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Aurélie Maysonnave

Noémie Delorme
ABSTRACT

Title: Deceptive advertising and the consumers’ reaction.

Authors: Aurélie Maysonnave and Noémie Delorme.

Supervisor: Venilton Reinert

Level: Bachelor in Business Administration, Marketing.

Key words: deceptive advertising, deceiving advertising, misleading advertising, consumer behaviour, consumer buying behaviour.

Purpose: Our main research objective is to find out what are the consumers’ reactions after knowing that they have been exposed to deceptive advertising.

Method: The method used is an exploratory research followed by a descriptive study. All secondary data have been collected thanks to Halmstad University Library and the different databases and books provided. Primary data have been obtained through a survey about French consumers’ from middle social class reactions. The instrument used to collect data is a questionnaire.

Theoretical Framework: We first defined deceptive advertising through various meaning and the consumers’ susceptibility to deceiving advertising. Then an explanation of consumers buying behaviour is provided.

Conclusion: The main findings of the research are available in the conclusion. The most suggestible type of advertising is television. Moreover, the majority of the people do not find easy to identify deceptive advertisements and care of them. In addition, the limitations of this research and some propositions concerning further research are giving.
INTRODUCTION

1. **Background**

Our research is based on deceptive advertising; thus, we will explain this term in the following part.

Deceptive advertising is the use of false or misleading statements in advertising. It is both widespread and old (Jef Richards 1990). However, deceiving advertising has changed through time because of regulations (Kotler, 2010). Policy makers have developed a substantial body of laws and regulations regarding this type of advertising. Deceptive advertising is now illegal in many countries (Federal Trade Government, 2012). In the early 70s, the fragrance industry started to grow and developed different ways of communication. In order to expand their sales, they adopted some deceptive advertising concepts. In fact, they proclaimed that women’s perfume had the power to appeal to men. This statement was used to attract a vast range of customers; even if it was wrong. (Tom Reichert, 2003).

Deceptive advertising has been used for many centuries and is well known in the business world (Jef Richards, 1990). This method is employed by all types of businesses, as well as in industries such as: retail trading. This advertising technique is used by companies in a highly competitive market (Kotler, 2010). Deceptive advertising creates statements in order to differentiate themselves from competitors. This is especially the case when they offer the same product or performance, as they create for themselves a competitive advantage (Raymond R. Burke, 1988). Companies using deceptive advertising pay more attention to their market share and profit than to their customers (Reichheld, F., 1996). The consumer is influenced on the evaluation of the product or service attributes (Olson and Dover, 1978). The company does not act socially responsible and deceives their customers (Kotler, 2010). Therefore, this will affect the competition in a non-accurate way (Lord and Kim, 1995).

Moreover, deceptive advertising has consequences with regards to the company. Deceiving advertising is only possible for businesses that conduct a one-time sale (Estrada, 2006). These businesses do not care about their customers, and thus cannot get value in return (Kotler, 2010) as the customers will, in most cases, only buy once. Some research suggests that yield increases profit; nevertheless, one-time sales yields are short-term and do not guarantee large profits in long-term business (Dillon, 1973).
Research can define deceptive advertising in different ways. However, for this research the definition of Aditya (2001) will be used. Aditya (2001, p735) defined deceptive advertising as “any act, claim or message that causes at least some consumers acting reasonably to make decisions that they would not otherwise make, leads at least some consumers action reasonably to believe something about the product, brand or manufacturer that is not verifiably true or has the potential to foster distrust of any kind, general or specific, or in other ways causes an erosion of ethical values deemed desirable society”.

Therefore, deceptive advertising has consequences on the companies that use this method, but also on the customers (Kotler, 2010). Relationships between the companies and the customers vary, and consumers have many perceptions of deceiving advertising.

2. **Problem**

Customers are day after day affected by advertising and marketing. Customers should be conscious that their buying behaviour can be misled through advertising methods. They have to be aware towards the way companies present and advertise their product or service.

