

The New Semantics Suggested for the Marketing Mix by Millennials

Ameena Zafar, Hadina Habil

Abstract: *This is an auxiliary study dealing with the 4 Ps of the Marketing Mix Model introduced by Robert F. Lauterborn. It focused on the comparative popularity of the components of the Marketing Mix among the contemporary consumers of fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs) produced by Unilever and Proctor and Gamble in the capital city of Islamabad, Pakistan. These two companies are two of the prominent multi-national companies providing products of day-to-day use in the country. This study sought to find out the most popular vocabulary to describe the components of the Marketing Mix among the consumers of FMCGs who are marketing graduates and thereby, revise, enhance and refurbish it to make it more relevant to the millennial perspective. The perspective of the consumers is important to gauge if the Lauterborn's Model is still applicable to the modern consumers or if the consumers have other marketing priorities, which may differ from the model. Data were collected through a survey based on the random sampling technique from millennial consumers at five local universities in the city. Analysis of the data revealed useful information regarding the validity of the semantics in the presently accepted marketing mix. Findings of this study have the potential to assist marketing strategies, especially at the advertising departments of the leading FMCG chains Unilever and Proctor and Gamble. Results of this study may also be applied to marketing campaigns of similar prominent multi-national companies producing FMCGs in Pakistan, like Nestle, Reckitt Benckiser and the Coca Cola Company.*

Keywords: *Consumer behavior, Marketing, Millennials, FMCGs*

I. INTRODUCTION

This study deals with the 4 Ps of the Marketing Mix Model introduced by Robert F. Lauterborn [2]. It focused on the comparative popularity of the components of the Marketing Mix among the contemporary consumers of fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs) produced by Unilever and Proctor and Gamble in the capital city of Islamabad, Pakistan. These two companies are two of the prominent multi-national companies providing products of day-to-day use in the country. This study sought to find out the most popular

vocabulary to describe the components of the Marketing Mix among the consumers of FMCGs who were marketing graduates. The two companies were used as a point of reference for millennial graduates to be able to relate the products to the components of the marketing mix and thereby, refurbish them. Perspective of consumers is important in gauging if the Lauterborn's Model is still applicable to the modern consumers or if the consumers have other marketing priorities or vocabulary, which may differ from the model. In a competitive environment, firms that survive will be those who research and understand their customers well, particularly in terms of what values customers seek and how they judge and find these values in the market place. Thus as Newman remarks, researching customer behavior is critical for marketing success [4]. Contemporary consumers/respondents of the survey were Pakistani Marketing graduates. As marketing graduates, they have been exposed to the internet and virtual social networking (VSN) and therefore, have global perspectives. However, the local culture still survives in their outlook towards different concepts and ideas. Merriam Webster dictionary defines culture as the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time [3]. As the basic building blocks of communication, words communicate meaning, but culture is the most important factor that influences the meanings of words. Culture gives meaning and provides the context for communication, and the ability to communicate allows us to act out our cultural values and to share our language and our culture [3]. Ideologically, Pakistan is an Islamic State. Pakistan's very foundation centres around Islam, and Pakistani culture is primarily based on the Islamic way of life, all other cultural aspects are inspired by Islam [6]. Keeping this in view, data were collected through a survey that employed the random sampling technique involving young consumers at the local universities in the city. The evaluation of the data revealed useful information regarding the validity of the semantics in the presently accepted marketing mix. The data was evaluated taking into consideration established topics of culture and reference groups, demographics and psychographics, perceptions, learning, motivation, attitudes, decision-making, and post-choice experience [1]. Collected through the course of this study and analyzed and shared at its conclusion, the data has the potential to assist marketing, especially at the advertising departments of the leading FMCG chains Unilever and Proctor and Gamble to devise

improved marketing strategies in the future. The results of this study may also

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be applied to marketing campaigns of similar prominent multi-national companies producing FMCGs in Pakistan, like Nestle, Reckitt Benckiser and the Coca Cola Company.

and various FMCG companies advertising through print and electronic media advertisements in the capital city, as show in Table 1 below:

II. OBJECTIVES

This study sought to find out the most popular vocabulary to describe the components of the Marketing Mix among contemporary consumers of FMCGs. The perspective of the consumers is important to gauge if the Lauterborn's Model is still applicable to the Millennial consumers or if the consumers have other marketing priorities which may differ from the model. It did not aim at denouncing the model by Lauterborn, but simply aimed to revise, enhance and refurbish it to make it more acceptable and relevant to the millennial perspective.

