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Revisiting Consumer-Responses Models: Are Suitable for Post-Millennials?

Abstract

Some influential authors have hardly criticized the traditional marketing consumer-responses models because these approaches would be hypothetical. To test these consumer-responses models, we surveyed 539 Chilean post-millennials, asking them about their prime motivations at the time of clicking on digital ads on their mobile devices (phones, laptops, or personal computers). We displayed three possible outcomes/responses to respondents, based on the traditional marketing consumer-responses approaches: a) knowing about the characteristics of a product or service through an informative ad, b) feeling a pleasant sensation through an attractive ad, and c) making a rapid purchase through a temporary offer or price promotion, with expiration time. We asked subjects about how many times they bought something after receiving different digital advertising inputs. According to our results, respondents tended to click more on behavioural ads, designed to trigger a rapid purchase, than on informative or affective ones. Our regression analysis demonstrated that owning a smartphone increased significantly the number of times *Gen Zers* bought after being exposed to a digital ad.

Keywords

Digital ads, hierarchy of effects model, advertising effectiveness, smartphones, Generation Z, post-millennials.

1. Introduction

“The digital advertising and the mobile phone are two realities that in the immediate future will reorient the communication markets,” wrote the influential Spanish scholar Alfonso Nieto Tamargo (2008), only a few months after the first iPhone was released. Still, nobody would be able to anticipate how digital and mobile devices would change the marketing and advertising markets in the following years. Digital advertising sales now explain 45% of global advertising revenues (they grew by +17% in 2018, reaching \$251 billion). Digital advertising sales are driven by search, video, and social media. Instead, non-digital ad sales (linear T.V., linear radio, print, and out-of-home) were flat in 2018 (+0.2%) reaching \$301 billion. Majority of digital ad sales (62%) is now generated by impressions and clicks on mobile devices (mostly smartphones). According to this report, mobile ad sales grew by +32% in 2018 while desktop-based ad revenues shrank (-2%), due to ad blocking and lower inventory (Magna, 2019). Thanks to this broad mobile ad market, it is expected that digital advertising revenues will surpass offline advertising sales in 2020 (Magna, 2019).

Today consumers are immersed in a hyper-connected world, receiving advertising messages through an infinity of mobile and desktop-based outlets. Digital marketing experts estimate that most Americans are exposed to around 4,000 to 10,000 ads each day (Forbes, 2017). In this overstimulated and overloaded advertising environment, how could marketers attract customers and motivate them to buy? To answer these questions, marketing scholars developed some customer-responses models, such as the hierarchy of effects, AIDA, and the diffusion of innovations theory by Rogers (1962, 1983, 2003). However, these approaches appear not being suitable to new generations immersed in digital hyper-connected environments, as Generation Z, the demographic cohort after Millennials. According to Twenge (2017), Generation Z is formed by people born in 1995 and later, who grew up with cell phones, had an Instagram page before they started high school, and do not remember a time before the Internet. For the Pew Research Center (2019), every person born from 1997 onward is part of Generation Z, to differentiate them from Millennials who were born between 1981 and 1996. By 2020, Generation Z will account for 40 per cent of all consumers in the U.S. being a valuable marketing segment for any company.

Post-millennials are intrinsically liberal and are the most racially and ethnically diverse adult generation in U.S. history. They see increasing racial and ethnic diversity as a good thing for society. At the same time, older generations are less convinced of this and are more likely to have a favourable view of interracial and same-sex marriage than their older counterparts (Parker, Graf & Igielnik, 2019).

