

A Research Study of the Factors that Influence Avoidance of Online Behavioural Advertising: Indian Students Perspective

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Abstract

As a new form of online advertising, online behaviour advertising (OBA) has developed into the most popular format in today's digital world, which helps advertisers generate insights into prospective buyers by tracking their digital footprint and deliver content relevant to them. A personalized ad sometimes makes a user uncomfortable and we are never able to find the factors behind his avoidance. However, this study aims to find the relationship between various factors that leads to ad avoidance and suggestions to improve the same. The study was planned as a cross - sectional study conducted with a sample size of 453 people and data obtained using a questionnaire. We will analyse the factors that leads to the online behaviour advertising avoidance in India. Goal impediment, privacy concerns, and perceived personalization all had significant influence on negative experience, and negative experience had a major impact on online ad avoidance behaviour, according to the findings.

Keywords: Advertising, Online Behavioural Targeting, Ad Avoidance, Perceived Personalization, Goal Impediment, Privacy Concern, Negative Experience

Introduction

As a new form of online advertising, online behaviour advertising (OBA) has developed into the most popular format in today's digital world, which helps advertisers generate insights into prospective buyers by tracking their

digital footprint and deliver content relevant to them. This is done by advertisers with the help of cookies and other techniques, that track the online behaviour of the users and target them according to their interests. According to Statista, with access to the internet at a very cheap rate, the number of people using the internet has reached in India has reached to more than 700 million. Thus, India poses a very good avenue for digital marketers to advertise their products and services through online medium to a large and untapped audience. Users today don't want unnecessary ads in which a company forces their product or service information to be seen by them. This leads to negative experiences by the users followed by ad avoidance.

With the increase in internet literacy of users and free availability of software and Google chrome extensions through which users can block the unwanted ads in no time, there is significant number of audience that could be the potential customer for a service provider but remain hidden under the veil of ad blocking software. CJ et al., discovered that that 66 percent of adults do not want advertisers to give personalised advertising based on their particular interests, and that proportion jumps to 73 percent - 86 percent when they understand that their personal information is gathered while targeting them. According to the 2016 Pagefair report, an anti-ad-blocking solution provider estimated that around 122 million people users in India use ad blockers which is second to China. This number has increased in the current time and digital marketers are trying their best to enable a positive experience in the users through relevant online ads.

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With the widespread adoption of the Internet and various digital initiatives carried out by the Indian government, possible drivers of online media advertising avoidance have been a focus of study to give insights that may propose strategic methods to reduce advertising avoidance (Cho, C. H., 2004) (Edwards, S.M., 2002) (Baek, T. H. & Morimoto, M., 2012). This study will help digital marketers to reduce the negative experience of users and create favourable responses to their ads.

Literature Review

Advertising Avoidance

Online Behavioural Advertising (OBA) is a unique type of targeted advertising that aims to illicit a favourable response from a user. It is a type of advertising that gathers information on individual internet activities in order to determine what should be seen by customers (Li, W., & Huang, Z., 2016). It can track the personal details of the customer (which includes the search history, surfing history, buying history, demographics and life interests, etc) and analyse the relevant insights from the data collected. (Johnson, G. A., Shriver, S. K., & Du, S., 2020). Turow discovered that people avoid advertisements by ignoring bothersome advertising (cognitive avoidance), exiting the room (physical avoidance), and changing the channel (mechanical avoidance). In conventional media, Speck at El discovered that demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation etc., ad interpretation (advertising hinderance), communicating problems, and other aspects influence ad avoidance.

India has approximately 500 million active internet users, according to the IAMAI's Digital Report of India. In India, almost 70 percent of the active Internet users use the internet on a daily basis. In addition, 90 percent of urban population uses the Internet at least once a week. The majority of people in India access the internet using mobile devices due to the affordability of mobile devices and the availability of lower data plans.

With the large use of the Internet, possible determinants of online advertisement avoidance have become a necessary topic to study in a country like India, which will provide valuable insights and various ways to minimize advertising avoidance. The variables that cause avoidance are unknown when a web user is encountered

with personalized and customized advertising. However, very few studies have been undertaken on behavioural advertising in India.

