

An Evaluation of Advertising Models in Emergent Countries – The Case of Albania

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Abstract: The market today is confronted with cornucopia of challenges and opportunities. The unfolding scenario is being closely watched by marketers across the globe and they are competing with each other to grasp the market share. In order to win over the consumers, marketers are constantly evolving strategies. The western firms based and operating from market-based economies are progressively being confronted with the growing challenge of creating brand awareness amongst the perspective consumers. As a result, advertising has become an essential marketing tool for these foreign firms in establishing their relatively less or unknown brands and products. The study aims to report the results of a survey about changing attitudes towards advertising in Albania. It examines the questionnaire - based response of a sample population of consumers from the city of Vlora, in their general attitudes towards advertising. Findings will contribute to the understanding of theoretical explanations for advertising in emerging markets, and of western firms using advertising marketing tool to penetrate these markets.

Keywords: marketing; consumer behavior; attitudes; brands

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1. Introduction

The subject of advertising is marked by diverse and conflicting perspectives. Popular writers and social critics, for example, often portray advertising as wasteful and manipulative, while some academic economists argue that advertising can provide useful information for consumers and lower prices. Advertising is often seen as a very important tool in marketing communication. It is a type of promotion where the target audience is reached via a recognizable advertisement placed in a definable advertising media. By using advertising the message of a marketing campaign could be often repeated and through this, awareness could be created

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amongst the new customers at the same time as it helps the already aware to learn more about and remember brands and their benefits. As a form of classical conditioning advertising can build associations between brands, logos, images, and benefits. Some examples of advertising are TV commercials, radio commercials, and print ads in magazines and newspapers. Advantages with advertising are that it can be quickly implemented but still have a widespread market cover. Marketers also have full control over the message content and can easily cut down on marketing cost if necessary by terminating the advertising campaign. However, there are also some disadvantages with advertising. The major drawback is maybe the fact that advertising cannot target individual customers, but also the difficulty in quickly changing the message thrust and the complexity in determining cost effectiveness are also a disadvantage.

Advertising activities have increased rapidly in the 1990s as the retail sector is being privatized and emerging as a dominant contributor (Wells, 1998). Some other authors (Andrews et al, 1994) have characterized it as „the engine of the trade’, an old advertising slogan of Mettsel company which continues to be an idiom of the everyday conversation. The advertising dimensions in former centrally planned economies differ significantly from western markets and are often overlooked by western managers in their haste to promote their products (Czinkota, 1997). There seem to be a general belief on their part that their consumers have preference for western brands, and understand and favor western modes and styles of advertising. But a historical dominance of indigenous advertising and marketing paradigms require challenging understanding from western firms in interpreting consumer attitudes towards advertising. Consumers in general, fear covert manipulation and subliminal techniques applied in advertising, and a continuous proliferation of new products and media information (Pollay et al, 1993). Gaining insights into the consumer attitudes towards advertising becomes necessary as advertising does not occur in a vacuum. Advertising agencies which are at the forefront of the societal trends would win, or else they might face dire consequences in the marketplace (Muncy et al, 1998). This article attempts to examine these issues in the Albanian context.

2. How is Albanian Advertising Developed?

Advertising in the emerging markets of Albania has been perceived as critical in its role in ‘building a bridge to the future’ (Wells, 1994). The economic considerations for greater productive efficiency urged the socialist countries like the Soviet Union and China started to resort to ‘capitalistic practices’ of advertising, market and consumer research, and flexible pricing strategies. As a generalization, the main features of Albanian advertising of consumer products during the 1960s to the 1980s included:

a) marketing mix decisions were centralized and based on products which met the needs of the centrally planned economy. Consumer products were characterized by a shortage of demand whilst those in excess were not readily available for purchase due to logistics problems. In an economy driven by demand, advertising was restricted to single product promotion, e.g. only one airline was available, only one political party ideology was advertised (the Communist Party). In general, few competitive products or services were available for alternative consumer choices or demand creation.