Post-millennials have grown up in an 'always on' technological environment, exposing dramatic shifts in their behaviours, attitudes and lifestyles –both positive and concerning– when compared to older cohorts (Dimock, 2019). Consequently, they trust more on social media than older groups, who have a higher tendency to be more cautious about Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

This study is a preliminary approach of broader research, which tries to understand the behaviour of post-millennials in Chile, regarding the relationship among technological devices, use, advertising and buying behaviour. Notably, in this case, considering the hyper-connected and ad-saturated environment faced by consumers, we tried to find evidence about the suitability of the traditional consumer-responses models in a post-millennial sample. Our research focuses on two aspects: first, the reasons declared by post-millennials to watch/read advertising on their connected devices, among cognitive, affective or behavioural motivations. Second, to observe a possible relation between buying behaviours of post-millennials and their reasons to buy, trying to connect the model to a buying pattern.

This paper follows the next structure: we firstly describe consumer-responses approaches, their pros and cons, and develop our hypotheses. Secondly, we explain the applied methodology. Thirdly, we comment on our results. Finally, conclusions are discussed.

2. Theoretical background

A classic approach in the academic field of marketing, the hierarchy of effects model developed by Robert Lavidge and Gary Steiner in 1961, identified a set of sequential responses supposedly given by subjects facing an advertising's input, assuming that "a customer passes through a series of steps in sequential order from initial awareness of product or service to actual purchase" (Belch & Belch, 2012).

Based on this consumer-response process, the subject or customer would move from essential advertising's outcome, awareness, to the final and most sophisticated one, the purchase, following a course of three successive stages: the cognitive, the affective, and the behavioural one (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961). In the first stage, subjects are aware and know about a product or service, relating advertising to information or ideas. In the second phase, recipients like and prefer a product or service, relating advertising to attitudes and feelings. In the final stage, consumers convince themselves about buying a product or service and make

a choice expected by marketers, relating advertising to actions and behaviours (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961).

It is implied in this advertising effectiveness' approach, that the three mentioned functions are respectively related to the traditional psychological division of the way of deciding and thinking into three dimensions: (1) the cognitive, intellectual or rational component; (2) the emotional or affective one; and (3) the motivational or striving state, associated with the tendency to treat objects as positive or negative goals (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961).

It is important to note that only one of the three primary functions described by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) is directly related to the immediate action of buying. The other two features, knowing and liking, would rather be useful to produce sales in the long-term, because "ultimate consumers normally do not switch from disinterested individuals to convinced purchasers in one instantaneous step" (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961, p. 59).

The objective of many marketers is not always selling immediately, but instead creating "awareness of the company or brand name, which may trigger interest in the product" (Belch & Belch, 2012, p. 189). In other situations, marketers "may want to convey detailed information to change consumers' knowledge of and attitudes toward the brand and ultimately change their behaviour" (Belch & Belch, 2012, p. 189).

Consequently, advertising can only be oriented to a) let uninformed people know about the launch of a new product/service or about what this product/service offers; b) create favourable attitudes or feelings towards a product/service and ultimately produce a preference; or c) convince informed people with favourable opinions and moods to buy a product or service (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961).

Although the marketing's strategy could be oriented in some occasions to accomplish more than one stage, it commonly focuses on only one of the three described phases. In any case, whether the marketer might want to let know something, change an attitude, or get the consumer to act, it has to comply with one of these three main objectives: 1) it must target an exact audience, 2) it must be measurable, and 3) it must be deployed during a specific time (Wansink & Ray, 1996).

2.1. *Alternative models*

Belch and Belch (2012) and Eisend and Tarrahi (2016) consider the hierarchy of effects by Lavidge & Steiner (1961) as the best-known consumer-response hierarchy approach of the marketing field. However, the hierarchy of effects by Lavidge & Steiner (1961) is not the only one developed to describe the three-stage-response process supposedly followed by subjects facing an advertising's input. Other three very influential models also assume that the buyer passes orderly through cognitive, affective, and behavioural stages when faces external stimulus. However, these models were developed for different reasons (Belch & Belch, 2012; Kotler, 2001).