Goal Impediment

One of the most important factors behind the online behavioural Advertisement avoidance is goal impediment. The Internet is a goal-oriented medium, the user will spend time on the internet to achieve a specific task, and unrelated ads in between the content they are looking for leads to a negative experience and thus avoid the Ad (Seyedghorban, Z. T. H., & Matanda, M. J., 2015) (Cho & Cheon, 2004). According to Edwards, S. M., Li, H. R. and Lee, J.-H. (2002), the impression of advertisement interruption leads to cognitive avoidance and behavioural avoidance. In addition, Speck and Elliott (1997) discovered that, when interrupted by Advertising has a direct impact on consumers' aversion to advertisements. Consumers negative emotions may also arise as a result of advertising material that is inconsistent with the website they're searching for.

In this study, along with these factors, we will also look upon the factor of visibility of the cookie notice when users visit the website. The visibility of cookie notice also impacts the goal or intention to surf on the website. E.g., Internet user may not know that cookie acceptance notice will help them in getting relevant information from the advertiser and if he is unable to surf the website it will lead to avoidance (Puri, D. A., & Mohan, T. B., 2020).

Privacy Concern

Privacy could be described as "the feeling that one has the right to own private information, either personally or collectively" (Baek & Morimoto, 2012). Marketers use the information extracted from the online behaviour of the prospect and target them with personalized loyalty and promotional schemes, through which they are able to maintain long term relationship with their target audience (Phelp, 2000). When the user come across a advertisement that relates to his personal habits, he becomes worried about his personal information that is exposed on the internet. That is why Privacy concern overall creates negative impact in the mind of customers since they no longer have control on their private information (Milne,

1999). And then to avoid this negative experience they become cautious and use every possible tool so that their personal information is not any risk (Sheehan, 1999).

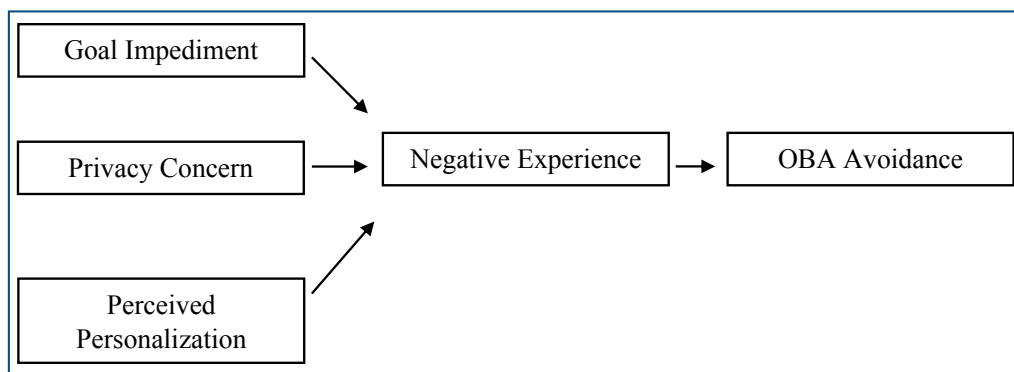
Perceived Personalization

Highly customized advertisements may raise customer concerns about the loss of privacy. The liberty of regulating the use of personal information. For instance, consumers who accept cookie notice or messages that are personalized to them, can interpret that their data will now be misused by the marketer for further advertising. Personalized Ads are tailor-made according to the user's preferences and by tracking the behaviour while the user is working online (Cong Li, 2016). Personalized data improves the focus and elaboration on the specified contents. Rather than general advertising, viewers want to see more targeted commercials. But they feel slightly dissatisfied with the highly relevant ads. This is due to affective factors such as ownership and vulnerability are dominant determinants that decide the consumer reactance towards the personalized ad (Chen & Feng, 2019).

Negative Experience

Existing studies about online behavioural advertising avoidance show that Goal impediment (GI), perceived personalization (PP), and privacy concern (PC) leads to negative experience (NE) which in turn result in online behavioural Ad avoidance.

A comprehensive overview of what causes the avoidance of Online Behavioural Advertising will not only help those in the advertising field but will also help them in building a scientifically verified ad avoidance model that goes beyond the conventional above the line advertising. It will also help marketers in preparing a successful marketing campaign and minimize customer avoidance. Through this study we will establish a theoretical concept to examine the major variables of online behavioural advertising avoidance based on a review of prior studies. Understanding what causes online behavioural advertising avoidance will not only assist academic researchers in building a complete theoretical model that would not only be completely different from the conventional marketing, but could also help advertisers design more effective marketing strategies.



