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E-LIFESTYLE AND INTERNET ADVERTISING AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOUR OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS IN CHENNAI CITY

S.Janani¹ and J.Aruna²

Abstract

The rapid growth of the Internet has transformed consumer lifestyles and created new patterns of online behaviour, giving rise to the concept of e-lifestyle. This study examines the relationship between e-lifestyle dimensions and internet advertising avoidance behaviour among Internet users in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Drawing upon lifestyle and consumer behaviour literature, the research investigates seven dimensions of e-lifestyle, namely need-driven, interest-driven, entertainment-driven, sociability-driven, perceived importance-driven, uninterested or concern-driven, and novelty-driven e-lifestyles, and their influence on users' tendency to avoid online advertisements. Using a cross-sectional research design, primary data were collected from Internet users and analysed to identify significant predictors of advertising avoidance behaviour. The findings reveal that, contrary to expectations derived from previous international studies, only the uninterested or concern-driven e-lifestyle significantly influences internet advertising avoidance behaviour in the Indian context, while the other six e-lifestyle dimensions do not exhibit a significant effect. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital consumer behaviour by highlighting the importance of users' concerns, disinterest, and perceived intrusiveness in shaping responses to online advertising. This study offers valuable insights for marketers and digital advertisers seeking to design more effective and less intrusive online advertising strategies that are in line with the preferences and attitudes of contemporary internet users.

Keywords: E-lifestyle, Internet Advertising Avoidance, Digital Consumer Behaviour, Online Advertising, Consumer Lifestyle, Internet Users, Chennai, Marketing Communication.

Introduction

Every human being is unique in nature. No two persons do the same thing in the same way; no two persons behave in the same way in the same situation; one can notice a lot of differences. The concept of 'Lifestyle' follows the same notion. Lifestyle is the way one lives or behaves. No two human beings can live or behave in the same way. Of late, a new type of lifestyle has started to pop up in the minds of academic researchers. It is an e-lifestyle. The

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growth of the internet medium has given rise to this type of new lifestyle among internet users.

Background of the Study

The term "lifestyle" is commonly used to categorise people who share the same characteristics and beliefs (Lin, F. Y., 2003). For example, DINK (Double Income No Kids) refers to couples without children with a higher disposable income (Lin, F. Y., 2003).

Lifestyle is the measure of attitudes, interests, and psychological preferences and is defined as the procedure people use to express their understanding of themselves (Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015). In marketing research, lifestyles can be used for niche marketing because they reveal consumers' needs and desires related to consumption behaviours (Lekakos, 2009; Li, 2013, as cited in Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015). Lifestyle is defined as "distinctive modes of existence that are accomplished by persons and groups through socially sanctioned and culturally intelligible patterns of action" and has been used for research and advertising in various markets (Lutzenhiser and Gossard, 2000; Sanquist et al., 2012, as cited in Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015). Lifestyle is a "set of behaviours reflecting individual psychological concerns (internal beliefs) and sociological consequences (external stimuli)" (Yu, 2011, as cited in Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015).

Lifestyle studies first appeared in the 1950s, and were intended to define consumer behaviours (Havinhurst and Feigenbaum, 1959; Yu, 2011 as cited in Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015), and the concept of lifestyle was used in marketing research in the 1960s (Lazar, 1963; Yu, 2011 as cited in Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015). The AIO (Activities, Interests, Opinions) scale was developed by Wells and Tigert in the 1970s and the VALS (Value, Attitude, Lifestyle) scale, developed by Mitchell in 1983 are widely used in lifestyle research (Mitchell, 1983; Yu, 2011, as cited in Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015). There are different opinions, definitions, and theories related to lifestyle; however, Yu (2011) found in his study that all of these theories suggest that human behaviours can be understood by psychological and sociological variables (Mendi, B., & Mendi, O., 2015).