After explaining in detail what deceptive advertising is, the research study will show that customers can react in different ways and how they do it. Moreover, how they judge their purchase, and their opinions of the company that deceived them; as well as how they express themselves nowadays.

3. **Research Question**

In order to carry through our thesis we are going to focus on this research question:

RQ: How do consumers react after knowing that they have been exposed to deceiving advertising?

4. **Purpose**

Our main research objective is to find out what are the consumers’ reactions after knowing that they have been exposed to deceptive advertising.

5. **Delimitations**

This study will cover various defining of deceptive advertising and its relationship with customers. The consumers’ reactions after facing deceiving advertising will be analysed.
However, this report will not broach the subject of deceptive techniques such as sales promotion, public relationships or branding. Moreover, the research will not give an explanation of the reasons why companies use deceptive advertising.
1. **Deceptive advertising**

1.1 Defining of deceptive advertising

First of all, the defining of deceptive advertising is important. Moreover, many definitions can be abstracted from several authors.

Deception can be observed for the consumer after exposure to an advertisement. In fact, advertisement creates beliefs and interpretations about the product or service advertised that are false (Sawssen Garbouj Chaouachi and Kaouther Saied Ben Rached, 2012). Deceptive advertising is defined as the use of false or deceptive statements in publicity (Campbell, 1995).

Deceptive publicity has been around since the inauguration of time and is still common today. Sometimes it is done innocently by an advocate; however, it is done with the intent in the direction of deceiving the consumers (Aaker, 1974).

Moreover, Hyman (1990) proposes a unique definition of deceptive advertising that can be adopted by researchers, lawyers, regulators or consumers. The author claims that an advertisement is deceiving if it comprises three conditions. Firstly, the advertisement contains a believable claim that is obvious or an unconscionable lie. Furthermore, the advertisement encourages a variance between what purchasers or purchase influencers believe to be claimed in the advertisement and what is fact. Finally, the advertisement encourages the purchaser or purchase influencer to build upon previously held erroneous beliefs, so that their viewing of the advertisement interacts with these prior beliefs to produce one or more erroneous beliefs.

Miller (1983) also defined deceptive advertising such as the message distortion resulting from deliberate falsification or omission of information by a communicator with the intent of stimulating in another, or others, a belief that the communicator himself or herself does not believe.

Furthermore, Shimp (2003) summarizes some of the key criticisms levied against deceptive advertising. He explained that misleading advertisement often creates and perpetuates stereotypes, causes people to buy things they do not really need, and finally, the charge that advertising plays on people's fears and insecurities. Moreover, Buller and Burgoon
(1996) added that deceptive advertising is a deliberate message conveyed to a sender to create a false belief or conclusion at the receiver.

According to a juridical standpoint, an advertisement is said deceptive if the company has acted deliberately and intentionally (Corson, 2010).

The United States were the first to implement rules and policies about deceptive advertising. The United States Supreme Court has ruled that false or misleading advertising is not protected under the First Amendment (Demaine, 2010). In this way, some agencies have been created and designed to discourage manufacturers and service providers to use deceptive advertising. In addition, these agencies also aim to protect customers.

Most countries implement both self-regulation and government controls which require advertisers to be able to prove that their claims are true (Petty, 1996).

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is an independent agency of the United States which has as principal mission the promotion of the consumer protection. The Federal Trade Commission defines deceptive advertisement as any “representation, omission or practice that is likely to mislead the consumer acting reasonably in the circumstances, to the consumer’s detriment” (FTC, 1983, p3). The FTC agency has characterized deception quite properly as a behavioural concept (Preston, Jacoby, Gardner; 1986). The independent agency bears responsibility for pursuing actions against businesses that have engaged in deceptive advertising in interstate commerce, and businesses may also bring actions against their competitors for doing the same (Demaine, 2010).

