Can Aggressive Marketing Cause an Ethical Dilemma?

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Abstract: Purpose: Current aimed to answer the question of whether aggressive marketing (Intensity, Frequency, Intrusiveness, Personalization and Persistence) can be seen as an intruder to the ethical value of marketing tactics and strategies.

Theoretical framework: Many organizations are seeking multiple approaches to market their product/services. Come of them do not give much attention to the marketing approach as long as it may comeback with profit and promotion to their products. One of these approaches are now called aggressive marketing which is based on organization taking risks and proactive tactics in order to guarantee its share in the market.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Through quantitative methodology and a distribution of a questionnaire on (293) managers and officer within companies registered with the Companies Control Department. The answer to the question is the fact that YES, aggressive marketing can be a source of an ethical dilemma and companies must be careful not to cross ethical or legal boundaries in their marketing efforts, such as making false or misleading claims, using deceptive advertising, or engaging in unfair competition practices.

Findings: Results also indicated that in some cases, aggressive of marketing can turn into harassment, with individuals receiving multiple phone calls, emails or direct mail that creates a sense of discomfort, anxiety or fear. Such marketing practices could be seen as abusive, unethical, and illegal. The level of intensity in aggressive marketing should be carefully calibrated to balance the need to generate sales with the need to maintain customer trust and brand reputation over the long term.

Research, Practical & Social Implications: The theoretical implications of current study would involve examining the relationship between aggressive marketing tactics and their impact on the ethical framework of businesses, organizations and their stakeholders. On a practical level, the study's findings could have significant implications for the way in which companies approach marketing and promotions

Originality/Value: The study could also highlight the importance of establishing clear ethical standards and guidelines for businesses and marketers, in order to prevent negative impact on customers and public perception.

Keywords: Aggressive Marketing, Intensity, Frequency, Intrusiveness, Personalization, Persistence, Marketing Ethics, Attacking Marketing, Brands War, Brands Rivalry.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Santos et al. (2022), ethical marketing is a set of marketing principles and practices that prioritize honesty, transparency, fairness, and social responsibility in all aspects of marketing communications and operations. As consumers become increasingly aware of the impact of businesses on society and the environment, ethical marketing has become an important aspect of corporate social responsibility and can help to build trust and long-term relationships with customers. This essay will explore the concept of ethical marketing, its benefits, and some examples of ethical marketing practices (Dyck and Manchanda, 2021).

At its core, ethical marketing is about promoting products or services in a way that is truthful, accurate, and honest, this means avoiding deceptive or misleading tactics such as false advertising or using misleading statistics (Laczniak and Murphy, 2019). Instead, ethical marketing seeks to provide consumers with accurate information about products and services, including their benefits, potential risks, and environmental impact, so that they can make informed decisions. It also means avoiding the use of manipulative tactics or exploiting consumer vulnerabilities such as fear, addiction, or the desire for social status.

However, going through previous literature on the concept of aggressive marketing and its relationship to marketing ethics, it was found that the relationship needs deeper understanding of how these two concepts influence each other. While aggressive marketing campaigns can be effective in driving sales, they can also create ethical concerns, particularly if they rely on misleading, deceptive or manipulative tactics to persuade consumers.

Existing research has provided some insights into the relationship between these two concepts, with some notions suggesting that aggressive marketing can compromise marketing ethics, while others have found that ethical marketing practices can actually enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. However, there is still a need for more research to fully understand the interactions between aggressive marketing and marketing ethics, particularly in today's rapidly evolving digital marketing landscape.

Moreover, there is a need for more practical guidance on how marketers can balance the need for aggressive marketing campaigns with ethical considerations, particularly with the increasing demand for socially responsible business practices. This is particularly important given the significant impact that marketing campaigns can have on consumers' attitudes and behaviors, as well as the potential legal and reputational risks associated with unethical marketing practices.

2. AIM, QUESTION AND MOTIVATION OF STUDY

Based on the literary gap above, current study aimed at exploring a possible answer for the question of whether aggressive marketing can cause a marketing dilemma when it comes of ethics and ethical code of marketing environment. Aspects of aggressive marketing chosen to represent the study notion included (Intensity, Frequency, Intrusiveness, Personalization and Persistence).

The motivation behind carrying out this current research study is attributed to the fact that the competitive nature of the business world has led to what is commonly referred to as brand wars. In an effort to outsell their competitors, businesses often engage in aggressive marketing practices that can sometimes take on a confrontational or antagonistic tone. This can include strategies such as comparative advertising, where a brand directly compares its product to a competitor's or even goes as far as calling out its competitor by name. By doing so, brands hope to make themselves stand out in a crowded marketplace and win over customers.

