, 2009). It can be further explored with the help of the hypotheses postulated below

H5: Consumer perception about purchasing has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying behavior.

In addition to the above, as discussed earlier that numerous researchers discuss the direct relationship of unsolicited SMS marketing and consumer perception about purchasing certain offerings (e.g. see Ulhaq, 2012). Similarly, researchers also discussed that consumer perception will lead the consumer to make the purchase e.g. see (Aslam et al., 2016; Barwise & Strong, 2002; Kavassalis et al., 2003; Zeeshan, Nafees & Mustafa, 2019). In similar vein, Aslam and his colleagues (2016) argue that unsolicited SMS marketing including the features such as appeal, product involvement, entertainment and irritation has an indirect effect on consumer buying behavior through consumer attitude toward this behavior. Hence, we extend this argument by discussing that unsolicited SMS marketing having the appeal, entertainment, and product involvement in their message could influence the consumer perception positively and unsolicited irritating SMS could negatively affect the consumer perception about purchasing. Consequently,

this negative or positive perception will lead to the consumer purchase and repurchase of the offerings that are being offered through unsolicited SMS marketing. Hence, we postulate that

H6: Consumer perception about purchasing mediates the relationship between irritation and buying behavior of the consumer.

H7: Consumer perception about purchasing mediates the relationship between appeal and buying behavior of the consumer.

H8: Consumer perception about purchasing mediates the relationship between product involvement and buying behavior of the consumer.

H6: Consumer perception about purchasing mediates the relationship between entertainment and buying behavior of the consumer.

Theoretical Framework
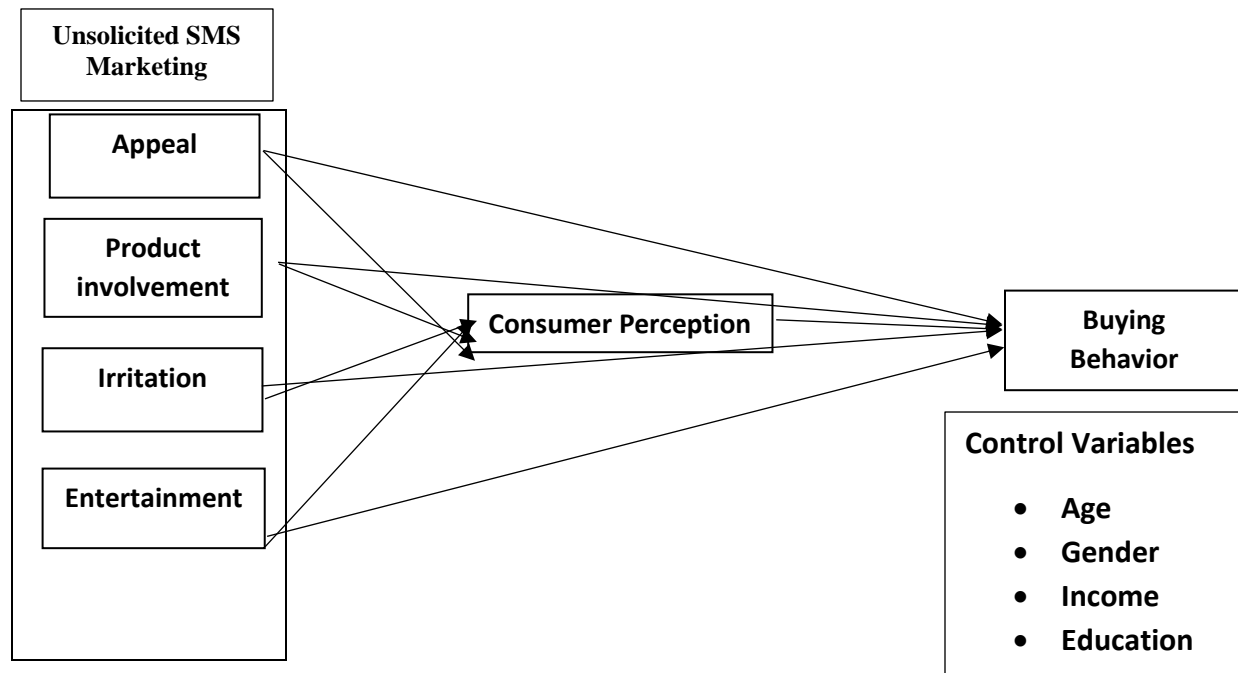
Instruments:

In this research, to measure the relevant constructs we adopted the scales referred and tested by the previous researchers. To measure the irritation a four items scale was adopted from Ducoffe, 1996). Similarly, in order to measure appeal and product involvement, we adopted the scales referred by (Schlosser, Shavitt & Kanfer, 1999). However, to measure consumer perception a 6-item scale was adopted from (Jayaraman & Anandnarayan 2012). In addition to it, to measure the entertainment we adopted a six-item scale referred by (Schlosser et. al., 1999) and tested by (Aslam, Batool & Ul Haq, 2016). Similarly, a three we used a three-item scale to measure the buying behavior of the consumers which has suggested by (Schlosser et. al., 1999) and further tested by (Aslam et al., 2016). However, in this research we have designated age, gender, education and income as control variables.

Hence, these controlled variables may affect the relationship of independent and dependent variables (Aslam et al., 2016).

Sample and data Collection:

In this research, we distributed a self-administrative questionnaire to a random sample of airline industry. However, to ensure the reliability and validity of the sample and target population, we have adopted mall intercept survey technique. Mall intercept is a survey technique where researcher could get face to face interaction with the consumer in a shopping mall or other public spaces. It is the most recommended technique to collect the data from the consumer because it ensures that the sample is the true representative of the population (e.g. see Kolb, 2008). Additionally, by using mall intercept technique the response will be maximum due to face to face interaction.

Hence, we distributed 500 questionnaires to the participants out of which 128 participants either did not responded or responded fragmented response. So, fragmented questionnaire were removed from main analysis and we have 372 consummate questionnaire for data analysis.

Data Analysis:

In this study, to analyze the relationship among independent and dependent variables we have used SMART PLS-SEM 3.2. As Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2016) suggested that PLS-SEM is an appropriate tool to analyze the relationship among independent variables particularly when the data is abnormal. Hence, in preliminary analysis we found that our data was normal at univariate level but not normal at multivariate level. So, we adopted PLS-SEM for conducting algorithm and bootstrapping analysis.

Pilot test:

Before going to the main analysis, we conducted a pilot test on a sample of 30 respondents in order to analyze the reliability and validity of the instrument. However, three items CP5, CP6 and EN5 were removed from main analysis because their loading values were below the threshold level of .60 as suggested by (Hair et al., 2016). Although, we remain all other items in our mail analysis because they are loaded perfectly against their relevant constructs and the value of average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach alpha were satisfactory after the removing of problematic items.

Findings and results:

We used SmartPLS to analyse the results in two phases. First is the assessment of the measurement model and second is the assessment of structural model. For measurement model, we need to ensure the reliability and validity of our study constructs. According to Hair and colleagues (2017), to access the reliability and validity of the model we should examine individual item loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity.

Factor loadings of our constructs are given in table 1. These loadings indicates that all factors are highly load and measure the construct sufficiently, as the value of each loading is above 0.60. The composite reliability is measured between 0 to 1 and the threshold value for CR is 0.60. Considering construct is not reliable if CR vale is below 0.60 (Hair et al., 2013). The CR of our constructs are shown in table1 and it clearly indicates that all our variables have CR value above 0.88. Hence, all variables are adequately measuring composite reliability. Convergent validity (AVE) threshold should be equal or greater than 0.5. Our study constructs AVE values are 0.5 or above as shown in table 1. Likewise, the Cronbach alpha value should be greater than .70 to ensure the internal consistency of the items. Cronbach alpha value of all study constructs is lies between the ranges of 0.71 to 0.88.