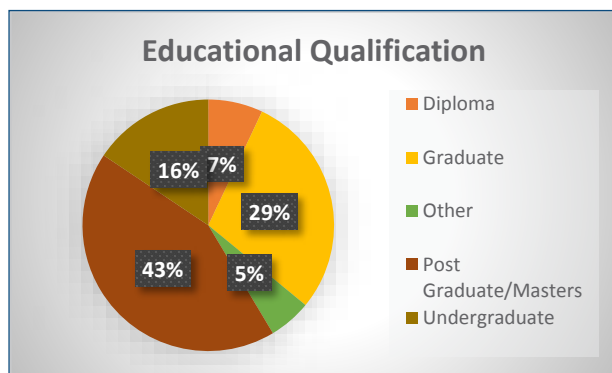
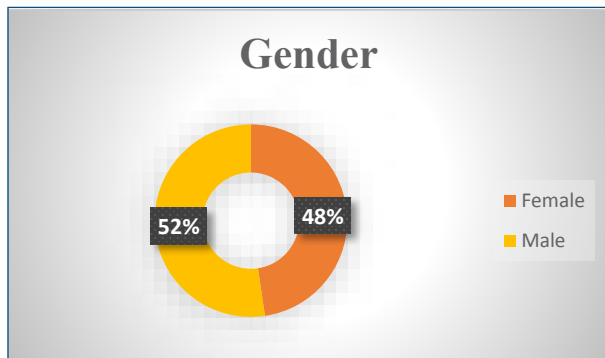
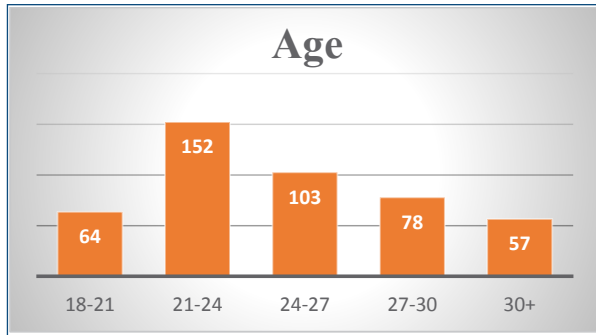
The above framework shows the theoretical model on which we will be working throughout the study.

Methodology

The Google form was floated to the respondents which were suitable to the study requirements. In total, we received 453 responses in total on which will we do further analysis. The sampling technique used for this study was convenience sampling. The questionnaire is split into two sections.

The first section contains the basic demographic data such as gender, age, educational qualification. In this

study we will be working with five variables, which further include a total of twenty-six problem items, which constitutes the second portion. All measuring scales are based on previous research and have been modified to fit the study goal. All factors were assessed using a five-point Likert scale. The current study makes extensive use of the Likert scale, which invites respondents to express their own opinions on a collection of statements related to the issue. Five constructs which—advertising avoidance, privacy concern, goal impediment, negative experience, perceived personalization—were studied using five-point Likert scales where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.



The above three graphs represent the demographics of the respondents covered in this study. Approximately 33% of the population is between the age of 24-27 years. Similarly, there are 43% of respondents with Post Graduate degree and 29% of respondent with graduate degree. Since, the research topic is based upon the perspective of student audience which is clearly visible from our sample description which mainly comprises of Undergraduates, Graduates, Post graduates and diploma students. Looking at gender mix we have equal proportion of both men and women participating in this survey.

Result and Analysis

Measurement Model Analysis

For checking the reliability and validity of the data statistically, IBM SPSS Version 26 software was used. The rotated component matrix produced following factor analysis is shown in Table 1. Factor loadings are highlighted values that aid in the identification of five different constructions. These factor loadings are then displayed in Table 2, where AVE i.e. Average variance extracted and CR i.e. Composite reliability are calculated for further study. Cronbach's alpha values for each are larger than 0.7, as seen in Table 2.