b) consumer product advertising did not just promote the usage of products but imposed repeat purchase of products which were obtainable in surplus. For instance 'soja milk' which was procured in abundance, was advertised and promoted as being healthy whilst it was not liked by the majority due to its smell. This innate led to the interpretation by consumers that advertising indicates some shortcoming in the product, (Feick et al, 1996) or else why would a producer need to advertise in a shortage economy? Therefore, producers and manufacturers had least pressure to be concerned about consumer preferences or to ensure that they met the 'market needs' or 'standards' as distinct from 'basic needs' and 'standards'

c) the content of advertising was informative but not aimed at individual satisfaction. A greater emphasis was on social welfare emphasizing 'good and healthy life' for people. In this 'Popeye' advertising, social welfare and health were central and the official distinction between 'capitalist' and 'socialist' advertising was maintained. The capitalist advertising was to serve a single company in its quest for sales in an excess supply situation and was therefore 'wasteful'. Socialist advertising, on the other hand, was not supposed to be based on (unhealthy) competition and was aimed at redirecting demand for greater economic and social welfare (Ostlund, 1973). Thus the objective of advertising was not commercial for profit generation which was perceived as capitalistic instrument based on exploitation. The function of advertising in adding value to products was perceived to be ideologically wrong as it fosters for instance monopoly power and profit and its role in the former Albanian economy was ambiguous (Hanson, 1974). Advertising was further discouraged as tax exemptions or reductions on advertising expenditure could not be claimed. Products originating from other than our country were sold in specialized hard currency stores which were beyond the reach of the majority of the population.

3. Objective of the Study

As the liberalization and privatization has increased, perspective consumers and managers in emerging markets like Albania are being exposed to a continuum of processes which aim at their greater participation in the marketing activities. In this context their expectations of and behavior towards new and emerging marketing functions must be understood for successful planning and implementation of marketing strategies (Noar, 1989). Research on consumer beliefs and attitudes and their relative importance for advertising processes, in these new markets will develop an understanding and the potential of advertising in reaching perspective consumers. Western as well as local firms are increasingly using advertising as a tool for developing brand recognition to establish themselves in the Albanian market. Further, western companies and academics explicitly or benignly believe that the only 'correct' model of advertising in emerging markets is based on the free-market western model (Wells, 1994). However research has shown that consumers Albania have a different view of advertising than their western counterparts. This can be attributed to their exposure to different ad stimuli and a different economic and historical background. This survey may contribute to the verification of such popular western beliefs that the western style of advertising is the best method for market penetration. It may illustrate the usefulness of advertising to marketing practitioners by emphasizing the importance of advertising in an integrated marketing strategy in emerging markets.

There is limited research and literature on the Albanian markets. In recent years a number of studies on Eastern Europe have emerged (Iatridis et al, 1998; Estrin et al, 1997; Zecchini, 1997). The prime focus is on studying the impact of changes in macro-economic policy on the transformation of business activities in these transitional markets. Major attention has been on the activities of firms within the macro marketing environment leading to privatization, or the choice and process of selection of markets, and modes of foreign investment (Buckley et al, 1994). Studies focusing on micro issue like changes in consumer or managerial attitudes and behaviors in emerging markets have received little research attention (Pribova et al, 1995). One explanation can be that the marketing scenario is new, and research is limited in general. Secondly, main thrust of business activity has concentrated on macro issues and research work has reflected this trend. In rapidly changing countries substantive advertising and consumer research is sorely needed as consumers are integrating into market related activities (Buckley et al, 1994). Knowledge gained from research on consumer and managerial behavior towards marketing functions will allow greater marketplace efficiencies by matching consumer and producers interests.

Consumers attitudes focuses on studying consumer attitudes towards advertising in Albania. Using open and close-ended questionnaires, the data was collected by personal approach in the city of Vlora from students in the University 'Ismail

Qemali' and their families. A descriptive analysis of results is presented on demographics, product usage, advertising awareness and media usage and recall. The results were fairly contradictory but indicated that in the sample population decision making is affected by the unavailability of products, and that there is a general indifference to media and an overall muted response to advertising.