FTC’s deception policy statement of 1983 limits the range of advertising regarded as legally deceptive by adding a materiality condition. In fact, it requires that the act or practice considered misleading "is likely to affect the consumer's conduct or decision with regard to a product or service. If so, the practice is material, and consumer injury is likely because consumers are likely to have chosen differently but for the deception." (FTC, 1983, pp. 689-690) For instance, deceptive advertising has long been problematic in the retailing industry; the FTC constantly struggles with difficulties in effectively policing and curtailing false advertising of nutritional supplements and health foods, which have been promoted as miracle cures to heal or prevent serious ailments (Barrett, 2003; Jones, 2004; Kotler and Armstrong, 2010).
Moreover, the American Marketing Association (AMA) defines deceptive advertising as “an advertising that intends to mislead consumers by falsely making claims, by failure to make full disclosure, or by a combination of both” (AMA, 1999). In 1962, AMA published a Creative Code discouraging deceiving or misleading advertising (Carson, 2010).

The European Commission (2005) defines deceptive advertising like a commercial practice that contains false information and is therefore untruthful or in any way, including overall presentation, deceives or is likely to deceive the average consumer to take a transactional decision that he would not have taken otherwise (Official Journal of European Union, 2005).

According to the European Commission’s directive, misleading advertising is any advertising which in any way, including in its presentation, is capable of deceiving the person to whom it is addressed, distorting their behaviour, and as a consequence, harming the interest of the customers (Official Journal of European Union, 2005). Moreover, the directive stated that when determining whether advertising is deceptive, many factors shall be taken into account such as the characteristics of the goods or services advertised, the price, the conditions of delivery of the goods involved, the nature, the attributes and rights of the advertiser (Official Journal of European Union, 2005).

The European Parliament stated that advertisements which mislead or which may mislead the people who receive them are forbidden. The misleading nature of these advertisements could affect the economic behaviour of consumers and traders, or may be detrimental to a competitor (European Parliament, 2006).

The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulation (2008) defines an advertisement as misleading if in any way deceives or is likely to deceive the persons to whom it is addressed and if, by reason of its deceptive nature, it is likely to affect their economic behaviour or injures or is likely to injure a competitor of the person whose interests the advertisement seeks to promote.

According to Komal Nagar (2010), advertising can lead to consumer’s misinterpretation of advertisement. The fact that people believe a certain claim they infer from an advertisement does not necessarily mean they have been misled (Armstrong and Russ, 1975; Grunert and Dedler, 1985). It means if the consumer identifies the claim as false, he does not believe it to be true and thus he is not deceived by the advertisement (Komal Nagar, 2010). A false claim
does not harm consumers until it is believed and unlike a true claim can create great harm if it causes false beliefs (Russo, Metcalf, and Stephens 1981). In addition, studies that have analyzed the influence of ethical criteria on consumers’ behaviour (Hiller, 2010; Roberts, 1995; Shaw and Shiu, 2003; Valor, 2007) found that consumers’ ethical perception may depend on product criteria and their individual value systems (Hiller, 2010).

Furthermore, according to Gardner (1975), deception is a behaviour which occurs if an advertisement leaves the consumer with an impression or a belief different from what would normally be expected if the consumer had reasonable knowledge. In addition, this impression or belief is in fact untrue or potentially misleading, and then we can say deception exists. As justification, Carrigan and Attalla (2001) stated that consumers often lack of information to make a judgment of whether a company’s action is deceptive or not.

As explained before, deception occurs when the advertising message contains information that is literally true but leads the consumer to draw erroneous inferences about the product or the service attributes (Hastak and Mazis, 2011). Following this reasoning, deceptive is not faulty. The consumer misinterprets claims in advertising and creates himself erroneous beliefs about the product or service.

Barone and Miniard (1999) defined deception as a work that indicates that consumers may make inferences that go beyond the information contained in advertising claims. When these inferences do not match reality (e.g., incorrectly inferring that a product possesses certain attributes or attribute levels), deception occurs.

Aaker (1974) was the first to formulate that advertisement may mislead the consumer. He explained that deception exists when the output of the perceptual process differs from the reality of the situation; and then affects the buying behaviour to the detriment of the consumer (Aaker, 1974).