However, one may argue that this type of marketing can be harmful to the industry as a whole, as it can create an overly adversarial climate and make the public overly skeptical of advertising claims. In addition, some critics argue that it can even lead to unethical practices, such as using misleading or false information to discredit competitors. Ultimately, while brand wars may drive innovation and competition, it's important for businesses to keep in mind the ethics of their marketing strategies and ensure that they are providing true value to their customers.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Aggressive Marketing

Aggressive marketing refers to a marketing strategy that uses highly assertive and proactive tactics to promote a product or service (Anshari et al., 2019). Pimpan et al. (2022) stated that marketing aggressiveness orientation refers to a company's willingness to take risks and engage in proactive marketing activities, such as advertising, promotions, and price discounts.

The goal of aggressive marketing is to generate a high level of interest in the product or service being offered and to increase sales as quickly as possible (Sarpatwari et al., 2017). According to Pimpan et al. (2022), aggressive marketing tactics may include things like cold-calling, mass email marketing, pop-up ads, door-to-door sales, or other forms of direct marketing that can sometimes be seen as intrusive or pushy. Grekov (2021) argued that while aggressive marketing can be effective in generating short-term sales and driving revenue, it can also have negative consequences. On that idea, Aroyeun et al. (2018) stated that customers may feel harassed or annoyed by overly aggressive tactics, leading to a negative impression of the brand or product. Additionally, aggressive marketing can sometimes lead to legal or ethical concerns, such as spamming or false advertising, which can damage a company's reputation and result in legal action (Mihajlović and Trajković, 2019).

3.1.1. Dimensions of Aggressive Marketing

Al-Shaar et al. (2017) and Muhonen (2017) noted that dimensions of aggressive marketing can vary depending on the specific marketing tactics being used, but some potential dimensions to consider include:

Intensity

This dimension refers to the degree to which a marketing tactic is forceful or assertive. For example, a cold call that interrupts a customer's day might be seen as more intense than a targeted email that is sent at a convenient time.

Frequency

Frequency is how often a marketing tactic is employed. For example, sending multiple emails per day or making repeated phone calls can be seen as highly frequent and potentially annoying or intrusive. It is a crucial metric as it helps marketers evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns in reaching their target audience. By understanding frequency, marketers can determine how often they need to show an ad to a specific audience to achieve their desired marketing goals, such as brand awareness, product consideration, or conversion. The frequency of marketing messages can be measured across various channels, including TV, radio, online ads, email marketing, and social media.

Intrusiveness

Being intrusive as a marketer refers to how much a marketing tactic invades a customer's personal space or time. For example, pop-up ads that interrupt a customer's browsing experience might be seen as highly intrusive.

Personalization

Personalization in aggressive marketing is how well a marketing tactic is tailored to the individual customer's needs or preferences. For example, targeted advertising that is based on a customer's past purchases or search history might be seen as more personalized than generic advertising.

Persistence

Being persistent means how long a marketing tactic is used. For example, a company that continues to send marketing emails to a customer who has opted out of receiving them might be seen as highly persistent. It involves creating a long-term marketing plan that aims to build a strong relationship with the audience, raise brand awareness, and establish a strong brand reputation. Persistence in marketing is often used to create a sense of familiarity and trust with the target audience, by gradually increasing their exposure to the brand or product.

3.2. Forms of Aggressive Marketing

There are a lot of forms of aggressive marketing, or that type of marketing that may compromise the reputation and acceptance of an organization through its marketing campaigns. However, there are known forms of aggressive marketing including Mihajlović and Trajković (2019):

- Telemarketing: This involves the use of telephone calls to sell products or services directly to consumers, sometimes on a repeated or intrusive basis.
- Door-to-door sales: This involves salespeople showing up at homes or businesses to sell products or services in-person.
- Email spamming: This involves sending unsolicited emails to prospects in a bid to get them to purchase products or services.
- False advertising: This involves making false, exaggerated or misleading claims about a product or service to sway customers into making a purchase.
- Urgency tactics: This involves creating a sense of urgency, such as by using countdown timers or limited-time offers to pressure customers into making a quick purchase decision.
- Negative marketing: This involves using direct and negative comparisons to other brands or products in order to make a company or product look superior.
- Guerilla marketing: This involves the use of unconventional promotional strategies such as street art, flash mobs or stunts to get attention and drive sales.