4. Methodology

The following section deals with analysis and interpretation of data collected through questionnaire schedule administered in the study area. Results of the findings are presented under various headings. The questionnaire development and design process was guided by the measures developed by two authors (Pollay et al, 1993; Muehling 1987). These studies not only explicate consumers' attitude towards advertising's social and economic effects but also other relevant perceptions of advertising such as media and the ad industry. To avoid the limits set by the prelisted answers or a set of predetermined belief statements by researchers, echo survey method was used which allows free response analysis and is more appropriate in identifying and surfacing underlying beliefs otherwise generally overlooked (Muehling, 1987; Kohan et al, 1972). This is more applicable when knowledge about attitude measures or issues is unfamiliar, as in case of emerging markets. 'New' marketing experiences transform and evolve respondents' attitudes towards advertising progressively. In such a scenario, it is not only appropriate but useful to design descriptive research study that would register the much needed qualitative insights of changing attitudes (Zinkhan, 1994). General attitudes towards advertising were examined through an open-ended questionnaire. Nine questions were devised, and first eight were randomly used in the study. Information on demographic characteristics was obtained last in one question with sub -categories. In total the questionnaire contained items to register general affective perception of advertising (what do you think of advertising? Is there any difference between 'foreign' and 'local' advertising?), functional objective of advertising (Is advertising important, if so, why do you think so? Have you come to know of any new brands through advertising after liberalization? If so, name any ten new foreign brands), general awareness on the societal effects of advertising (Do you think advertising is socially responsible? Do you know of any legal restrictions on advertising? Do you trust advertising?), advertising means to understand the most acceptable medium for advertising practices (What are the most popular mediums of advertising?), and finally, demographic characteristics (age, gender, profession). No income related question was asked. Each question was assigned six numbers for response, except when ten brand names were asked to be listed.

The questionnaire was pre -tested on eight respondents and two marketing studies professors, before our sample population was approached. All suggestions received were discussed and subsequently a final version was prepared. During this process we learnt to pay particular attention to simplify the usage of the language, and to maintain the questions and the questionnaire as short as possible. One question was added after pre-testing of our questionnaire was completed. The test respondents did not understand which advertising was being referred to, i.e. local or foreign. We opted to use this popular concept devised to distinguish between the pre and the post liberalization advertising in the introductory letter as well as in the questionnaire. Essentially local advertising refers to the advertising conducted by the domestic companies and about local brands in both pre and post liberalization period, whilst foreign advertising related to new advertising by western firms following economic and political liberalization. The latter category and was subjected to censorship and heavy restrictions under the communist regime. Since objective of this study is limited to capturing the general attitude during current transition period, our distinction of the two concepts has been rudimentary and simplified in its nature. Any further in-depth research would require augmentation of distinctions between local and foreign advertising. Unless otherwise mentioned, in our results and discussion, all advertising refers to foreign advertising. The study is based on the student population registered to obtain part-time or full -time master degree in Economic Faculty of University of Vlora. The course is partially delivered in English and all participants have a good knowledge of the English language. The student population is expected to have at least three years of work experience.

A convenient sample of randomly stratified population of at least hundred respondents was selected and approached. The selection of this sample was based upon our assumption of the exposure of the age group involved to the pre and post liberalization marketing environment. Therefore it was believed that this group could provide us enriched information on the process of the development of the advertising in Albania with their knowledge from a comparative environment. Given the admission requirements mentioned earlier, the sample group was assumed to be relatively older than an average student age group, and therefore participated in final purchase decisions, and could be categorized as active consumers. As noted in earlier studies also (Andrews et al, 1994), as business students, our respondents may have had more knowledgeable and informed opinions on the topic of advertising than might be found with other samples such as the general population. Each respondent was given a three-page questionnaire where was included an introductory page explaining the purpose of our study and two pages containing survey questions. All data was acquired in unaided research environment with the assistance of colleagues at university. The questionnaire was distributed and collected on the same day on January 2012. Because of our direct approach to respondents to fill in the questionnaire non-response issue is of