III. METHODOLOGY

Data were obtained through a survey that employed a random sampling technique in identifying consumers at five local universities in the city. 100 respondents comprising marketing graduates were approached to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions, two of which were open ended, while the remaining eight were closed/multiple choice questions. Hard copies were distributed and collected manually following the respondents' feedback. Analysis of the data revealed useful information regarding the validity and popularity of the semantics in the presently accepted marketing mix.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The questions that were used to collect the data were based on identifying the values of the customers of Unilever and Proctor and Gamble, and establishing the fact that the marketing graduates were generally familiar with the marketing strategies of their products. This was important so the respondents could establish a consumer perspective and would be able to relate to the questions asked about the Marketing Mix vocabulary. The vocabulary refers to the eight words used in the Marketing Mix namely, the 4 Cs; consumer, cost, convenience and communication, and the 4 Ps; product, price, place and promotion. The following questions were multiple-choice questions about replacing the existing Marketing Mix vocabulary with new ones. The four most common synonyms were suggested for the 4 Ps and 4 Cs suggested by Lauterborn. The participants were also prompted to replace the words with new ones of their choice. In other words, the survey respondents could also suggest totally new words other than the synonyms of the 4 Ps and 4 Cs, which would be compatible with the contemporary consumers' marketing demand.

With reference to the survey questions based on the Marketing Mix, the marketing graduates suggested new vocabulary to replace the one used in the construction of the present model. Answering the topic of the opening question, out of the 100 respondents included in the survey, the majority was aware of the marketing 'lingo' through the theoretical knowledge taught in their marketing courses and marketing research projects at their universities. They also had a fair amount of knowledge as consumers observing the marketing strategies of Unilever and Proctor and Gamble

Table 1: The New Semantics suggested for the Marketing Mix by Millennials

Q1	Are you familiar with the marketing mix?	Yes: 97%	No: 3%
Q2	The four Ps introduced by Lauterborn	The four Ps suggested by millennials	Respondents percentage
	Product	Commodity	8%
		√ Item	82%
		Merchandise	7%
		Artifact	2%
		Other	1%
Q3	Price	√ Value	80%
		Worth	14%
		Charge	3%
		Amount	3%
		Other	0%
Q4	Place	√ Location	85%
		Area	3%
		Shop	7%
		Mall	2%
		Other	3%
Q5	Promotion	Advertising	9%
		Publicity	3%
		√ Marketing	87%
		Endorsement	1%
		Other	0%
	The four Cs introduced by Lauterborn	The four Cs suggested by millennials	Respondents percentage
Q6	Customer	Consumer	10%



		Shopper	13%
		√ Buyer	70%
		Bargainer	5%
		Other	2%
Q7	Cost	Budget	6%
		Charge	11%
		√ Rate	79%
		Price-tag	1%
		Other	3%
Q8	Convenience	Suitability	3%
		Ease	17%
		√ Availability	73%
		Accessibility	13%
		Other	4%
Q9	Communication	√ Information	75%
		Message	20%
		Announcement	3%
		Interaction	7%
		Other	0%
Q10	Are the above terms recommended to replace Lauterborn's Model?	Yes: 86%	No: 14%

The opening and concluding questions were general in nature. In answer to question number 1, the majority replied in the affirmative, when asked whether they were aware of the 4 Ps and Cs of marketing introduced by Lauterborn. In question 2 to 9 they suggested new words to replace the 4 Ps and 4 Cs. For the 4 Ps they came up with alternate synonyms and new vocabulary as follows: item for product 82%, value for price 80%, location for place 85%, and 87% marketing for promotion. The four Cs were revised as follows: consumer was replaced by buyer 70%, cost by rate 79%, convenience by availability 73%, and communication by information 75% : ending up into "ivlmbrai" or "VIMBRAIL" for the sake of remembering it better. The concluding question, question number 10, asked whether they would recommend the marketers catering to the contemporary consumer to use their suggestions to replace

the existing 4 Ps and 4 Cs. The majority replied in the positive to this question too.