Table 1

Item loadings, reliability and convergent validity values

First Order	Second Order	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
AP	Uni-Dimensional	AP1	.84	.90	.75	.84
		AP2	.86			
		AP3	.89			
IR	Uni-Dimensional	IR1	.80	.83	.56	.73
		IR2	.75			
		IR3	.61			
		IR4	.81			
PI	Uni-Dimensional	PI1	.87	.88	.71	.80
		PI2	.82			
		PI3	.83			
EN	Uni-Dimensional	EN1	.82	.91	.67	.88
		EN2	.84			
		EN3	.83			
		EN4	.82			
		EN5	.77			
CP	Uni-Dimensional	CP1	.76	.82	.53	.71
		CP2	.73			
		CP3	.74			
		CP4	.68			
BB	Uni-Dimensional	BB6	.76	.90	.74	.83
		BB7	.79			
		BB8	.81			

Note: AP=Appeal, IR= Irritation, PI= Product Involvement, EN=Entertainment, CP= Consumer Perception, BB=Buying behaviour, CR= Composite reliability, AVE= Average variance extracted

We measured discriminant validity of our model with the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria. As shown in table 2, all the bold values of AVE are highly load as compare to other variable values present in table. Thus, we can say that our all variables have appropriate amount of discriminant validity (Hair Jr. *et al.*, 2016). Figure 1 shows measurement model of our study constructs.

Table 2
Discriminant validity

Variables	AP	IR	PI	IN	CP	BB
AP	**.87**					
IR	.52	**.75**				
PI	.52	.58	**.84**			
IN	.56	.46	.50	**.81**		
CP	.39	.66	.56	.35	**.73**	
BB	.70	.40	.64	.68	.38	**.74**

Note: AP=Appeal, IR= Irritation, PI= Product Involvement, IN=Entertainment, CP= Consumer Perception, BB=Buying behavior

Structural model is used to determine the path of predicted hypotheses and their significance level. First, we examined multicollinearity of our study constructs through VIF. According to Hair et al. (2013), VIF and tolerance values are less than 10 and greater than 0.1, respectively. Our study variables VIF values ranges between 1.62 to 2.96, hence there is no multicollinearity. Further, we have examined path coefficients, coefficient determination (R^2), the effect size (F^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2).
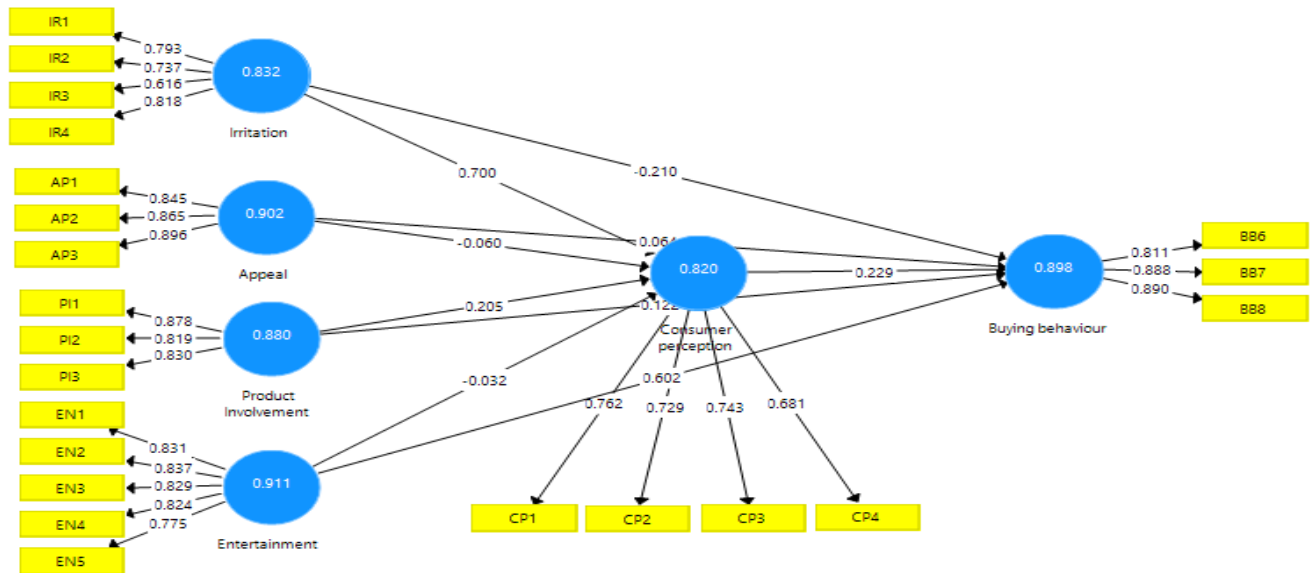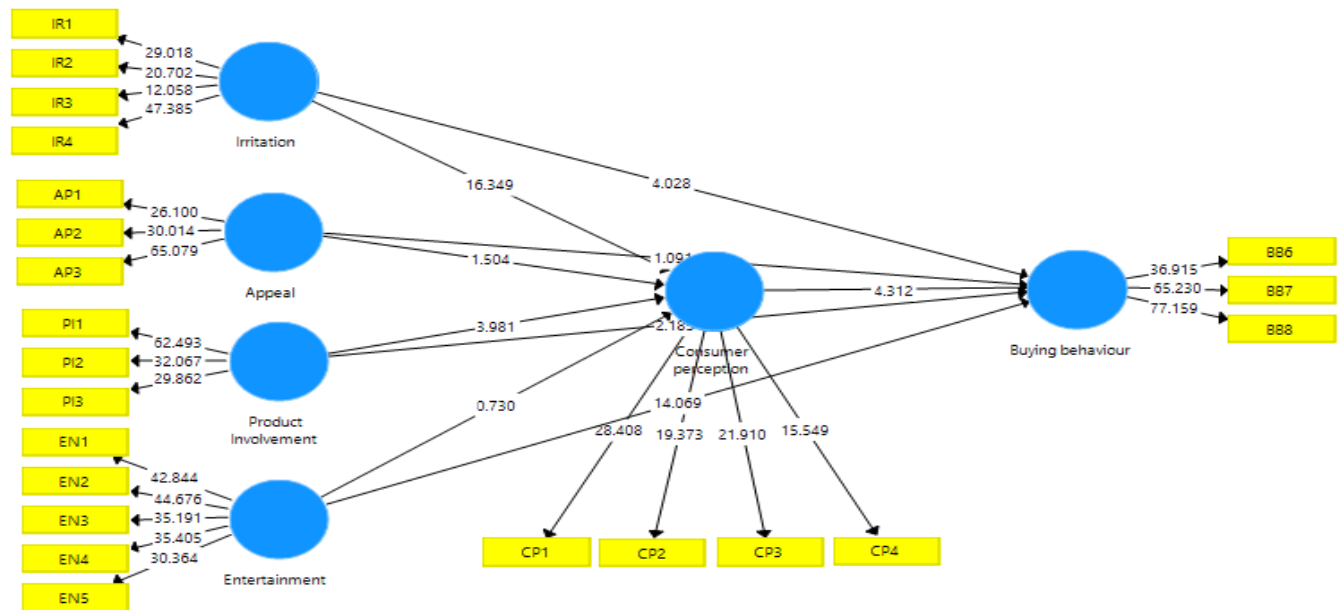
Figure 1 (Algorithm)