insignificant relevance here. One hundred usable questionnaires were received out of a total of 106 responses. Six questionnaires contained incomplete data and could not be used for our research purpose. During the data collection process respondents' preference for closed question based questionnaire was conveyed. Lack of exposure to research and market experience could explain their choices. This inexperience was also conveyed by respondents' queries on our handling of the information provided to us in writing. A legacy of centrally planned regime could explain such a suspicious view on parting with data in handwriting. It is recommended that if feasible, when mistrust in research related activity is high, interview method with small focus group in congenial environment might facilitate higher quality of data collection. Precautionary measures such as emphatic assurance on the preservation of respondent's anonymity and perhaps use of technical devices to fill in the questionnaire could reduce the degree of mistrust.

4.1. Profile of the Respondents

- *Sample size 100*
- *Per cent Female 52 (Male 48)*
- *Age Group 18-24 yr. (N=6), 25-40 yr. (N =78) with 25-34 yr. (N=59) and 35-40 (N=19), 41 -51 yr. (N=10)*
- *Current Occupation Managerial (N=37), Education and Research related (N=23),*
- *Full time Student (N =21), Miscellaneous (N=6)*

The above socio-demographic data for the respondents confirmed our assumption that respondents would also be engaged in some employment activity or would have had some previous work experience. Also the respondents group was a relatively older age group with majority being within the range of 25 to 40 years. These characteristics also confirmed that these respondents were active consumers and decision-makers.

4.2. Discussion of Study Findings

General perception of advertising. Respondents varied in their response of their perception of advertising. The economic and functional objective of advertising in providing information on new products (not necessarily brands) is being understood and absorbed. In general, most respondents (N=83) found advertising to be positive and contributive in some form. The main cause for advertising to be necessary was perceived in its economic and instrumental objective in providing information on: the new types of products (quality, usage, information on brand);

new firms (manufacturers and services); effects of advertising (adds to the professionalism in local advertising), and other product characteristics. There are clear indications that advertising message is assisting in comparative decision making. *'(It helps to choose amongst the variety of products in the market, helps to follow the upgrade of different brands'. (25 yr., female bank employee). 'Advertising helps me in making a particular choice in the shop' (29 yr., female translator).* Advertising has been seen as a broader concept with its objective being viewed beyond mere provision of information on products and services. It provides opportunities for consumers, manufacturers and advertisers in creating market efficiencies such as by learning from the methods and styles of advertising used in the West. *'There are many different interesting things in the world that are still unknown to me... besides, it's interesting to watch their way of thinking through ads. ' (24 yr., male student). Or 'Advertising means progress' (30 yr., male manager).* Out of this sample, a small number of respondents (N=6) stated that their perception of advertising was also circumstantial. Advertising might be necessary and informative in one circumstance but less convincing when high claims on product quality are made ('it is necessary but it's too perfect' (41 yr., male manager)). It was also perceived to be negative (N=16) because of its aggressiveness where false claims were made; or because advertised products were beyond respondents' purchasing power or information on quality of products and services provided was not substantiated *'I do not trust its message and when I need to buy a product, I ask for information from my friends'. (29 yr., female translator).* Advertising was wasteful or led to a waste of money (N=11) because it did not address Albanian consumer needs and served the desires of manufacturers and promoted low quality products. Responses on differences between local and foreign advertising were diverse. Local advertising was considered to be essential (N=24) which should continue and must be supported by the state authorities.

