



Analyzing Two Mindsets and their Impact on the Perception and Recall of Promoted Messages

Nick Sammartino (master's student)

nhsammartino@gmail.com

1. Overview

For decades, marketers conceptualized different characteristics of certain audience groups to better understand their expected attitudes and behaviors triggered from a persuasive message. Theoretically, understanding a particular audience's receptive behavior can help a communicator attract more attention when conveying a promotional message.

According to Dweck's (2006) theory of "mindset," individuals are receptive to learning based on their two types of mindset: individuals who have a "growth mindset" are more open and receptive to learning than those with a "fixed mindset." Dweck explains that those with a growth mindset believe that knowledge can be improved upon, while those with a fixed mindset believe that knowledge and skills can not be improved. The current study tests Dweck's mindset theory in the communication realm to see if different mindsets lead to different perceptions of brand messaging and recall.

2. Hypotheses & Research Question

H1: It is expected that those with a fixed mindset will be less receptive to a brand's advertising message than individuals with a growth mindset.

H2: It is expected that those with a fixed mindset will be less likely to recall details of an advertisement than individuals with a growth mindset.

RQ: Will a fixed mindset individual perceive a brand's advertising messages and recall an advertisement differently than a growth mindset?

3. Method

An online survey (n=146) asks participants to respond to statements Dweck uses to determine mindset. These statements include the following: "music talent can be learned by anyone," or "intelligence is something very basic about you that you cannot change very much." The survey also includes questions regarding the impact of advertisements on an individual as well as questions regarding recall.

4. Results

The survey recorded data from respondents classified in the following manner: "Strong Growth Mindset" (11%), "Growth Mindset" (57%), "Strong Fixed Mindset" (1%), and "Fixed Mindset" (31%). It also provided information about perception and respondents' ability to recall advertising messages. An ANOVA was used to test the aforementioned hypotheses.

H1: $F(3,142)=1.453, p=.23$ Not supported

Those with a fixed mindset (32%) were not less receptive to brand advertising messages as hypothesized. In fact, neither growth nor fixed mindset individuals were particularly receptive to advertising brand messaging.

H2: $F(3,142)=.812, p=.49$ Not supported

Neither mindset showed a statistically significant difference when answering questions regarding advertising recall.

5. Discussion

One key finding includes that growth mindset individuals stated that frequently seeing advertisements negatively impacted their attitude toward the brand. For a follow-up study, a focus panel could identify the reasons for the current survey results that are inconsistent with previous literature using Dweck's approach. It is likely that general advertising questions changed the outcome of answers. Using a focused approach showing specific advertisements in future research could yield intended results.