

Ad Campaigns and Social Norms that Encourage Low-Carbon Consumption

Jungwoo Horvath*

Department of Applied Economics, University of Valladolid, Valladolid, Spain

Introduction

It is difficult to move to low-carbon consumption, which is required to stop climate change, while high-carbon products are widely advertised. On low- and high-carbon consumption, we examine the individual and combined effects of advertising and social norm communication. In order to encourage low-carbon consumption, this involved showing 2728 US residents an imitation Facebook homepage that featured both green and non-green advertising as well as strong and weak social norms. Green advertising and social standards each worked well on their own to encourage low-carbon decisions. However, when combined, advertising narrowed the available options and negated the beneficial impacts of the social norm. We demonstrate that this outcome is the result of advertising influencing more decision-making pathways than societal norms. It implies that the ability of low-carbon standards to alter consumer preferences is dominated by advertising [1].

Description

Consumption patterns must shift toward low-carbon consumption in order to mitigate climate change. Consumers are also being bombarded by product advertisements encouraging high-carbon consumption. It is assessed that the normal American is presented to around 4000 to 10,000 notices everyday most of which are for high-carbon items, that is to say, those which produce impressive CO₂ discharges over their lifecycle. Additionally, targeted advertisements made possible by online platforms like Facebook and Google have significantly improved commercial advertising's effectiveness. According to studies advertising may account for up to 65% of the total variance in consumption patterns. In light of this, pertinent questions include whether green advertising, i.e. advertising for low-carbon products, can promote consumption of low-carbon alternatives and whether advertising for high-carbon products reduces the effectiveness of climate policies aimed at controlling emissions associated with consumption [2].

Advertising is a form of information dissemination. Because of this, it can be incorporated into a broader context of motivations, incentives, and policies that involve providing consumers with information to encourage them to purchase low-carbon products. However, it is possible that various forms of information dissemination activate distinct psychological mechanisms that influence environmentally responsible behavior. Repeated information that appeals to goals, self-concepts, and desirable product qualities is provided in advertising, which in turn creates emotional associations and favorable perceptions of the advertised product [3].

In a similar vein, numerous studies demonstrate that social norm

communication can be utilized to influence individuals' decisions. Social norms can effectively influence people's environmental attitudes and behaviors by conveying information about what other people do or think. Social media can be used for information tools like advertising and social norms. In point of fact, the majority of advertising currently occurs on such media. It is unclear which of these information mechanisms is more effective at influencing consumer behavior, and it is also unclear whether they interact, or whether the presence of one influences the effectiveness of the other. In this section, we investigate how each of them affects consumer behavior in favor of low-carbon products and whether influencing consumers with norms for low-carbon consumption is an effective tactic when advertising is present.

In order to accomplish this, we carried out an incentive-based experiment in which participants were given the option of purchasing a product with a high or low carbon footprint. Our objective was to simulate a real-world scenario to determine whether information can influence consumer choice between low-carbon and high-carbon products. We look at how product advertising and social-norm communication affect choices individually and collectively. Through two scenarios, we specifically investigate the possibility of interaction effects between the two information mechanisms: one in which the norm and advertising work in the same direction (for example, they both favor a low-carbon option); and another in which they oppose one another (for example, advertising for a high-carbon option and the social norm for low-carbon consumption). Last but not least, we conduct a structural equation model analysis to pinpoint the pathways by which the two kinds of information-advertising and social norms-influence behavior [4].

It has long been known by psychologists that prolonged exposure to advertising results in a stronger preference for a particular product. The explanation for this phenomenon of exposure is that the advertised products create a sense of familiarity that lowers the level of risk associated with choices and prevents consumers from evaluating too much information, thereby preventing overly complex decision making. Consumers' emotional neural responses are triggered when they are exposed to logos of well-known brands, according to neuroscientific evidence of this familiarity effect. Advertising typically incorporates pleasant cues, such as colors, music, or images that elicit affective processing in response to induced emotions. Products that are heavily advertised are thought to be superior to those that are not especially when it comes to quality and claim that it is more widely used. The intention to make a purchase can be predicted by these two perceptions. For many low-carbon options, it is difficult for new brands to enter the market in this setting.

Additionally, green advertising improves other consumer attitudes in addition to fostering a more favorable perception of a product's environmental impact. For instance, a few investigations discover that individuals rate an eco-named item as having a preferred taste or execution over an indistinguishable non-marked item, which has been recommended to be the consequence of a green-radiance impact. Green cues are typically used to achieve such effects on consumer attitudes. Not only do consumers believe that products with a green color have a lower impact on the environment yet additionally research shows that pictures of nature in promoting significantly affect brand mentality than text based data about ecological advantages. Normally, the degree to which shopper view of items is impacted by prompts and claims of green promoting is directed by different aspects, like the customers' inclusion with ecological issues. Using a combination of green claims and cues to create favorable perceptions of attributes like quality or popularity, and in the case of green advertising, reduced environmental impact, the reviewed evidence suggests that advertising strengthens consumer attitudes toward a product [5].

*Address for Correspondence: Jungwoo Horvath, Department of Applied Economics, University of Valladolid, Valladolid, Spain, E-mail: jungwoo@gmail.com

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Conclusion

Social norm management has been lauded as particularly effective at encouraging environmentally friendly behaviors like lowering home energy consumption and recycling in information policy research. Whether or not it is able to activate personal moral norms or peer pressure through social information determines how effective a social norm communication is. Injunctive norms refer to the perceived appropriateness or morality of a particular behavior, whereas descriptive norms refer to observations of what the majority of people do regardless of the appropriateness of the behavior. According to de Groot, a norm's strength or weakness is determined by the proportion of people who adhere to it i.e., how many people engage in the particular behavior.

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