These respondents seem to have affinity with local advertising largely due to patriotic emotions ('it's our own promoting our own goods' 46 yr., male commercial manager). *It was also believed to be more trustworthy ('It's not sophisticated like foreign advertising but it's more trustworthy' 27 yr., female student), promoting indigenous products ('It is a must. The Albanian population must be aware of domestic products available at the market to make a right choice'. (24 yr., male engineer.))and using local models ('our people') which was under the threat of being dominated by the foreign advertising (N=4).* It was mentioned to be of high quality and of high performance particularly where density of text in messages was high ('linear and straightforward', 'high quality', and 'more text which is understandable')(N=17). Simultaneously perception of local advertising also generated high unfavorable responses (N=51) in some form, while some respondents (N=16) were totally dismissive of local advertising (poor, useless, waste of money, bad quality). This negativism in all categories mainly derived from respondents' subjective visual imagery and related to their hedonic

experiences of advertisements of local products and brands (e.g. bad colors and style, copies foreign advertising, lack of originality, not interesting, poor text and production, too many words). The importance of aesthetics of ads was further confirmed by the characterization of foreign advertising for being more professional, creative and of high quality (N=81).

There is a realization that insufficient capital input is an important reason for a persistent poor quality of local advertising: *'Where there is \$, there is creativity'* (32 yr., male accountant) It is interesting to note that absorption of comparative information in this category was emphatically characterized by cognitive responses related to the hedonic effects of advertising. No response related to the preference of foreign advertising for consumer related responses, e.g. provision of better product information.

Brand Awareness. Attitude towards brand awareness was registered through unaided brand recall. All respondents responded affirmatively to that they had been exposed to new brands after the liberalization. When asked to name any ten brands known in the post liberalization period a small number (N=6) was non-responsive. Some mentioned only one to four brands (N=23), and a few mentioned product categories and not brands (N=4), and one response was by company's name (Unilever, and P&G). The most frequently mentioned brands were also global brands, and nearly all brands recalled were in consumer product categories (N=89), even though the question did not specifically referred to consumer brands or products. Some respondents (N=11), also mentioned brands in consumer services sector. These brands mentioned can be randomly categorized as follows: *consumer electronics (Panasonic, Philips, Samsung, Sony, Bosch, Siemens), soft drinks (Coca-Cola, Pepsi Co.), white goods (Tefal, Rowenta, Indesit, Whirlpool), cigarettes (Camel, Marlboro, Phillip Morris), computers (Apple, IBM), cars (Daewoo, Hyundai, Kia, Ford, Opel, Mazda and BMW), washing powder (Ariel, OMO), cosmetics (Head and Shoulders, Johnson and Johnson, Revlon), services (KLM, Visa). Only two respondents mentioned food chains (Pizza Hut, McDonalds) and alcohol (Johnny Walker).* The objective was to gain preliminary information on brand knowledge and we realize that within our research design, it is difficult to assess whether the knowledge of these brands existed prior to liberalization or not. At least one respondent mentioned that *'we knew these products (brands) before, but now I know what they look like'* (32 yr., male ban employee). In other words brand recall might not necessarily have been based on cognitive perception. In the category of cars Korean brands were more recognized, and in consumer electronics European and Japanese brands were recalled more frequently. Cigarette brands were also frequently mentioned (N=41).

Is advertising responsible? General awareness about the societal effects of advertising was registered by inducing three open-ended questions. On social responsibility of advertising, response can be analyzed as being skeptical (N=55)