Table 1

	Rotated Component Matrixa				
	1	2	3	4	5
AA1	0.717	0.303	0.268	0.232	0.125
AA2	0.719	0.297	0.329	0.138	0.176
AA3	0.82	0.228	0.2	0.14	0.115
AA4	0.795	0.422	0.156	0.209	0.022
AA5	0.7	0.132	0.156	0.499	0.159
AA6	0.774	0.462	0.127	0.169	0.018
AA7	0.753	0.233	0.161	0.256	0.262
AA8	0.735	0.383	0.123	0.249	0.117
GI1	0.363	0.254	0.196	0.332	0.693
GI2	0.169	0.061	0.012	0.065	0.856
GI3	0.029	0.098	0.029	0.158	0.844
PC1	0.227	0.762	0.252	0.25	0.139
PC2	0.348	0.804	0.291	0.149	-0.021
PC3	0.342	0.686	0.216	0.279	0.066
PC4	0.368	0.825	0.211	0.165	0.074
PC5	0.418	0.702	0.217	0.154	0.218
PC6	0.326	0.742	0.182	0.166	0.228
PP1	0.29	0.226	0.835	0.091	0.001
PP2	0.218	0.276	0.803	0.138	0.006
PP3	0.141	0.097	0.881	0.206	0.057
PP4	0.135	0.224	0.771	0.177	0.19
PP5	0.129	0.184	0.888	0.144	0.006
NE1	0.367	0.207	0.201	0.708	0.137
NE2	0.339	0.287	0.187	0.688	0.272
NE3	0.271	0.201	0.225	0.8	0.174
NE4	0.179	0.452	0.356	0.619	0.108

Table 2: Validity and Reliability Metrics

Variables	Questions	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's alpha, AVE, CR
Advertising Avoidance	When I'm surfing the web, I purposefully ignore targeted online advertisements.	0.717	Cronbach's alpha = 0.957 AVE = 0.566 CR = 0.912
	When I'm on a shopping site, I purposefully avoid targeted internet advertisements.	0.719	
	When I check my mailbox, I purposefully avoid targeted online advertisements.	0.82	
	Behavioral advertising/targeted ads on the internet are irritating.	0.795	
	Behavioral advertising/targeted ads on the internet are unappealing	0.7	
	I will close any online behavioural advertisements that appear.	0.774	
	To prevent online behavioural advertisements, I'll take certain steps (such as changing my browser settings).	0.753	
Goal Impediment	I intend to remove/unsubscribe from online behavioral ads	0.735	Cronbach's alpha = 0.819 AVE = 0.642 CR = 0.842
	These advertisements make it challenging to find what you're searching for.	0.693	
	These advertisements divert my attention.	0.856	
	These advertisements are interfering with my ability to do my work.	0.844	
Privacy Concerns	It is critical for me to understand how my personal data is used.	0.762	Cronbach's alpha = 0.947 AVE = 0.570 CR = 0.888
	The privacy regulations for online behavioural advertisements should be explained clearly.	0.804	
	When information is shared without consent, it makes me very uncomfortable.	0.686	
	If I can't control my personal information, I feel that my privacy has been violated.	0.825	
	I'm concerned that my network activity record may be misused.	0.702	
	When online behavioural advertisements ask for my personal information, I generally take a moment to think	0.742	
Perceived Personalization	This personalized advertising provides purchasing suggestions that are relevant to my needs.	0.835	Cronbach's alpha = 0.935 AVE = 0.700 CR = 0.921
	I think that this personalized advertising enables me to order products that are tailor-made for me.	0.803	
	This personalized advertising is, in general, suited to my situation.	0.881	
	This personalized advertising gives me the impression that I am a special consumer.	0.771	
	This targeted advertising, I believe, is tailored to my requirements.	0.888	
Negative Experience	Online behavioral advertisements are not attractive	0.708	Cronbach's alpha = 0.895 AVE = 0.500 CR = 0.799
	Online behavioral advertisements are not useful	0.688	
	Online behavioral advertisements lack specificity	0.8	
	Online behavioral advertisements do not provide any incentive	0.619	

Table 3: The Correlation Matrix of Variables

Correlation Matrix					
	AA	GI	PC	PP	NEx
AA	0.752				
GI	0.467	0.801			
PC	0.753	0.427	0.755		
PP	0.510	0.273	0.550	0.837	
NEx	0.706	0.520	0.670	0.551	0.707

In the above Correlation Matrix, the diagonal values are square root of the AVE calculated in the Table 2. We can also observe that the square root of each of the AVE of variables is larger when compared to the coefficients with other variables. This implies that the scale used for the study has a good discriminant validity.