Scope of the Study

This study is a cross-sectional study. The data is collected from internet users residing in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Hence, the results cannot be generalised to other parts of India. The research work studies only e-lifestyle and internet advertising avoidance behaviour. This study is limited to the variables need-driven e-lifestyle, interest-driven e-lifestyle, entertainment-driven e-lifestyle, sociability-driven e-lifestyle, perceived importance-driven e-lifestyle, uninterested or concern-driven e-lifestyle, novelty-driven e-lifestyle, and internet advertising avoidance behaviour. The research also considered demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, income, and occupation.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of this study:

- To understand the e-lifestyle of different generations of Chennai City
- To establish the relationship between e-lifestyle and internet advertising avoidance behaviour
- To study the internet advertisement avoidance behaviour of different generations
- To study the influence of demographic variables on the different e-lifestyles

- To study the influence of demographic variables on the internet advertising avoidance behaviour

Research design

Every researcher requires a blueprint of what should be done to complete the research process efficiently and effectively. This blueprint is denoted as a research design. Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques used by a researcher to provide a blueprint to carry out the study in the desired way. This blueprint serves as a reference point for the researchers so that they can identify the process and approach for the collection and analysis of the desired information.

Research Gap

Lifestyle has long been considered an important determinant and a better predictor than demographic information (Lazer, 1963; Jih and Lee, 2003; Pandey and Chawla, 2014, as cited in Yu, C. S., Li, C. K., & Chantatub, W., 2015). Consumer lifestyles have been studied in various contexts over several decades (Pandey and Chawla, 2014, as cited in Yu, C. S., Li, C. K., & Chantatub, W., 2015). Although employing lifestyle to analyze consumers has been proven very useful in many instances in marketing literature and is capable of giving a competitive edge (Bregman et al., 2005; Pandey and Chawla, 2014 as cited in Yu, C. S., Li, C. K., & Chantatub, W., 2015), using the traditional lifestyle instrument to assess people's lifestyles shaped by current technological environment may not be adequate (Bregman et al., 2005; Allred et al., 2006; Ahmad et al., 2010; Yu, 2011; Ye et al., 2011; Pandey and Chawla, 2014; Yu, 2015b as cited in Yu, C. S., Li, C. K., & Chantatub, W., 2015). For this reason, e-lifestyle has recently been proposed as a more effective variable to predict or analyse consumer behaviour (Yu, C. S., Li, C. K., & Chantatub, W., 2015).

Despite the growing importance of digital technologies in shaping consumer behaviour, limited research has examined how e-lifestyle influences internet advertising avoidance, particularly in the Indian context. This study addresses this gap by investigating the relationship between e-lifestyle dimensions and online advertising avoidance among internet users.

Review of Literature

Wilawan Jansri (2018) examined the influence of consumer e-lifestyle (i.e., e-activities, e-interests, e-opinions, and e-values) on consumers' perception of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. This study also investigates whether consumers' brand loyalty is influenced by CSR activities in the context of the spa business. The study employed purposive judgment sampling using a questionnaire to collect data from 368 local and foreign consumers of spa products and services in Phuket, Thailand. The results revealed that consumer e-interests and consumer e-values have a positive effect on CSR activities, while consumer e-activities and consumer e-opinions do not affect

Amir Abedini Koshksaray et al. (2015) provided insights into the e-lifestyle of Internet users and their avoidance of Internet advertising. A survey was conducted with a group of 412 participants. The data were analysed through structural equation modelling (SEM) and multiple regression analysis, both before and after adjusting the data by introducing the effect of average hours of Internet use on participant responses. The results obtained by analysing the main data reveal that e-lifestyle does not have a significant effect on Internet advertising avoidance (IAA).

However, analysis of the modified data does indicate a significant effect. Also, in the analysis of the main and modified data, the type of avoidance from Internet advertising (cognitive, affective, and behavioural) varies according to each e-lifestyle.