Figure 2 (Bootstrapping)

Our results revealed that IR (Irritation) positively influence (CP) Consumer Perception (β =-.694; t= 15.77; P<0.01) is accepted. Similarly, hypothesis, (AP) Appeal binding positively influence CP (β=0.06; t= 1.47; P<0.05) is accepted. (PI) Product Involvement does not positively influence CP (β=-.033; t= 0.764; P>0.1), hence this hypothesis is not

Table 3

accepted. Our hypothesis, entertainment has a positive and significant effect on CP (β = .207; t= 3.995; P<0.1) is not accepted. Similarly, our results show that CP has a positive and significant impact on BB (β= .229; t= 4.269; P<0.01). Hence, this hypothesis is also accepted

Direct and mediation hypotheses results:

Paths	β	S.E	T value	P value	Decision	VIF	F²	Effect	Q²	R²
									.28	.57
IR→CP	-.694	.044	15.77	.000	Supported	1.71	.694	Large		
AP→CP	.060	.040	1.473	.041	Supported	1.75	.06	Small		
PI→CP	-.033	.043	0.764	.222	Not Supported	1.77	-.03	Small		
EN→CP	.207	.052	3.995	.000	Supported	1.62	.207	Medium		
CP→BB	.229	.054	4.269	.000	Supported	2.64	.229			
IR→CP→BB	.076	.040	1.899	.029	Supported	2.96				
AP→CP→BB	.007	.006	1.069	.043	Supported	1.76				
PI→CP→BB	-.004	.006	.637	.262	Not Supported	1.87				
EN→CP→BB	.023	.013	1.721	.043	Supported	1.63				