Firstly, besides the hierarchy of effects model, the most long-standing approach describing consumer-responses to advertising inputs was coined as AIDA by Strong (1925), because it depicts the buyer as passing successively through Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action (Belch & Belch, 2012). According to this model, the marketer must first get the customer attention and then arouse some interest in the company's product or service. The high interest incubated into customers should lead to a strong desire to have the product offered by the marketer. The AIDA process finishes with the action performed by the customer and expected by the marketer: making a purchase commitment and closing the sale: "To the marketer, this is the most important stage in the selling process, but it can also be the most difficult" (Belch & Belch, 2012, p. 190).

Secondly, another prevalent hierarchy of responses approach is the information processing model, which passes from the first to the third stage through next steps: a)

presentation, b) attention, c) comprehension, d) yielding, e) retention and f) behaviour (Belch & Belch, 2012; Kotler, 2001). This model assumes a more active role by audiences, at the time of seeing the recipient as an “information processor” or “problem solver.” The steps of this approach are similar to those of the hierarchy of effects model of Lavidge and Steiner (1961): attention and comprehension are similar to awareness and knowledge, and yielding is similar to liking, but the information processing model includes a step not found in other approaches: retention, defined as the ability of the recipient of retaining those pieces of information considered as valid or relevant: “This stage is important since most promotional campaigns are designed not to motivate consumers to take immediate action but rather to provide the information they will use later when making a purchase decision” (Belch & Belch, 2012, p. 191).

Finally, the third alternative consumer-response approach is the innovation adoption model, which is based on the diffusion of innovations’ theory by Everett Rogers (1962, 1982, 2003). Like the three previous models, the innovation adoption approach also moves from the first cognitive stage to the third behavioural one, following next course: a) awareness, b) interest, c) evaluation, d) trial and e) adoption. Every one of the steps described by Rogers (1962, 1982, 2003), also implies conscious and active individual processes. For instance, the first step of this consumer-response model, awareness or knowledge, occurs when an individual is exposed to the product’s existence and gains some understanding of how it functions. Rogers (2003) begins wondering which comes first: awareness of a product or the need about it?

Regarding this “chicken or egg dilemma,” different authors disagree about the role played by consumers at the time of learning about products and innovations. Some claim that receivers play a passive role and are aware of products and innovations “by accident,” as an individual could not actively seek a product until she knows that it exists. In contrast, others believe that consumers learn or gain knowledge about a product through actions initiated by them. For these authors, knowing a product is an active rather than a passive activity by consumers. Rogers (2003) explains it in this way: “Individuals generally tend to expose themselves to ideas that are under their interests, needs, or existing attitudes. We consciously or unconsciously avoid messages that conflict with our predispositions. This tendency is called selective exposure” (p. 166).

Rogers (2003) defines the selective exposure construct as our tendency to pay more attention to messages that are consistent with our existing attitudes and beliefs. Thus, selective exposure is complementary to another very close construct, selective perception, defined as our tendency to interpret communication messages according to our existing attitudes and beliefs.

An important question at this regard is, can a need be created? Rogers (2003) defines a need as a state of dissatisfaction or frustration that occurs when our stock of desires outweigh our stock of actualities. According to him, we may develop a need when we learn that a product is available in the market: we can desire a product or service at the right moment of learning about its existence, as we may want to acquire or imitate an innovation, trend or novelty at the right time of getting news about it as well as vice versa: “Some change agents create needs among their clients by pointing out the existence of desirable new ideas. Thus knowledge of the existence of innovation can create motivation for its adoption” (Rogers, 2003, p. 165).

According to the expected effect, it is possible to find evidence of different types of advertising in the market environment, which utilized different appeals based mainly on one of the three above-defined consumer-responses. When people face an ad with a cognitive, affective or behavioural appeal, they would be motivated to pay attention to the input based on their needs. In a digital context, consumers would be motivated to click on the ad, follow its link, or watch the digital advertising based on those described appeals. Then, research questions emerge: are post-millennials different in their buying behaviour to other

generations? Are they appealed by other motivations different from behavioural ones? Considering consumer-responses approaches, they would not be different and would be appealed by any of the three stimuli, not just for one. Based on this, we propose our first hypothesis H1: “post-millennials will be motivated to follow online advertising for different types of appeals.”