for at least two sets of reasons. Firstly, false claims, which were perceived to be misleading and thus irresponsible, were made especially when medicines, cosmetics and tobacco were being advertised. Secondly, the content was not fully informative and confusing when the quality of products was experienced to be lower than portrayed in the ads ('sometimes the content of commercials does not reflect the reality' (27 yr., female teacher) or 'I am not sure, because according to each advertiser only that product is good' (29 yr., female). The non-response to this question was the highest (N=27) while the remaining respondents' were affirmative in response (N=18) but without any further explanation. This may indicate that respondents were not able to understand the question due to their unfamiliarity with the subject of advertising and social responsibility. When further examined through specification of trust in advertising, response was more translucent. A general feeling of mistrust and skepticism was again experienced by most respondents (N=58). The response in this category related both to attitudes towards advertising content (Aad) ('I trust 50% local ads and 70% foreign ads. I trust Japanese electronic adverts' 28 yr., female engineer), and towards advertising as an institution (Ad) ('I dislike all ads', 25 yr., male banker). Mistrust resulted from personal experience because information (on product quality, availability, prices) required further verification with one's peer group (friends, family and other people). At times advertising was perceived to be useful (N=22), 'even if it is a waste of my time' (20 yr., male student) or 'it depends on my attitude to the specific company' (39 yr., male respondent). A relatively small number (N=27) expressed all favorable trust in advertising in general. This positivism generated from their belief that the information provided was truthful (N=5); and advertising was more convincing, experienced and truthful in its presentation (N=7). Within this group, local advertising was perceived to be more trustworthy (N=14), because information provided could be checked which was not easy for products manufactured abroad ('I trust local adverts because our local brands are proved to be of higher quality than foreign ones' (28 yr. Male researcher)). There was also non-belief in advertising (N=12) and aversion by some respondents (N=2). This non-belief and aversion generated from the intensity of advertising which can be confusing ('I don't trust any advertising' (24 yr., male engineer), or challenges it presents to the viewers level of intelligence ('no, I am a realistic person' (25 yr., female), 'I don't think, I only enjoy looking and hearing the message' (26 yr., female)). There is a growing awareness regarding the advertising laws in Albania which is by and large a self-regulated industry. In general there is an awareness of regulatory restrictions on advertising of alcohol, tobacco, weapons, drugs and sex related services (N=48). ('yes, all sorts of products that can damage one's health' 21 yr., male student). Specific nature of the legal restrictions were also mentioned and some showed awareness of the compulsory use of the Albanian language in advertisements (N=16). Greater number of respondents (N=51) however, showed ignorance of any regulations by

not answering ($N=18$), or responding in negative ($N=33$) (*'it's not my job to know them. Govt. should. (know these regulations). (29 yr., male bank employee), or 'I don't care. They (ads) are only a source of information' (34 yr., male manager)*).

What are the means of advertising? Most respondents mentioned TV as the most popular medium of advertising ($N=81$), followed by print media ($N=51$), billboards ($N=19$), exhibitions ($N=11$). In most cases the Albanian TOP Channel was also mentioned. It was interesting to note that radio and cinema, which constituted popular medium of communication prior to liberalization, were rarely mentioned ($N=2$). It shows that the new media, along with the print media, has become a very powerful medium of communication. Other forms of advertising e.g. magazines, radio and buses were also mentioned ($N=7$). Research results should have implications beyond our population who are active consumers and are potentially affected by advertising in their purchase decision making.

Some limitations of our study. a) This study is limited to the urban and central Albanian situation where purchasing power is higher and consumer exposure to new products is potentially greater due to their availability in the shopping malls. b) respondents' paucity in exposure to market and marketing experience might have resulted in their marked difference in response in all categories. c) marketing processes are constantly changing and crystallization of marketing attitudes is transpiring at a high speed. During this process, absorption, processing and interpretation of data is also likely to be different in a market with significant differences in the value system than in the West. The results, therefore, are to be treated cautiously and future research might be conducted with the non-business community and the general population. Assessment of individual integration into western style marketing indicates an increasing awareness towards contemporary advertising while skepticism is prevalent. The desire to gain detailed information about the product and its components, usage, was high. Explanation of this economic effect is in the newness and resulting unfamiliarity such as on the usage or the beneficial usage of the products. *'There are too many new products appearing in the Albanian consumer market... very often, (when) buying new products, consumers use data they get from the commercials and ads' (27 yr., male)*. This is consistent with the findings elsewhere that functional and not sensory information is of higher relevance in emerging markets where uncertainty avoidance is high (Donthu, 1998). In our sample, the role of advertising continues to be viewed as essential or significant as indicated elsewhere (Wells, 1997; Andrews et al, 1994). But the effect of such advertising was interpreted beyond this fundamental objective of product information. Its function has been observed to facilitate growth and innovation in the local advertising industry, and competition in the product market. Respondents also showed awareness of the aggressive intensity of advertising. This can partially be explained through consumer's reflection of their nationalistic feelings when felt threatened by a high speed of