Siti Hasnah Hassan, T. Ramayah, Osman Mohamed & Amin Maghsoud (2015) studied the impact of e-lifestyle on customer satisfaction and loyalty from mobile consumers in Malaysia. The data were collected using a survey among 197 respondents from Generation Y that aged between 18 and 37 years old. The data were analysed using Smart PLS and the results show that the second-order construct of e-lifestyle has a significant effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Siti Hasnah Hassan, T. Ramayah Thurasamy, and Wai Yee Loi (2017) assessed the relationship between e-lifestyle, customer satisfaction (CS), and loyalty among mobile service subscribers in Thailand. The results reveal that e-lifestyle has a substantial effect on CS. Subsequently, CS affects strongly on consumer loyalty towards telecommunication service providers. Moreover, CS mediates the relationship between e-lifestyle and consumer loyalty. The study concludes that e-lifestyle has to be integrated into marketing strategies and customer relationship management in order to sustain consumer loyalty.

The Concept of e-lifestyle

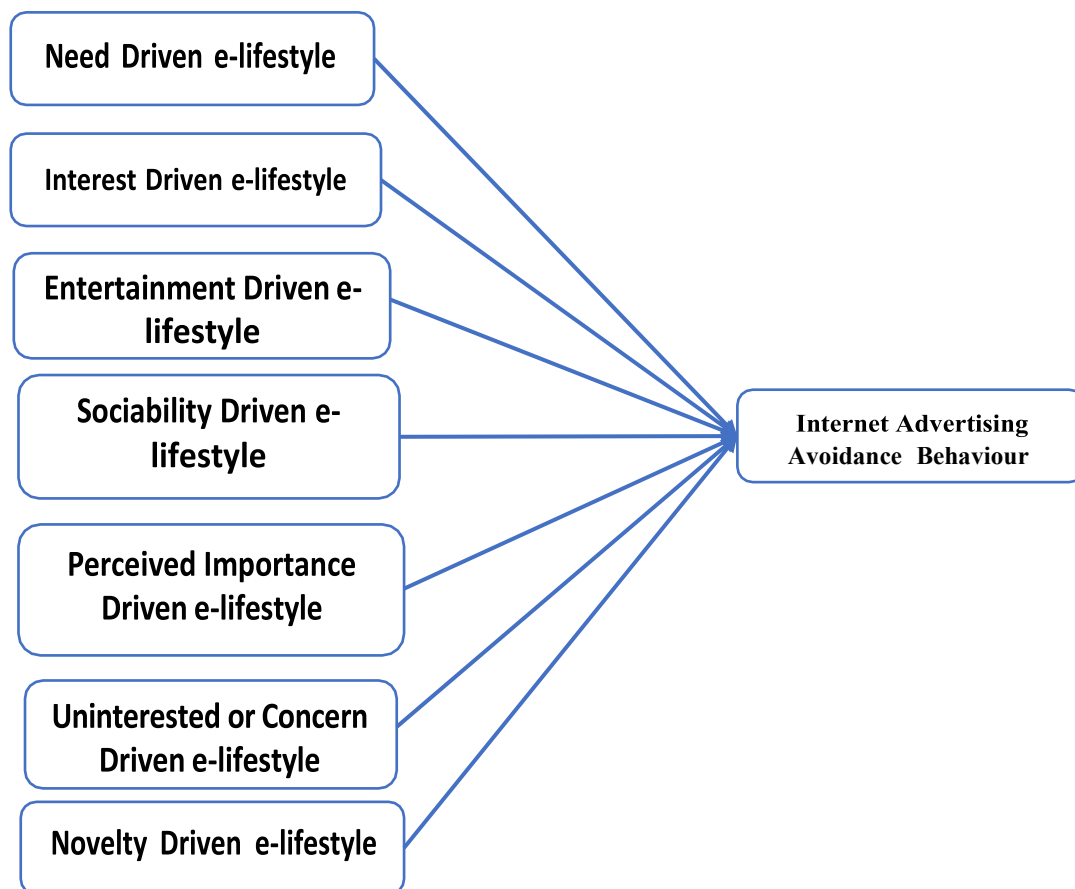
In the 1990s, leading experts, politicians, public officials, business leaders, and journalists predicted that the internet would transform the world (Adnan, A., 2017). The internet would revolutionise, we were told, the organisation of business, and lead to a surge of prosperity (Gates et al., 1995 as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). Since then, the growth of the internet has been spectacular (Adnan, A., 2017). There are now more than 2 billion internet users across the globe, about 30 percent of the world's population (Adnan, A., 2017). This is certainly a new phenomenon that is of enormous significance for the economic, political and social life of contemporary societies (Griffiths, 2013 as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). In 2015, retail e-commerce sales worldwide amounted to 1.55 trillion US dollars and e-retail revenues are projected to grow to 3.4 trillion US dollars in 2019 (Statista, 2016, as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). Concurrent with this rising online shopping trend, marketing researchers have been increasingly engaged in developing frameworks that enable practitioners to understand online consumer behaviour (Adnan, A., 2017).