2.2. Consumer-response models' critics

Although academics and marketers have highly validated the four-described consumer-response approaches, some prominent authors have challenged those approaches. Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn (1992) state that the described consumer-response models assume that marketers have total control of messages while the receiver is a passive host “in a sanitary world where only the marketer’s message is seen or heard” (p. 110). The hierarchy of effects model could be ignoring that marketer’s messages compete for each other in a global scenario: “The greatest challenge to the model is that it is hypothetical and, despite its acceptance, there is practically no scientific evidence that it correctly assesses the way the human responds to advertising or marketing communication” (Schultz & Schultz, 2004, pp. 86-87). According to these authors, the consumer-response models were developed by academics who were not able to measure the actual impact of their communications. Then, “markets were so diffused, channels so complex, and technology and measurement instruments so crude that only broad approximations of behaviour, generally in a very aggregated form, were possible” (Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn, 1992, p. 110).

An additional challenge focuses on the sequence of the cognitive, affective and behavioural phases because the order of steps should vary depending on the buyer’s involvement into the purchase and the product’s level of differentiation. For instance, Kotler (2001) states that the “learn-feel-do” sequence is only appropriate when the recipient is highly involved with the purchase and the product of interest by the consumer competes into a category with high levels of differentiation, e.g. an automobile. An alternative sequence, “do-feel-learn,” can be decided by the marketer at the time of offering products with little or no differentiation within a product category to an audience highly involved, e.g. aluminum siding. Another sequence, “learn-do-feel” is recommended to market products with little distinction within the product category to audiences having low involvement, e.g. salt.

As the course “learn-feel-do” does not seem to be conclusive, different appeals could generate different buying patterns. Consumers could face many advertising messages with various requests in different industries or even in the same product category. Besides, in certain moments or groups, some call could be more efficient than others. For example, a limited-time offer, a behavioural appeal, could generate more sales than cognitive or affective inputs for high-priced products. Or in a beauty category, like perfumes, an emotional appeal could be better. Also, different generations could show different motivations and behaviours associated with advertising (Parment, 2013; Williams & Page, 2011). In fact, in the digital environment with more information available, it is easier to find and compare products, and for this reason, it seems that *post-millennials*, or digital natives, respond to behavioural appeals more than others (Beall, 2016; Smith, 2011), generating different buying patterns. In consequence, different buying patterns link to different requests. Then, our next hypothesis H2 says: “post-millennials’ buying behaviour will be more affected by behavioural appeals than by cognitive or affective ones.”

3. Methodology

After describing the foundations of the consumer-responses models studied in the marketing field and our hypotheses, we proceed to describe the methodology of our study.

We conducted an online survey of 539 Chilean post-millennials. The goal was to measure which one of the three consumer-responses linked to a higher interest by young and digitally

connected audiences, Respondents were invited by e-mail to answer the survey without offering incentives. The ratio among responded questionnaires and total e-mails delivered was 0.52.

Our sample was formed by 277 men (51.4%) and 262 women (48.6%). They ranged in age from 16 to 25 (mean= 19.1; sd= 2.36), 54.5% of subjects were aged 16-18, and the rest between 19 and 25 years. Almost all subjects had a smartphone (98%), which is not surprising because the Chilean mobile and technological market is very competitive: with a population of 17 million people, Chile has a stock of 23 million operative mobile phones (Subtel, 2018). The sample was taken from college and high school students participating in a national marketing contest performed in Santiago de Chile in December 2017. Students were coming from private and public colleges and high schools, from all the main towns of the country's capital.