According to Dover and Olson (1978), most of the researches indicate that consumers’ beliefs and attitudes are impacted by deceptive advertisement. The authors stated that deception in advertising occurs when consumers obtain demonstrably erroneous beliefs as a function of exposure to an advertisement.
When consumers believe an advertisement to be true when it is actually false, consumers may be “harmed” (Attas, 1999). Moreover, Attas (1999) explained that individuals prefer their beliefs to be true. The consumer, misled by an advertisement, will be tempted to buy the advertised product and in that way either getting less than he thought he would or paying more than he should (Attas, 1999). Additionally, consumer’s attitude toward advertising-in-general is defined as "the audience member's affective reaction to advertising in general" (Gauzente; 2008, p8). Mehta (2000) found that consumers’ attitude toward advertising, influence advertising effectiveness. He found that those who have more positive attitude toward advertising are more likely to be persuaded by advertising (Soroa-Koury, Yang, 2010).

Aditya (2001, p735) defined deceptive advertising as “any act, claim or message that causes at least some consumers acting reasonably to make decisions that they would not otherwise make, leads at least some consumers acting reasonably to believe something about the product, brand or manufacturer that is not verifiably true or has the potential to foster distrust of any kind, general or specific, or in other ways causes an erosion of ethical values deemed desirable in society”.

Carson (2010) commented the fact that deceptive advertising harms consumers and competitors gives a presumption for thinking that such advertisements are unethical. Deceptive advertisement might cause someone to purchase a product which is of value to him which he would not have bought otherwise.

Bowie (1982) argues that making deceptive advertisements in order to gain a competitive advantage is morally wrong. If deception in advertising were a universal practice, no one would trust advertising and no one could gain an advantage by means of deceptive advertising.

The defining of deceiving in advertising has been the subject of disagreements (Gao, 2008). We could notify confusions between the jurisprudential, scientific and ordinary meaning of deception (Russo, Metcalf and Stephens, 1981). Despite the differences in the defining of deceiving advertising, some common features can be identified (Sawssen Garbouj Chaouachi and Kaouther Saied Ben Rached, 2012).
1.2 Consumer’s susceptibility and deceptive advertising

In this part we will discuss under what circumstances consumers are more or less susceptible to deceptive advertising and what their reactions are.

Consumer’s susceptibility to advertising refers to “the extent to which individuals attend to and value commercial messages as sources of information for guiding their consumptive behaviours” (Barr and Kellaris, 2000, p. 230). Consumer’s susceptibility to deceptive advertising has been a growing area of the study since the 1980’s (Xie and Boush, 2011). Susceptibility includes the conditions under which consumers can or cannot recognise deceptive claims (Armstrong, Gurol and Russ, 1979), the psychological mechanisms of being deceived (Darke and Ritchie, 2007) and the effect of regulatory resorts (Darke and Ritchie, 2007).

Researchers suggest that high susceptibility result from interactions among the deceptive claims, situational contexts and consumer’s characteristics (Xie and Boush, 2011).

Framework of consumer’s susceptibility to deceptive advertising (Xie and Boush, 2011).
1.2.1 Content

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), advertising claims are the verbal messages that convey material information about product or service attributes.

Concerning deceptive advertising, the claims are intentionally made in a way to mislead consumers to read beyond the literal message and to draw wrong conclusion about the product or service advertised (Hastak and Mazis, 2011). Despite the large number of deceptive claims, a fundamental issue is whether consumers can detect false claims (Vladeck, 2000). Intuitively when consumers rely on advertisements for information and trust claims, they are more likely to be deceived (Oslon and Dover, 1978).

Consumers can be less susceptible to deceptive advertising when they have diagnostic or product expertise (Andrews, Burton, Netemeyer, 2000); also when they are aware of deceptive tactics (Blair and Landon, 1981) or product and service experience (Barone, Palan and Miniard, 2004). However, deceptive claims take advantage of many presuppositions without clarifying the exact and correct meanings in specific contexts (Xie and Boush, 2011). Moreover, nowadays, many deceptive claims are implicitly manipulative rather than completely false (Mazis, 2001).