3.2.1. The Appearance of "Brands War" Concept

The concept of aggressive marketing played a crucial role in increasing the rivalry between brands which led to the appearance of "Brands War". This concept refers to the intense competition between different brands in a particular industry or market. It typically involves brands engaging in aggressive marketing campaigns and strategies in order to gain a larger share of the market and increase their brand recognition (Berendt et al., 2018).

In terms of appearance, the "Brand War" concept can create a highly competitive and fast-paced environment within an industry, brands may begin to focus heavily on differentiation, aiming to set themselves apart from their competitors in order to stand out to consumers which can lead to a proliferation of new products and services, as well as an emphasis on innovation and marketing (Fattal, 2018).

Berendt et al. (2018) argued that from a consumer perspective, the appearance of a "Brand War" may be evident in the abundance of marketing messages and advertisements from competing brands, brands may employ a variety of tactics, such as celebrity endorsements or social media campaigns, in order to capture the attention of consumers and stand out from their competitors.

Overall, the appearance of a "Brand War" is characterized by intense competition, innovation, and aggressive marketing strategies employed by brands seeking to gain a larger market share and increase their prominence within their industry (Alvarado-Karste and Kidwell, 2022). Among the most famous brands war is the one between Nike vs. Adidas, those two brands have been competing in the sportswear industry for decades, with both brands trying to capture the attention of athletes and fitness enthusiasts around the world. Both brands have been successful in launching innovative products, celebrity endorsements, and creative marketing campaigns to stand out in a crowded market.

Another example of brands war is Uber vs. Lyft, the competition between ride-sharing companies Uber and Lyft has been heated, with both brands competing to attract more drivers and riders. Both companies have launched several promotions, discounts, and user incentives to win over customers and gain market share in this rapidly-changing industry (Dawes and Zhao, 2017).

3.2.2. Examples of Aggressive Marketing

There are many examples of international and famous brands which depended on aggressive marketing in order to reach its goals and promote a certain product/service it presents with full audacity and neglect of individual space. Such examples include (Ilhan et al., 2018; Havard et al., 2018; Curran, 2018):

- Red Bull: With sponsored extreme sports events, viral video campaigns and heavy advertising, Red Bull has become known for its aggressive marketing tactics. Its tactics including promoting its product based on adopting and sponsoring dangerous and life threatening sports.

- Nike: Nike is known for its "Just Do It" campaign, which encourages consumers to be active and push their limits. The brand uses high-profile athletes and celebrities in its ads, focusing on the idea of empowerment and pushing boundaries.

- Domino's Pizza: This international pizzeria ran an aggressive "Pizza Turnaround" campaign in which it admitted that its pizza was not up to par and promised to make significant improvements. The company also offered customers free pizzas as part of the campaign.

- Burger King, which in 2018 launched a campaign that involved sending negative comments to their competitor McDonald's through their mobile app. The campaign was criticized for being childish and insensitive.

- PepsiCo, which launched a controversial ad campaign featuring Kendall Jenner in 2017. The ad faced significant backlash as it was perceived to trivialize serious social justice issues like police brutality and political protests.

- There is the ongoing feud between Samsung and Apple, with both companies launching negative ad campaigns against each other.

Figure 1. Burger king used Geo-Targeting to compete with McDonald's (Marketingminds, 2023)

Figure 2. Samsung used negative marketing on Apple (Marketingminds, 2023)

3.3. Marketing Ethics

Hassan et al. (2018) stated that marketing ethics refers to the principles and standards that guide ethical behavior in the practice of marketing. The goal of marketing ethics is to promote fairness, transparency, and honesty in marketing practices and to ensure that marketing efforts are respectful of customers and their needs (Purwanto et al., 2019; Hashem, 2013). Thorpe and Roper (2019) noted to some key principles of marketing ethics which include:

Honesty: Marketers should be truthful and accurate in their marketing communications, avoiding exaggeration, false claims, and misleading information.

Transparency: Marketers should be open and transparent about their marketing practices, including the use of customer data and the sources of their products or services.

Respect for privacy: Marketers should respect customers' privacy and avoid using their personal information in ways that are invasive or disrespectful.

Fairness: Marketers should strive for fairness in all their marketing efforts, including pricing, promotions, and distribution.

Responsibility: Marketers should take responsibility for the social and environmental impacts of their marketing practices, and work to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts.

Trust: Marketers should work to build trust with their customers by demonstrating a commitment to ethical principles and values.