Besides, any probably common method bias problem was controlled by the followed procedures (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003), so reported results are valid. We assured anonymity to respondents saying that there were no right or wrong answers. According to Podsakoff *et al.* (2003), these procedures reduce people's evaluation apprehension and the probability to get socially desirable responses. Also, the design of the questionnaire followed the recommendations of Aaker, Kumar and Day (2010). In the case of multiple scales, the categories were displayed randomly. Furthermore, the question order was pre-tested to prevent the order bias. Finally, when a respondent answered a question, she could not come back to change her answers, avoiding respondents could edit their prior inputs for being consistent with the following questions.

We asked subjects about their prime motivations at the time of clicking on a digital ad on their mobile devices (phones, laptops, or personal computers). Three possible responses were displayed to respondents based on consumer-responses approaches: a) knowing about the characteristics of a product or service through an informative ad, b) feeling a pleasant sensation through an attractive ad, and c) making a rapid purchase through a temporary offer or price promotion, with expiration time.

Subjects were also asked about how many times they bought something after receiving different digital advertising inputs. Gender, age, availability of technological and mobile devices, and frequency of use of social media and communication-apps, such as WhatsApp, Facetime, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others, were also required to subjects and coded. Data were aggregated and processed with the statistical software Stata.

Most of these subjects declared being intensive users of social media and messaging applications based on their mobile devices, as Table 1 depicts: more than one out of three subjects said checking on the messaging app WhatsApp about 5 hours per day on average. Other 18% declared checking on WhatsApp 4 hours per day on average. Almost 21% stated checking on WhatsApp 3 hours per day on average. In sum, respondents appeared using intensively their mobile devices to connect with other people.

Table 1: Time using different apps on mobile phones.

How much time do you spend checking or / using the next apps on your mobile device on average? (%)						
App / Time	1 H. on average	2 H. on average	3 H. on average	4 H. on average	5 H. on average	Don't have this app
WhatsApp / Chat	7.6	17.8	20.9	17.6	35.5	0.6
Facebook	48.6	21.5	10.4	5.7	7.6	6.3
Instagram	26.9	27.2	17	12.5	8.6	7.4
Snapchat	38.7	18.9	12.4	8.6	5.7	15.7
Twitter	33.3	2	3	1.6	1	59.1
Pinterest	35.2	6.6	3.4	1.4	1	52.4
YouTube / Videos	48.8	20.2	11.1	4.2	4.5	11.3
Spotify / IMusic	23.7	19.6	18.8	9.4	12	16.5

Source: Own elaboration.

Chilean post-millennials also declared preferring a private channel of communicating with others, rather than an exposed way of doing it: half of the respondents appeared using Facebook an hour per day on average, much less than the fast and private means of communicating through WhatsApp. It is also surprisingly the low penetration of the Twitter app on the mobile devices of these young samples: almost 60% of Chilean post-millennials did not have the Twitter app in their mobile devices.

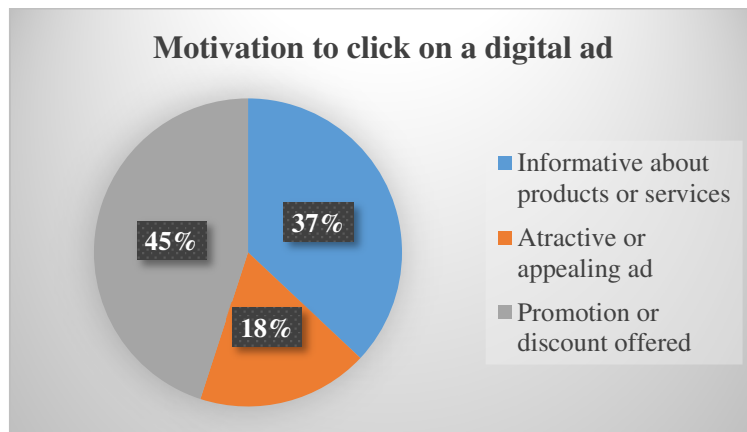
4. Results

Almost all studied subjects declared having noted or learned about digital ads displayed or shown to them by marketers on their portable devices: 98% of respondents have watched or read an ad in their mobile devices the previous week. However, only 45% of subjects intentionally clicked on one or more of those ads.