However, there is a multitude of factors that shape online consumer behaviour like beliefs, attitudes, lifestyles, and so on, which may be culture and country dependent (Pavlou and Chai, 2002 as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). The convergence of the internet and mobile communications has stimulated the phenomenal influence of information and communication technology (ICT) and the proliferation of ICT-enabled services/products (Yu, 2011 as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). This has significantly impacted and changed the context and the way people live in recent years (Adnan, A., 2017). Since understanding individual lifestyles has long been considered quite useful in tailoring and delivering suitable services/products to specific target segments, e-lifestyle offers marketers a useful basis to market/design ICT-enabled services/products (Chen and He, 2006, as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). ICT has resulted in societal changes leading to overt consumer conduct and changed internal beliefs of customers, thereby activating different patterns of consumer behaviour (Yu, 2011, as cited in Adnan, A., 2017). Such interactions of individuals in the electronic environment, wherein online activity is the omnipresent result in a different electronic lifestyle, are here termed as e-lifestyle (Adnan, A., 2017).

Need-driven e-lifestyle

The content of the need-driven e-lifestyle reflects the personal lifestyle, which is considerably developed through meeting the job and life needs by internet services which depend upon the internet (Yu, 2011). This lifestyle reflects the way individuals live using the internet and e-services because they can bring comfort, efficiency, and usefulness to the daily and occupational lives of individuals. Thus, to better interpret and analyse the content of this group's lifestyle, the need-driven e-lifestyle has been selected for them (Yu, 2011).

Conceptual Framework of the Study



Limitations of the Study

The research is not free of limitations, though. An in-depth examination is required to find out if there are other unnoticed factors causing ad avoidance. The respondents were not selected randomly. Hence, "sample selection errors" could be there. Even though utmost care was taken to get a true response from the respondents, there is always a chance of getting an improper response. Another important limitation of the study is the lack of a valid scale to measure the variables. This study did not gather any qualitative data. That could be another limitation. This is a cross-sectional study. Longitudinal studies may give results different from this.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study considered only need-driven e-lifestyle, interest-driven e-lifestyle, entertainment-driven e-lifestyle, sociability-driven e-lifestyle, importance-driven e-lifestyle, concern-driven e-lifestyle, and novelty-driven e-lifestyle. In future, studies could be undertaken by including other variables too. This is a cross-sectional study. In future, longitudinal studies could also be undertaken. This study was conducted in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. This study could be conducted in other parts of India, too.

Conclusion

Internet Advertising avoidance Behaviour is an important issue faced by organisations that put their effort into digital or online marketing. The literature survey indicated that there are seven e-lifestyles that may be responsible for internet advertising avoidance behaviour. However, when tested in the Indian context, only Uninterested or Concern Driven e-lifestyle influences the internet advertising avoidance behaviour.

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