Moreover, marketing ethics goes beyond truthfulness and transparency, and extends to social responsibility, ethics in marketing means marketing products or services in a way that takes into account their impact on society and the environment (Landi and Sciarelli, 2018). Pride and Ferrell (2019) state that there are many benefits to ethical marketing practices, one of the most significant benefits is that ethical marketing can help to build trust with customers.

According to Ryan (2021), there are many examples of businesses that engage in ethical marketing practices. For example, the outdoor clothing company Patagonia has built an entire marketing campaign around its commitment to environmental sustainability, including a pledge to donate at least one percent of its net annual sales to environmental causes. The company has also taken steps to reduce its ecological footprint and has invested in environmentally

friendly products and materials. Another example is the cosmetics firm Lush, which has built its brand on a commitment to ethical sourcing and ingredient transparency, as well as a commitment to animal welfare and environmental sustainability. The company has also taken steps to reduce its packaging and waste, and has campaigned against animal testing in the cosmetics industry.

3.4. Related Studies

Pimpan et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between marketing aggressiveness orientation and marketing success in the food business sector in Thailand. Marketing aggressiveness orientation refers to a company's willingness to take risks and engage in proactive marketing activities, such as advertising, promotions, and price discounts. The researchers collected data from 182 food businesses operating in Thailand, representing a range of sizes and types of businesses. They used structural equation modeling to analyze the data and test their hypotheses about the relationship between marketing aggressiveness orientation and marketing success. The study found that marketing aggressiveness orientation is positively related to marketing success in the food business sector in Thailand. Specifically, companies that were more aggressive in their marketing activities tended to have higher levels of customer loyalty, brand reputation, and market performance. The researchers suggest that companies in the food business sector should consider adopting a more proactive approach to marketing in order to achieve greater success in the highly competitive marketplace. They also highlight the importance of companies maintaining ethical standards in their marketing activities, to avoid any negative consequences of aggressive or unethical marketing tactics.

Grekov (2021) investigated the impact of negative political attack ads on voters' attitudes and emotions, using sentiment analysis to examine how language and tone impact the effectiveness of these ads. The researchers conducted two experiments involving participants who watched attack ads created by a fictional political campaign. In the first experiment, participants were randomly assigned to watch either a humorous or a serious negative ad attacking an opponent, and their emotional responses were measured using facial expression analysis. In the second experiment, participants were asked to rate the overall tone, credibility, and effectiveness of a series of negative ads presented in text format. The study found that humor can be an effective tool in negative political advertising, and that humorous attack ads resulted in more positive emotional responses from viewers compared to serious negative ads. The researchers suggest that humorous ads are effective because they reduce viewer defensiveness, making voters more open to the messaging and more likely to remember the ad. In contrast, serious negative ads were found to be less effective, with viewers questioning the credibility of the claims made in the ads. The sentiment analysis also found that viewers responded more positively to ads that focused on policy issues rather than personal attacks on individuals.

Aroyeun et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and competitive advantage among small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study aimed to determine whether competitive aggressiveness could lead to a competitive advantage, or whether it could have a negative impact on a firm's success. The study surveyed 215 SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria, using a structured questionnaire to collect data on their competitive aggressiveness, competitive advantage, and other business-related factors, such as marketing strategies, customer relationships, and innovation. They used regression analysis and other statistical tools to analyze the data and test their hypotheses. The study found a positive relationship between competitive aggressiveness and competitive advantage among SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. Specifically, SMEs that were more aggressive in their marketing and competitive strategies tended to have a greater competitive advantage, as measured by factors such as market share, profitability, and customer satisfaction. However, the study also found that this relationship was stronger for firms that were innovative and had good customer relationship management practices. The researchers suggest that SMEs in Nigeria should adopt a more aggressive approach to competition, but also focus on building strong customer relationships and investing in innovation in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

Mihajlović and Trajković (2019) investigated the effectiveness of aggressive marketing tactics versus more discrete approaches, in terms of their impact on customer behavior and loyalty in the insurance industry. The researchers conducted a survey of 342 insurance customers in the Republic of Macedonia, asking them to rate their satisfaction with their insurance provider, their likelihood of sticking with their current provider, and their preferences for different types of advertising and marketing tactics. The researchers also measured the customer's awareness of the different types of advertising and their perception of the companies that use aggressive vs. discrete marketing tactics. The study found that customers in the insurance industry preferred discrete marketing tactics to aggressive ones, and that

the use of aggressive tactics had a negative impact on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and willingness to recommend the company to others. However, the researchers also noted that there were some demographic factors that influenced customer preferences for different types of marketing, such as age, income, and education level. The authors suggest that insurance companies and businesses in general, should carefully consider their marketing tactics and try to strike a balance between the need to promote their products and services and the need to maintain good customer relationships.