social and economic change ('too much advertising *too soon*' 39 yr., male, commercial manager). In a transitional economy that is establishing its independent identity and formulating its ideological convictions away from the communist regime can be counterproductive and arouse negativism and unfavorable brand attitudes. A lack of experience of market economies can manifest in many ways e.g. market disbelief (Fieck et al, 1996). This might lead to premature interpretations of negativism such as respondents noted 'foreign advertising is monotonous' (39 yr. Male supervisor), or 'it's a waste of money' (22 yr., male student and banker). Further empirical research is needed for refined identification of such negative attitudes as distinguished from skepticism, criticism, disbelief and mistrust. Theoretical models for advertising in developed markets such as of persuasive hierarchy which follow cognitive – affective – and behavior stage model might be less relevant in emerging markets where skepticism is high. Consumer behavior is influenced by low purchasing power, personal and peer group experiences and word-of-mouth medium of advertising continues to create credence. Advertising is providing foundations for comparative decision making, and engineering self-formation into an institution and industry.

The advertising industry is largely self-regulated and advertising laws have only been introduced recently. A general lack of regulations or awareness of their nature might be a result of the unproductive perception of advertising under former regime (Richman, 1974). Consumers who were aware of regulations also seem to be aware of the necessity of it. A high density advertising of generally prohibited products such as alcohol, tobacco and related products, have added to their beliefs that the western companies are exploiting the absence of or lapse in implementation of existing but relatively weak legal restrictions. This may lead to a review of current laws and contribute towards the establishment of advertising as a socially responsible marketing institution. Marketing processes are constantly developing in Albania and strong indications of change processes of the social and economic life can be deducted from this survey. New media such as TV and news print magazines seem to have replaced the old print media and radio. The newness of the information, presentation and the visual imagery used in these mediums (color, style, aesthetics, models and so on) has made them acceptable and popular. The global knowledge about advertising is on the increase and its future economic and social effects should not be underestimated. For instance, TV and the print media, as the most popular mediums of advertising indicate the importance of brand recall are based on visual perception. This is more likely to form brand recognition and thus develop brand attitudes. Based on our findings, advertising contents should emphasize the product knowledge and quality aspects if persuasion knowledge is to be created. Additional supportive information in print media would need to reiterate and substantiate these claims for consumer assurance if connate consumer attitudes are to be developed.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Consumers' evaluation and purchase intention of foreign goods in emergent countries is of great interest to the marketers. The research findings provide the authors an analysis of the current situation for an important emerging market and should be of interest both to academics and practitioners in the field of international marketing. Psychological acceptance of advertising as a means of information on new products is a new phenomenon in Albania, and skepticism and confusion originate from the consumers' inexperience in receiving, processing and analyzing such information. Consumers' negative attitudes can be neutralized by providing detailed information on products through increased transparency in ad content, whilst maintaining professional presentation (color, models, and context). A two-tier advertising approach can be followed where the TV medium could be used for brand creation and awareness, and print media to substantiate and provide additional advertising information. Western advertisers might take into account that local advertising ought not to be displaced by aggressive advertising and a blended approach would smooth the transition. Therefore, managerial perception of the advertising should also be studied to provide a comparative and more reliable view of advertising in emerging markets. Foreign companies entering the Albanian market develop advertising for a relatively unknown market but nonetheless, a positive image of the advertising activity should be created. The content of advertising is firstly, to be interpreted by the 'state bodies with appropriate authority'. These bodies do not have any previous experience of dealing with 'western style' advertising and companies can face further restrictions in their advertising activities. This not only requires creativity in developing the content of advertisements, but also managerial and negotiation skills to deal with such authorities.

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