Other than the word choices prompted by the survey questionnaire, the latter of each choice of words prompted a totally original suggestion to be given by the marketing graduates. However, they did not provide new words to replace all the eight components of the marketing mix, so these partial yet original choices could not be used to form a new marketing mix.

A. Limitations: There were a few limitations in the data collection process. It was next to impossible to access professional or fresh graduates who were now working at different organizations due to security and privacy issues. Due to this limitation the last semester students at different universities were engaged for the survey. It was difficult to identify and meet a large group at a time during university hours due to their classes, so small groups of nine or ten students were available at a time to fill the questionnaires only during their breaks.

V. CONCLUSION

At the end of the study, the 4 Ps and Cs were changed into an altogether new and unexpected combination of letters into a new marketing mix, called "VIMBRAIL". Whether this new vocabulary and abbreviation can catch on in the future and whether it will become valid and popular in the practical world of marketing, that remains to be seen. However, for now, the data collected through the course of this study and analyzed and shared at its conclusion, will help the marketing, and especially the advertising departments of the leading FMCG chains Unilever and Proctor and Gamble to revisit the 4 Ps and Cs, and devise improved marketing strategies in the future based on the new findings. This research might also give the marketers some idea as to how the millennials respond to the accepted concepts in marketing. The contemporary consumers have an altogether different perspective as compared to the previous generations who had less global exposure. This generation needs fast and efficient stimuli to stimulate their curiosity and to catch and retain their interest. Therefore, bringing a newness into the age old accepted concepts and strategies might prove useful to upgrade the marketing policies of organizations/companies catering to the consumer of today. Even if the modern consumer is not a millennial, and is a senior citizen, or from the generation of baby boomers, or generation X, due to the world becoming a global village a heightened awareness has become a part of his personality. The marketers need to step up their act and devise extraordinary strategies to enhance their sales as well as expand their target market. Hence, the usefulness of this study may be two-fold, acting as a benefit for the consumer as well as an FMCG company functioning in Pakistan like Proctor and Gamble. The results of this study may also be applied to the marketing campaigns of similar prominent multi-national companies

producing FMCGs in Pakistan, like Nestle, Reckitt Benckiser and the Coca Cola Company.



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AUTHORS PROFILES



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She is currently pursuing PhD in Linguistics at University Technology Malaysia (UTM) with a focus on languages in marketing. Her research concentration is Business Communication and her expertise is multi-dimensional, dealing with Business Communication, Curriculum Design for

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She has been teaching English language and Literature for the last twenty-eight years, out of which the last 16 years teaching has been in the higher education sector. Presently, at NUST she has been entrusted with the duties of Faculty Sponsor for NUST Debating Society, and Student Development Committee, UCRC as a curriculum developer. She is a member of NBEAC Examination and Resources team, the organizing team for NIMUN, Job Fair, Campus to Corporate network seminars, and a Corporate and in-house trainer for corporate communication. I also develop the language content for the NBS Convocations and student Orientations.

Previously, she was the MBA Program Manager, Chairperson for the English Curriculum Development Committee, OBE Program Developer for MS and BS Social Sciences, the department member for the Exam Design Committee and the patron of 'The Crescendo Club' at Capital University of Sciences and Technology. She has served as the chairperson of the 'Communication Cluster', Convener of English Curriculum Design Committee, and a senior member of the Consultancy Division.

She has taught and designed the curricula of Business Communication, Verbal Communication, Business Research, Research Methodology, Business & Technical Report Writing, Functional English, English Literature, Freshman English and Sociology for the graduate and undergraduate programs. Her teaching assessment has always been between 75% to 85%.



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