To answer our first hypothesis, which states that post-millennials will be motivated to follow online advertising for different types of appeals, we analyzed the declared motivation by Chilean post-millennials for clicking on digital ads. As mentioned above, three consumer-responses were provided to respondents to answer which one of the primary motivation was. Each alternative was related to one kind of consumer-response: a) the ad includes information about a product or service (cognitive); b) the advertisement is attractive (affective); c) the ad triggers a purchase offering a discount or a promotion (behavioural).

As Graphic 1 shows, 37% of respondents clicked on the digital ad because it was informative. Another 18% clicked on the digital ad because it was attractive. 45% clicked on the digital ad because it triggered a purchase through a promotion or a discount with an expiration date.

Graphic 1: Motivation to click on a digital ad.

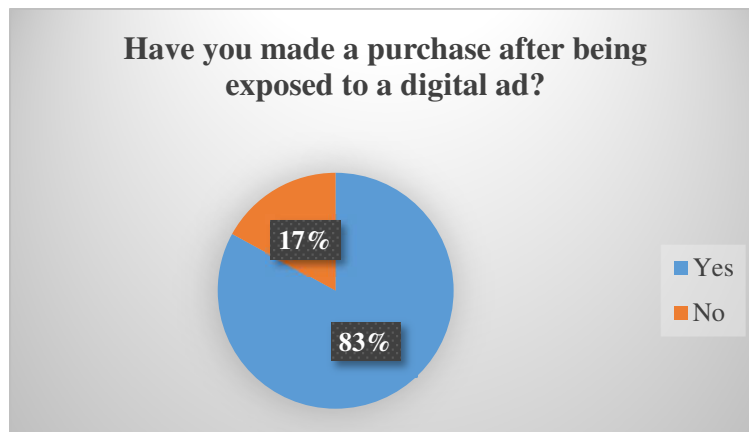


Source: Own elaboration.

As a result, the behavioural motivation appeared as the most frequent response given to a digital ad exposed through a mobile device, nearly followed by the cognitive one ($\chi^2[2] = 62.94, p = 0$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is validated by the evidence; post-millennials are motivated to watch or read online advertising by different appeals.

To evaluate hypothesis 2, which states that post-millennials' buying behaviour will be more affected by behavioural appeals than by cognitive or affective ones, we first analyzed the general buying behaviour of the sample. As a result, 83% of respondents declared they had purchased being exposed to a digital ad in the last six months (Graphic 2).

Graphic 2: Purchasing after being exposed to a digital ad.



Source: Own elaboration.

Also, 40% of respondents declared they had bought something three or more times after being exposed to a digital ad in the last six months; 17% twice; and 24% had bought something once. In conclusion, Chilean post-millennials declared to be very intensive at the time of purchasing something after reading or watching a digital ad.

Therefore, to measure the relationship among the number of times a Chilean respondent bought in the last six months with the three consumer-responses given to a digital ad, a multiple linear regression was performed. The number of times a respondent bought after being exposed to a digital ad was the dependent variable, which was explained by the three consumer-responses (cognitive, affective, or behavioural) as independent variables. Also, three control variables were included: gender, age, and smartphone ownership being 1 when the respondent has one, 0 otherwise. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Regression Analysis 1.

How many times have you bought something in the last six months after being exposed to a digital ad?						
F (5,533)	4.59	Prob > F	0.0004	R2	0.0413	
Root MSE	2.8691	Adj. R2	0.0323			
	Coef.	S.E.	t	P> t 	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Age	.111022	.0525464	2.11	0.035	.0077985	.2142455
Gender	-.3409068	.2478152	-1.38	0.170	-.8277212	.1459075
Smartphone ownership	2.355023	.849861	2.77	0.006	.6855353	4.024511
Motivation to click on the ad						
Cognitive	-.3276951	.2779336	-1.18	0.239	-.8736747	.2182845
Affective	.6723209	.3487457	1.93	0.054	-.0127638	1.357406
Cons.	-1.735877	1.307023	-1.33	0.185	-4.303426	.8316713

Source: Own elaboration.