Hassan et al. (2018) investigated the impact of Islamic marketing ethics on customer satisfaction in the Islamic banking industry. The study aimed to explore whether Islamic banking customers place a high value on ethical behavior by banks, and whether adherence to Islamic marketing ethics can lead to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. Study surveyed 266 customers of Islamic banks in Indonesia, using structured questionnaires to collect data on their perceptions of Islamic marketing ethics, their satisfaction with their bank, and their willingness to recommend the bank to others. The researchers also conducted a thematic analysis of the open-ended responses to explore further the factors influencing customer satisfaction. The study found that Islamic marketing ethics have a positive impact on customer satisfaction in the Islamic banking industry. Specifically, customers who perceived their bank to be more ethical tended to be more satisfied with their banking experience, more likely to stay with the bank, and more likely to recommend the bank to others. The researchers suggest that adherence to Islamic marketing ethics can be an important differentiator for Islamic banks seeking to compete in the crowded banking landscape in Indonesia. The study also identified several factors influencing customer satisfaction, including the quality of service provided, the ability of the bank to meet customer needs, and the bank's reputation for ethical behavior. The researchers suggest that Islamic banks should prioritize customer needs and expectations, and develop marketing strategies that promote their ethical stance, in order to improve customer satisfaction and retention.

Launching from above argument, and based on literature review presented earlier, researcher was able to form a model that was able to highlight the relationship between study variables and from which hypotheses were extracted:
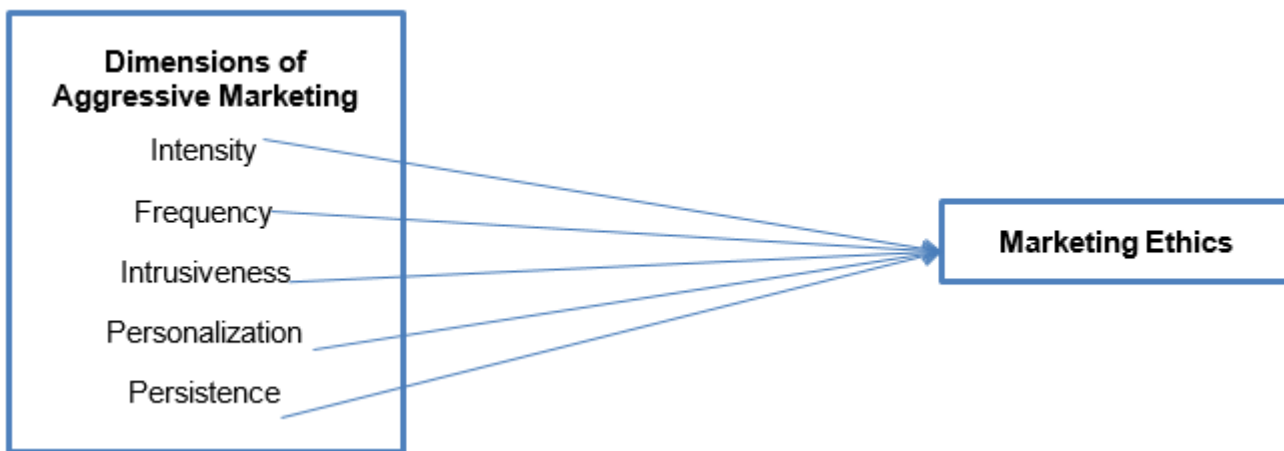

Figure 3. Study Model

From above model, following set of hypotheses was extracted:

Main Hypothesis:

H: Aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within

Sub-Hypotheses:

H1: Intensity in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within

H2: Frequency in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within

H3: Intrusiveness in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within

H4: Personalization in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within

H5: Persistence in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within

4. METHODS AND MATERIALS

4.1. Methodological Approach

Current study depended on quantitative methodology in order to gain as much responses as possible. The numerical data that quantitative methodology generates can help in reaching an explanation for phenomenon under examination, hence, generalize results and be more accurate in highlighting the relationship between variables.

4.2. Tool of Study

A questionnaire was utilized in order to be the main tool of study. The questionnaire was built by researcher through the aid of previous studies, it contained two main sections that included demographics (age, gender, qualifications, computer literacy); and paragraphs related to study variables (aggressive marketing/ Intensity, Frequency, Intrusiveness, Personalization and Persistence). Due to the rare previous studies in the concept of aggressive marketing and marketing ethics; the questionnaire was built and presented before a group of specialized academics in marketing for the sake of arbitration, and in its final version the questionnaire consisted of [35] statements distributed on variables of study. The questionnaire was designed on likert 5 point scale (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree.