Several meaning classifications can be observed into the literature (Armstrong and McLennan, 1973; Gardner, 1975; Armstrong and Russ, 1981; Richards, 1990). Even though, two main forms of deceptive advertisement can be identified, they are explicit and implicit deceptive advertising. (Sawssen Garbouj Chaouachi and Kaouther Saied Ben Rached, 2012).

The explicit deception is one type of deception in which the message contains expressly false information. Deception can be observed comparing the message content of the advertisement and the actual characteristics of the product or service (Sawssen Garbouj Chaouachi and Kaouther Saied Ben Rached, 2012).

The implicit advertising is the second main form of deception. It occurs when an advertising message contains information that is literally true but leads the consumer to draw mistaken conclusions about the service or product attributes (Hastak and Mazis, 2011). This form of deception is more difficult to detect because it require a comparison between consumers’ beliefs formed after the advertisement and the actual product or service attributes (Sawssen Garbouj Chaouachi and Kaouther Saied Ben Rached, 2012).
The statement, “books provide information which leads to knowledge” implies rather than directly attributes the book to the knowledge (Estrada, 2006). Materiality is very important in determining deceptive advertising. Any statement made in an advertisement must have sufficient proof to support the claims and must be linked to relevance (Hastak and Mazis, 2011).

Nowadays, companies have numerous possibilities to spread their ideas and products (Mujtaba and Jue, 2005). In addition, recent research has specified that the types of media used can influence the effectiveness of advertising and moral judgments (Morris et al. 1986, 110). Additionally, the message content is important; for instance, companies like health care, insurance, food manufacturers, drug and alcohol use graphic and astounding negative emotional messages which are used to exploit consumers’ fear of cardiac and cancer (Alsop, 1988 & Marsha, 1997). Cox (2010) added that the object of an advertising is usually to change or influence attitudes. It aims to persuade people to buy product A instead of product B, or to promote the habit of continuing to buy product A (Cox, 2010).

Some critics argue that emotional appeals, which are more frequently used in television than in print, target the populations most vulnerable to persuasion; it means that ads on TV are likely to mislead viewers (Macias, Pashupati, and Lewis, 2007). For instance, researchers have found that consumers are more likely to “miscomprehend” televised drug advertisements than of these from other media sources (Morris et al. 1986). Furthermore, the FTC association claims that drugs and medicines are more and more deceived in advertisements (FTC, 1983). Television commercials try to make people buy things they do not really need (D’Alessio & et.al, 2009). However, print advertising is generally considered to be more informative and credible than other forms of advertising (Macias, Pashupati, and Lewis, 2007). Print media has been found to have a stronger transformative impact on affect and product attitudes than television (Bronner and Neijens 2006, 92). Accordingly, it could be argued that misleading information in print advertisements is likely to be believed and lead to suboptimal patient care. Furthermore, Internet advertising becomes more and more deceptive using prices comparisons to create semantic cues intended to influence consumer perception value (Mujtaba and Jue, 2005). Rosie (2013) stated that TV and radio were cited as the least influential source of information prior to making a purchase, while in-store and online topped the list.
1.2.2 Context

According to Xie and Boush (2011) when consumers are aware of deceptive advertising and of its processes, they may either underperform depending upon the momentary cognitive or emotional status, that influence how they perceive information, and the immediate surroundings where the claim is presented. These factors are grouped as “situational contexts” (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981).

In the context of deceptive advertising, detection and attention can be demanding cognitive tasks that require some types and level of motivation and ability (Barone and Miniard, 1999). Consumers are not always highly motivated and able to discount deceiving claims. If they are distracted at the moment of the advertisement exposure, they can be more susceptible (Xie and Boush, 2011).

However, according to Celsi and Olson (1988) susceptibility can differ based on how consumers process claims including processing involvement, inferential strategies and information relevancy. Also motivational and emotional status influences style and focus, resulting in the consumer’s loss of ability to discern deceptive claims (Tormala, Clarkson, Petty, 2006).