Although the size effect is small ($R^2= 4.13\%$), our model appears being very significant ($p < .01$) and shows impressive results. At the time of observing independent variables individually, the regression model shows there is not a more proper motivation than others in buying behaviour. Using a behavioural appeal *versus* an affective one does not have an impact on the number of times people buy after being exposed to a digital ad, as the coefficient is not significant. Similar results appear when comparing behavioural appeal *versus* the cognitive one: there is not a significant change. Hence, hypothesis 2 is not supported by the evidence.

Besides, we also checked the likely effect of having an affective appeal *versus* a cognitive one, finding positive and statistically significant results (Table 3). Then, when post-millennials face an emotional appeal *versus* a cognitive one, the number of times they buy increase one unity on average, all other variables constant (*ceteris paribus*). According to literature, this is unexpected.

Table 3: Regression Analysis 2.

Regression Analysis: Dependent variable: How many times have you bought something in the last six months after being exposed to a digital ad?						
F (5,533)	4.59	Prob. > F	0.0004	R2	0.0413	
Root MSE	2.8691	Adj. R2	0.0323			
	Coef.	S.E.	t	P> t 	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Age	.111022	.0525464	2.11	0.035	.0077985	.2142455
Gender	-.3409068	.2478152	-1.38	0.170	-.8277212	.1459075
Smartphone ownership	2.355023	.849861	2.77	0.006	.6855353	4.024511
Motivation to click on an ad						
Affective	1.000016	.356527	2.80	0.005	.2996456	1.700386
Behavioural	.3276951	.2779336	1.18	0.239	-.2182845	.8736747
Cons.	-2.063572	1.338966	-1.54	0.124	-4.693871	.5667265

Source: Own elaboration.

Finally, it is interesting to comment on the effect of gender and smartphone ownership. In the first case, when people get older, they increase their buying behaviour in just 0.1 times, all other variables constant. Gender coefficient is positive and statistically significant. However, its impact is not essential. On the contrary, owning a smartphone makes a considerable difference. Smartphone ownership coefficient is positive, statistically significant and very important. When owning a smartphone, the number of times post-millennials buy something after being exposed to a digital ad increases 2.36 times on average.

5. Conclusions

Harsh criticism has received the traditional consumer-responses models by some very influential marketing authors, like Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn (1992), and Schultz & Schultz (2004), because these approaches would be hypothetical. We have tested these consumer-responses models with our survey to 539 Chilean post-millennials, asking them about their main motivations to click on digital ads and the number of times they bought after being exposed to digital ads, and some relevant conclusions arise.

Firstly, it is essential to note that digital ads designed to catch young's eyes appear as an effective way of communicating with these digital natives. According to our data, 83% of respondents have responded to a digital ad making the proper purchase. Digital ads, correctly personalized and segmented, appear as the right way of inducing sales among young audiences. Thus, the traditional consumer-responses models seem to be relevant and suitable to this segment and environment.

Some of these connected and agile consumers are very intensive at the time of buying after being exposed to digital advertising inputs: 24% of them declared they had bought once in the last six months after being exposed to a digital ad, 19% said they had bought twice, 17% have bought three times, 9% have bought four times, and 31% have purchased four times or more. Additionally, in the same period, almost one out of three young subjects surveyed declared they were commonly induced to buy thanks to digital ads. Like previous research, we conclude that post-millennials enjoy and love shopping (Ordun, 2015; Williams & Page, 2011).