4.3. Population and Sampling

Population of study consisted of companies registered with the Companies Control Department, amounting to (4976) companies, according to what was reported by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply. A convenient sample of (357) was chosen to represent population of study. After application process; researcher was able to retrieve (293) properly filled questionnaires which indicated a response rate of (82%) as statistically acceptable.

4.4. Screening and Analysis of Primary Data

In order to screen and analyze gathered primary data; SPSS was chosen and Cronbach's Alpha was used so as to test reliability and consistency of study tool, Alpha = 0.931 indicating a tool that is reliable and consistence given that it was higher than 0.70. Other statistical tests included:

- Frequency and percentage

- Mean and standard deviation

- Multiple regression

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Demographics

As it appeared in table 1, frequencies and percentages of sample responses to the questionnaire indicated that majority of the sample were females forming 51.9% of total sample who were within age range of 25-30 years forming 43% of the sample, regarding educational level, it appeared that majority of the sample held MA degree forming 86% with an experience of 7-11 years forming 40.6% of total sample.

Table 1. Demographics

		f	%
Gender			
	Male	141	48.1
	Female	152	51.9
Age			
	25-30	126	43.0
	31-36	76	25.9
	+37	91	31.1

		f	%
Education			
	BA	5	1.7
	MA	252	86.0
	PhD	36	12.3
Experience			
	2-6	78	26.6
	7-11	119	40.6
	+12	96	32.8
	Total	**293**	**100.0**

5.2. Descriptive Results of Questionnaire

Mean and standard deviation of responses to questionnaire statements were calculated. It appeared that all statements scored higher than mean of scale 3.00 which was seen as a positive tendency. Among the sub-variables of study, it was seen that intensity scored the highest mean of 4.20/5.00 compared to the lowest variable scoring a mean of 4.07/5.00 which was intrusiveness but still positive as it scored higher than mean of scale 3.00.

Table 2. Questionnaire Analysis

Paragraph	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Intensity in aggressive marketing tactics often used to create a sense of urgency and persuade consumers to make a purchase.	4.30	.83
2. Companies that use intense, aggressive marketing tactics may be more likely to attract attention and generate buzz	4.15	.61
3. Companies that use intense, aggressive marketing tactics run the risk of alienating potential customers who may view such tactics as manipulative or dishonest	4.14	.68
4. Intensity in aggressive marketing can be effective in industries and markets where competition is high	4.19	.72
5. Intensity in aggressive marketing can be effective with customers are highly motivated to make a purchase.	4.20	.68
6. intensity appears in a form of forcefulness or assertiveness in marketing	4.22	.68
Intensity	**4.20**	**.51**
7. High frequency aggressive marketing can create brand awareness	4.24	.65
8. High frequency can reinforce key messaging to the target audience, leading to increased sales and customer loyalty.	4.22	.71
9. Excessive frequency in aggressive marketing can be viewed as intrusive and annoying	4.13	.85
10. Excessive frequency in aggressive marketing can lead to negative attitudes towards the brand and a decline in sales.	4.15	.66
11. Frequency in aggressive marketing can become overbearing or intrusive to consumers.	4.10	.68
12. The optimal frequency of aggressive marketing may vary depending on the industry, target audience, and competitive landscape	4.12	.75