Note: AP=Appeal, IR= Irritation, PI= Product Involvement, EN=Entertainment, CP= Consumer Perception, BB=Buying behaviour

Results in table 3 shows that CP significantly mediates the relationship between IR and BB (Buying behaviour) (β=.076; t=1.89; P<.05), hence accepted. In addition, CP significantly mediates the relationship between AP and BB (β=.007; t=1.06; P<.05), hence accepted. CP does not significantly mediate the relationship between PI and BB (β=-.004; t=.634; P>.01), hence hypothesis is not accepted. However, CP significantly mediates the relationship between EN and BB as (β=.023; t=1.721; P<.05), so we do not accept the hypothesis. Further, control variables such as gender, age, education and income have insignificant effect on dependent variable BB. Figure 2 shows all the direct and indirect relationships of study variables whereas figure 3 shows the relationship of control variables with dependent variable buying behaviour. Additionally, all control variables have insignificant.

Discussion:

Our best efforts are to identify the role of unsolicited SMS marketing to shape consumer perception, which will further effect the buying or purchasing behavior of the consumers. For this purpose, we consider, SMS marketing using different factors such as Appeal, Irritation, entertainment and product involvement could influence the consumer perception positively as well as negatively. However, a good consumer perception in turn lead consumer toward purchasing and repurchasing.

Our finding reveals that irritation has negative and significant impact on consumer perception as per H1. For instance, if marketing SMS's irritate the consumer then it will create the negative perception about certain products and services which ultimately hinder the purchasing. However, numerous studies discuss the negative impact of irritation on consumer perception. For occurrence, Schulze et al. (2015) argue that some organizations design poor marketing campaigns using SMS marketing, hence consumers get irritated and it will create negative image in the consumer mind. Similarly, JR et al. (2018) suggested that there is a negative relationship between annoying marketing and consumer perception about certain products and services. In similar vein, researchers also argue that while experiencing a marketing campaign a consumer either perceive positively or negatively about certain offerings.

In addition to the above, our results suggest that appeal and entertainment features of unsolicited SMS have a positive and significant effect on consumer perception as per H2 and H3 respectively. For example, if an unsolicited marketing SMS is appealing, entertaining and effective enough to encourage customer to get involved with product then it will galvanize the consumer perception positively about particular products and services that a company is offering through unsolicited SMS marketing. However, numerous researchers discuss the positive relationship of these feature of unsolicited SMS marketing including the features of appeal, entertainment and product involvement. For instance, Ulhaq (2012) argue that, those unsolicited marketing SMS which are more appealing attract the consumers than those which are focusing other features such as product information etc. Similarly, JR (2018) discussed that marketing campaigns must matched with the interest of the target audience. Hence, consumer will take interest in that particular message and the chance of creation a perception about that offering will also increases. In other words, if a consumer

received the unsolicited SMS which are beyond the consumer interest then it may irritate the consumer and ultimately lead to the negative perception about that offerings.

Similarly, our findings suggest that entertainment will also positively and significantly affect the consumer perception. For example, if an unsolicited SMS entertaining for the consumer then it will create a positive perception in the consumer mind which ultimately lead to consumer to take the buying decision. These findings are consistent with the previous studies of (Oh & Xu, 2003; Ulhaq, 2012). As Ulhaq (2012) argue that entertainment feature of the unsolicited create a valuable addition in creating customer loyalty and encourage consumers to make a purchase and repurchase. Because, entertainment could be a touch point which most of the consumers are looking in most of the products and services. Similarly, Aslam and her colleagues (2016) discussed that, offering entertainment and involving the consumers in some sort of entertaining games and experiences will create a positive gesture in consumer mind which encourage them to take a buying decision. Besides, our results suggest that product involvement does not has a significant impact on consumer perception against the H4. However, our results regarding the impact of product involvement on consumer perception counter the previous arguments of the researchers (e.g. see Oh & Xu, 2003; Ulhaq, 2012). As researchers suggested the positive and significant impact on consumer perception (Aslam et al., 2016; Schulze et al., 2015,). One possible reason could be that a consumers may sometimes receive the unsolicited SMS marketing with the feature of product involving when they do not want to get involved in that