Structural Model Analysis

Table 4: Regression Model 1

Model		Unstandard. Coeff.		Standardized Coeff.	t	Sig.
		Beta	S.E.	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.246	1.142		-.216	.830
	GI	.389	.093	.275	4.159	.000
	PC	.266	.049	.416	5.469	.000
	PP	.196	.057	.247	3.450	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Negative Experience.

After testing the reliability and validity of the data we did the structural model analysis indicating the impact and relationship between the variables. There

was a significant impact of Goal impediment, Privacy concerns and Perceived personalization on the Negative experience variable. We also performed linear regression on independent variables and Ad Avoidance as dependent variable. However, Perceived Personalization had a significance level of 0.63 in this case which was more than the confidence value of 0.05. So, we discarded any direct impact of independent variables on Ad avoidance.

The relationship between Goal Impediment and Negative Experience was 0.389 which was the maximum coefficient value among the other independent variables with p-value<0.05 indicated that GI significantly influences NE.

Table 5: Regression Model 2

Coefficients

Model		Unstandard. Coeff.		Standard. Coeff.	t	Sig.
		Beta	S.E.	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.942	1.826		5.991	.000
	Negative	1.459	.130	.706	11.190	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Advertising Avoidance.

From the above table we can see that Negative experience in turn significantly impact Ad avoidance behaviour which completely justified our theoretical model. After performing Regression analysis, it showed a coefficient of 1.459 (p-value<0.05) which indicates significant relationship.

Table 6: Relationship between Variables

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardized coefficients	S.E.	P value
H1	Goal Impediment → Negative Experience	.275	.093	.000
H2	Privacy Concern → Negative Experience	.416	.049	.000
H3	Perceived Personalization → Negative Experience	.247	.057	.001
H4	Negative Experience → Ad Avoidance	.706	.130	.000

The above table showcases the direct relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It shows that there is direct relationship of Goal Impediment (GI), Privacy Concern (PC), Perceived Personalization (PP) with Negative Experience (NE) and further Negative Experience leads to Ad Avoidance (AA) Behaviour. The p-value of all the relationships is statistically significant

which confirms the strength of the theoretical model displayed above.

Conclusion

This paper confirms to the findings of previous authors (Li & Huang, 2016; Wijenayake & Pathirana, 2019) on

the similar topic. Since, the number of internet users is increasing at a phenomenal rate in India. This paper would provide significant value to the marketers from the digital point of view. According to this study, the Goal Impediment, Privacy concern and Perceived Personalization all are directly proportional to Negative experience leading to Ad Avoidance behaviour in users.

Goal Impediment: Marketers should not unnecessarily force their ads or place large number of ads when user has come with the objective to engage with content on your website. This is especially when students try to access various educational or entertainment content on internet.

Privacy Concern: Clear and specific notice regarding cookie targeting can yield a positive behaviour among the users as they themselves makes the decision regarding whether to opt for cookies or not. Privacy concern is the biggest concern for users which leads to negative experience and companies try their best to counter this problem (Diffley et al., 2011). Many apps have now started asking for optional permission of users to extract their personal permission while installing their app. This gives the user a sense of safety that their data is not shared with the third parties.

Perceived Personalization: According to the Literature (Jung, 2017), in the era of Hyper-local personalized advertisements, consumers give positive response to the ads which are specially made for people like them and thus perceived personalization leads to decrease in negative experience. However, according to our research study, users do not like personalized ads which means increased personalization leads to increased negative experience.

Limitations

First drawback of this study include that the method adopted for sampling was convenience which may not have accurately captured the real results for this study. Then regarding the sample selection, as we have conducted the study on students as they are most active on internet. However, the scope of the study can be further expanded by taking other age groups as well. Second, Google has announced they are going to ban third-party cookies by 2022 to empower the privacy of the user. After further deliberations the timeline has been further pushed till 2023 since the entire advertising ecosystem today is

dependent on third-party cookies and Google Chrome currently boasts of 65% market share in search engine.

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