Paragraph	Mean	Std. Deviation
Frequency	**4.16**	**.48**
13. Unsolicited phone calls, spam emails, and pop-up ads in aggressive marketing can be viewed as intrusive and annoying by potential customers.	4.09	.68
14. Intrusiveness can lead to negative attitudes towards the brand	4.01	.69
15. Intrusiveness can cause a decline in sales, as consumers may perceive the brand as disrespectful and untrustworthy.	4.08	.67
16. The effectiveness of intrusiveness in aggressive marketing tactics can be enhanced by targeting the right audience	4.09	.67
17. Regulations such as the CAN-SPAM Act and the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) were made to guideline aggressive marketing tactics	4.11	.73
Intrusiveness	**4.07**	**.50**
18. Personalization can increase engagement, brand loyalty, and sales	4.12	.69
19. Personalization can create a more personalized and relevant experience for the consumer.	4.22	.68
20. Personalization in aggressive marketing can effect customer satisfaction	4.27	.66
21. There is the risk of data privacy when implementing personalization strategies	4.15	.82
22. Personalization isn't always effective to attract potential customers	4.13	.61
Personalization	**4.18**	**.47**
23. A persistent aggressive marketing strategy can help to create brand awareness	4.14	.66
24. Persistence in aggressive marketing runs the risks of annoying or alienating potential customers with excessive marketing efforts.	4.18	.72
25. Persistence can have a negative influence on the effectiveness of marketing efforts and their strategies.	3.97	.67
26. Persistence should be built on commitment to ongoing refinement and improvement in marketing tactics.	4.17	.69
27. Persistence may lead to annoyed and overwhelmed customers	4.23	.69
Persistence	**4.14**	**.47**
28. Aggressive marketing tactics can potentially harm marketing ethics by crossing ethical boundaries and violating the trust of consumers.	4.30	.68
29. Some aggressive marketing tactics, such as false advertising or deceptive pricing, can be unethical and harm the reputation of the company	4.18	.83
30. Aggressive marketing tactics that target vulnerable populations, such as children or the elderly, can be viewed as exploitative and unethical.	4.15	.63
31. Aggressive marketing campaigns that use manipulative can be viewed as unethical and harmful to consumer welfare.	4.17	.67
32. Intrusive aggressive marketing tactics can be viewed as unethical and disrespectful of consumer privacy.	4.22	.73
33. Aggressive marketing tactics that use psychological tactics can be viewed as unethical and manipulative.	4.02	.68

Paragraph	Mean	Std. Deviation
34. Companies that engage in aggressive marketing without proper disclosure or transparency can be viewed as unethical and deceptive.	4.20	.71
35. Aggressive marketing tactics that exploit cultural, racial or gender stereotypes can be viewed as unethical and harmful to social welfare.	4.22	.72
Marketing Ethics	**4.18**	**.48**

5.3. Hypotheses Testing

H: Aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies

Above hypothesis was tested utilizing multiple regression, and the resultant F value of 130.303 was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This showed that Aggressive marketing was able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies. Moreover, the independent variables were found to account for 69.4% of the variation in the variable under research (r=0.833 implied a high degree of correlation).

Table 3. Hypotheses Testing

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			R	R Square
1	(Constant)	.149	.173		.861	.390	.833a	.694
	Intensity	.078	.039	.083	2.005	.046		
	Frequency	.202	.048	.201	4.166	.000		
	Intrusiveness	.102	.042	.106	2.425	.016		
	Personalization	.193	.047	.187	4.092	.000		
	Persistence	.598	.048	.582	12.398	.000		

According to the coefficient table, all t-values were substantially different from zero at the 0.05 level, indicating:

- Intensity in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies, since t- value =2.005 is significant at 0.05 level

- Frequency in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies, since t- value =4.166 is significant at 0.05 level

- Intrusiveness in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies, since t- value =2.425 is significant at 0.05 level

- Personalization in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies, since t- value =4.092 is significant at 0.05 level

- Persistence in aggressive marketing is able to create a marketing ethics dilemma within Jordanian companies, since t- value =12.398 is significant at 0.05 level

5.4. Discussion

Purpose of current study was to answer the question of whether aggressive marketing can cause a dilemma from perspective of marketing ethics. For that sake, a questionnaire was distributed on a sample of (293) managers and officer within companies registered with the Companies Control Department. SPSS was employed in order to screen and analyze gathered primary data, results of study indicated the acceptance of the hypothesized idea arguing that aggressive marketing tactics can sometimes be seen as unethical if they cross certain lines or violate basic principles

of fair business practices. In other words, if a company uses false or misleading advertising to promote its products or services, or if it engages in spamming or telemarketing harassment, this can be seen as unethical and potentially harmful to customers.

In addition to that, the relationship between aggressive marketing and ethics in marketing is complex and requires a careful balance. While some aggressive marketing tactics can be effective in generating sales and driving revenue, companies must also consider the potential harm that these tactics can cause to their reputation and customer relationships. Ultimately, ethical marketing practices are those that prioritize transparency, honesty, and respect for customer preferences, while also being effective in promoting the company's products or services.

The study adopted a set of sub-variable that formed the dimensions of aggressive marketing including (Intensity, Frequency, Intrusiveness, Personalization and Persistence), through analysis, it was seen that the highest influential variable that provokes an ethical dilemma in aggressive marketing was "persistence" which is the consistent effort that marketers put into reaching their audience and promoting their products or services repeatedly over a long period of time.