certain products and services. Consequently, their perception may not get influenced by unsolicited marketing SMS including the features of product involvement. Furthermore, our findings reveal that consumer perception has a significant and positive impact on buying behavior of the consumers. Hence, the Ajzen's theory of reasoned action also support the relationship that individual's behavior has guided by his or her intentions toward that behavior. Similarly, Aslam and her colleagues (2016) argue that if someone perceive a positive image of a product, service or brand in his/her mind then there is likelihood that he/she will purchase this product in future. Additionally, Schulze and other (2015) also support the positive relationship between consumer perception and buying behavior of the consumer.

Additionally, regarding the mediation hypotheses, results of this suggest that consumer perception also mediates the relationship between unsolicited SMS marketing (including the features of irritation, appeal and entertainment) and buying behavior of the consumers. For example, organization may shape the consumers behaviors toward purchasing and repurchasing of products and services by using unsolicited SMS marketing indirectly by creating a good consumer perception. Similarly, Ulhaq (2012) discussed that unsolicited SMS marketing play important role in shaping the consumer perception which ultimately affect the buying behavior of the consumer and lead them to make a purchase. Besides, Aslam et al. (2016) also suggested the indirect effect of unsolicited SMS marketing and buying behavior through some attitudinal phenomena such as consumer intentions or consumer perception. In similar vein, Aslam et

al. (2016) discussed the indirect role of unsolicited SMS marketing in shaping the consumer behavior through consumer intentions. However, unsolicited marketing SMS which include the feature of product involvement do not has a significant indirect effect on buying behavior through consumer perception. In other words, consumer perception does not mediate the relationship between product involvement feature of unsolicited SMS marketing and buying behavior of the consumers. Hence, this finding counter the argument of (Aslam et al., 2016). One possible reason to this contradiction is that product involvement does not have significant impact on consumer perception as discussed earlier. So, it might possible that it will not have any indirect effect on consumer behavior through consumer perception.

Conclusion and research implications:

To get the better understanding of the consumer behavior is the ultimate dilemma of any organization. Hence, practitioners are coping to reveal the puzzle that how unsolicited SMS marketing could shape the consumer positive perception toward certain offerings. So, this research suggest that the unsolicited SMS marketing is an important aspect in shaping the consumer perception as well as buying behavior of the consumers. Marketing researchers could develop the better understanding that how unsolicited SMS marketing play the role in consumer decision making (i.e. purchasing and repurchasing the certain offerings). Similarly, they could also analyze that how consumer perception play a mediator role between buying behavior and unsolicited SMS marketing including the features of appeal, entertainment and irritation. However, practitioners and marketers of airline industry could shape the

consumer perception positively could create positive consumer perception toward what they are offerings by using the unsolicited SMS marketing including the features of appeal and entertainment which will further lead the consumer to make a decision of purchase and help in building loyalty. However, organizations must ensure that their unsolicited marketing SMS's do not irritating for the consumers otherwise it may create a negative image in the consumer mind which ultimately lead the consumer toward brand switching.

Limitation and future research:

As an old saying "practice makes perfect but nobody is perfect". Hence, our research is also surrounded by a couple of limitations. First of all, in this research we consider the four aspects of unsolicited SMS marketing such as irritation, entertainment, and appeal and product involvement. However, future researchers are encouraged to consider the other aspects of unsolicited SMS marketing such as entertainment and discounts, social responsibility taken by the organization and others which could affect the consumer perception. Secondly, future researchers are also encouraged to analyze that how a consumer perception which is created by unsolicited SMS marketing affect the other behavioral outcomes such as brand addiction (e.g. see Zeeshan, Nafees, Mustafa, 2019) and brand loyalty. Thirdly, this research has done in airline industry while future researchers could replicate the findings in manufacturing and other services sectors and could compare the results to enhance the robustness of the results. In addition to it, Mustafa, Nafees and Aftab (2019) argue that the behavior of the consumers in Asian contexts is very different from the behaviors of the consumers in the western

contexts. Hence, this research has been conducted in Asian contexts while future researchers also encouraged to replicate the findings in the other western contexts to analyze the role of cultural factors between the relationship of unsolicited SMS marketing and buying behavior.

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