Our results also demonstrate that behavioural ads, those designed to trigger a purchase through a promotion or a discount with an expiration date, were slightly more clicked on than cognitive ads, designed to let uninformed people know about the characteristics of a product or service. At the same time, both cognitive and behavioural ads were much more clicked on than affective ads, those designed to create favourable attitudes or feelings towards a product or service and producing a preference. According to our survey, 45% of those respondents that clicked on a digital advertising input, did it because the ad triggered a purchase through a promotion or a discount offer, 37% did it because the digital ad was informative about the characteristics of a product or service. Only 18% did it because the digital ad was affective and designed to create favourable attitudes or feelings towards a product or service.

Initially, promotions and discount offers seem to be more effective among post-millennial audiences because these are likely more oriented to save money, buying products at lower prices, and taking advantage of marketing opportunities (Beall, 2016; Smith, 2011). Based on this, we could hypothesize that these young audiences are less willing to click on a digital ad for the only reason that they like or enjoy the advertising input. As they know that the ad is a sponsored message, they are probably skeptical about click on an affective and likeable ad without a more practical, selfish and interested motivation. Young audiences could feel an urgent need to click on an ad to have a direct benefit, but not to click on the ad only because it is an excellent corporate message. However, our results show that there are no differences in the buying behaviour between behavioural and affective digital ads or between behavioural and cognitive ones.

Furthermore, more counter-intuitive and contradictory findings compared to previous research is the significant difference in buying behaviour between affective and cognitive digital ads. However, just as post-millennials are focused on prices and promotions, they are also interested in novelty and prestige of their buying decisions (Williams & Page, 2011). Thus, they are interested in affective digital ads appealing to their emotions and feelings.

Besides, it is essential to note the close relationship between owning a smartphone and the frequency of buying after being exposed to a digital advertising input. At this regard, we must recognize that, in a very competitive mobile phone's market as Chile, with 23 million mobile phones in a country with 17 million people, is not surprising that 98% of our young sample declared owning a smartphone. This portable device, with access to the Internet anywhere/anytime and easy portability, facilitates a rapid and sometimes impulsive purchase after receiving a digital ad, most of the times through the same media.

In the past, most of the times we learnt about products and services through the radio, the T.V., magazines and newspapers. But we could not buy through these one-way media. Now, the same device that permits us to know about a product or service allows us to make the purchase directly, easily, quickly and safely, anywhere and anytime and to bring us products from all the world. With our data, we confirmed that owning a smartphone makes a highly significant difference ($p < .01$) of 2.36 purchases compared with not owning this device. Thus, when a post-millennial who loves to buy is exposed to an ad designed to trigger an immediate purchase, owning a smartphone can be a final nudge through making the purchase possible quickly.

Moreover, age is another significant variable ($p < .05$) at the time of explaining the variance of times buying declared by respondents after being exposed to a digital ad: one year more of age represented an increase of 0.12 times buying after being exposed to a digital ad. It sounds logical because we can assume that when young people get older, they can have more money available to buy things they like. At this regard, we did not find significant differences by gender.

Finally, regarding research limitations, we must recognize that the size effect of our measurements is small, and a lot of "reality" remains unexplained. We would like to deal with this limitation shortly. Another significant limitation of our study is the impossibility to compare with younger and older populations. However, it is essential to note that this is a preliminary study, which is part of a larger one. Shortly, this study will be replicated with people under 16 and older 25. Thus, we may know how "affected" are other populations when they receive cognitive, affective or behavioural inputs if they click on digital ads or if they buy after being exposed to digital ads. We could also know how many times they do it. Finally, we can learn if there is a relation between owning a smartphone and the number of times buying after being exposed to digital ads. All these data will be compared with those of Chilean post-millennials. At the same time, it would also be desirable to expand the number of countries researched to compare Chilean respondents with similar populations in Latin America or other regions. Finally, this study just looked for relations between three advertising appeals and buying behaviour. Still, it would be recommendable to clearly understand the effect of different ad appeals on buyer behaviour to conduct causal research.

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