Current study proved that persistence appeared to be the highest factor that may cause an ethical dilemma when it comes to aggressive marketing. According to results, while persistence in marketing can be an effective strategy to build brand awareness and customer loyalty, it can lead to an ethical dilemma when it crosses the line into aggressive or intrusive marketing tactics. For instance, when companies engage in relentless sales pitches, use manipulative tactics to pressure customers to make a purchase, or repeatedly target individuals who have not expressed any interest, they can create tension or frustration, which raises ethical questions. Customers may feel overwhelmed or offended when they face a constant barrage of marketing messages that are not tailored to their preferences or that do not respect their privacy. These results agreed with Pimpan et al. (2022); Grekov (2021) and Aroyeun et al. (2018) who argued that companies should aim to strike a balance between persistence and respect for the customers, by deploying ethical marketing practices, by incorporating features like providing the customers with the option to opt-out of marketing messages, or offering personalized communications that are relevant, timely and respectful.

In 2nd rank, frequency of marketing - which is the number of times a specific target audience is exposed to a particular marketing message or advertisement within a given period of time – appeared to be a factor that my lead to an ethical dilemma in aggressive marketing given the fact that frequency can become unethical and aggressive when the messages are repeatedly forced on the target audience, without regard for their privacy or consent. This agreed with Al-Shaar et al. (2017) and Muhonen (2017) who argued that when advertisers repeatedly bombard a specific audience with ads, even after they have shown no interest, it amounts to over-targeting, and this approach can be unethical, aggressive, and intrusive when it is done aggressively, without giving the audience any way to opt-out. Study also found that frequency in excessive frequency in marketing can also lead to misleading advertising when the messages are exaggerated, emotional, or include false claims to grab the audience's attention, in addition to that, frequency in marketing can be unethical and aggressive is when the target audience is not given a choice to opt-out, or when their personal data is used to push ads to them excessively.

So, as an answer to the main question of study of whether aggressive marketing can cause an ethical dilemma, the answer is *Yes*, aggressive marketing can definitely cause an ethical dilemma for companies. On the one hand, aggressive marketing tactics can be effective in generating sales and driving revenue, but on the other hand, they can also be seen as invasive, misleading, or disrespectful to customers.

In addition, aggressive marketing can create ethical dilemmas for individual marketers who may be pressured to use these tactics by their employers or by the need to meet sales targets. In some cases, marketers may feel that they are compromising their personal values or their commitment to ethical principles in order to achieve short-term gains.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

Main question of study was answered and it appeared that aggressive marketing, if misused, can cause an ethical dilemma in marketing sector, and to avoid ethical dilemmas related to aggressive marketing, companies and marketers should prioritize ethical considerations in their marketing practices. This may involve establishing clear guidelines for ethical behavior, providing training and support for marketers, and being transparent and honest in all

marketing communications. By balancing the need for effective marketing with ethical principles, companies can build trust with customers, avoid legal and reputational risks, and contribute to a more positive and sustainable business environment.

In conclusion, ethical marketing is an increasingly important aspect of corporate social responsibility and can help businesses to establish a positive reputation and build trust with customers. By prioritizing honesty, transparency, fairness, and social responsibility, businesses can establish themselves as trusted partners in the community and align themselves with consumers' values and priorities. By doing so, businesses can create a virtuous cycle of positive reputation, customer loyalty, and long-term financial success.

It's important to note that not all aggressive marketing tactics are inherently unethical; some tactics may be appropriate in certain contexts. However, companies should always consider the potential harm that aggressive marketing can cause and balance their marketing efforts with ethical considerations.

6.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The theoretical implications of current study would involve examining the relationship between aggressive marketing tactics and their impact on the ethical framework of businesses, organizations and their stakeholders. This could include looking at how such tactics can lead to situations where businesses must weigh up the benefits of financial gain against the potential harm caused to customers or the wider community, and how these ethical dilemmas can impact organizational decision-making and reputation.

On a practical level, the study's findings could have significant implications for the way in which companies approach marketing and promotions. For example, if aggressive marketing tactics are found to pose ethical risks, businesses may need to re-evaluate the types of strategies they use and how they measure success.

6.3. Recommendations

Based on previously presented results and discussion, author argued that to ensure that marketing efforts are ethical, companies should establish clear policies and guidelines for marketing practices regularly review and evaluate these practices, and prioritize the needs and preferences of their customers over short-term gains. Additionally, companies should be transparent in their marketing messaging and avoid any tactics that could be considered deceptive or misleading.

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