Darke and Ritchie (2007) suggest that once consumers recognize the risk of being deceived, a defensive motivation can be activated. Then, we observe negative responses such as distrust. These responses serve a preventive function of reducing the risk of being deceived. These responses can be strong enough and fast to be more important than the accuracy motivation to consider alternatives. Then as a result, the negativity is not only applied to the deceptive advertisers, but also to the others even if they are not deceptive (Ashworth and Main, 2010).

1.2.3 Consumers’ characteristics

Our research has documented a number of individual differences in how consumers tend to respond to advertising and deceiving claims. But we can define two types of individuals’ characteristics; dispositional and developmental (Xie and Boush, 2011).

Dispositional differences refer to predetermined characteristics such as gender, age, family, and lifestyle. (Barone et al, 2004). John and Cole (1986) argued that age is indicative of the intensity of memory and knowledge-based when consumer processes advertising
information. More particularly Gaeth and Heath (1987) found that young adults are less susceptible to some deceiving techniques than older adults, because they were more engaged in the process of examining advertisement. Moreover Barone et al. (2004) revealed that gender can be a factor.

Developmental differences are knowledge and expertise that can evolve with time (Xie and Boush, 2011). According to John (1999), consumer’s knowledge structure evolves from the perceptual stage (3-7 years), through the analytical stage (7-11 years), and to the reflective stage (11-16 years). In accordance with Barry (1980), consumer’s susceptibility to deceive claims varies depending upon the different life stages from early childhood to adulthood.

Moreover, when consumers are aware of manipulative tactics, they can sometimes be distracted by factors such as momentary cognitive business (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000), previous agent-consumer relationships (Kirmani & Campbell, 2004), and low persuasion knowledge confidence (Ahluwalia & Burnkrant, 2004).

Depending on whether consumers have the ability and motivation to evaluate deceiving claims carefully, they may or may not recognize deceptive claims and advertising. Furthermore, when customers fail to detect deceptive claims, they are more susceptible (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000). Situational context and individuals’ characteristics may moderate and affect the salience of the advertisement (Xie and Boush, 2011).

Additionally, it depends on the customer’s brand loyalty. It seems more obvious that consumers are more loyal towards companies that behave right than companies which behave unethically (Folkes and Kamins, 1999). Carrigan and Attalla (2008) stated that consumers punish company’s unethical behaviours by not buying the products anymore or warn others not to buy certain products (Laczniak et al., 2001). In this case, consumers often appear angry and feel sufficiently discontented to rebel against firms (Helm, 2004). However, even with knowledge about unethical or deceiving activities, some consumers still buy products from the offending company. Others argue that they had a lack of information concerning the products and its company not to purchase their offerings again (Carrigan and Attalla, 2008). Customer’s brand loyalty has many aspects (Rowley, 2005). Rowley (2005) concluded that there are four types of loyalty: captive, convenience-seekers contented and committed. Captive customers prefer repeatedly purchasing the same product, service and brand because
of lack of opportunities to substitute for alternatives. Convenience-seekers may not respect the brand itself, but look on the convenience that can carry. Contented consumers, however, have a positive attitude to a brand, but they won’t attempt to some extra consumption. The perfect one is the committed, who are active both in attitude and behaviour. Moreover, when talking about loyalty, we cannot forget to mention customer’s satisfaction. Ha (2009,) has expressed the view that satisfaction is a crucial factor of the customer performance and attitude.
2. Consumer Buying Behaviour

2.1 Definition of Consumer Buying Behaviour

The research’s main goal is to find out how consumers react after they have been exposed to deceptive advertisement. There is not one universal and common definition but several. Kotler and Armstrong (2010, p133), stated “consumer behaviour refers to the buyer behaviour of final consumers-individuals and households who buy goods and services for personal consumption”. Solomon (2009) explained consumer buying behaviour as the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.

Mansoor and Jalal (2011) explained that the consumer buying behaviour could take many forms of consumer’s choices that can vary depending on a large set of factors such as: earnings, demographics, social and cultural factors. According to Belk (1975) we can make a classification of these factors in two groups; the situational and the non situational factors. Situational factors are for instance social factors, temporal perspective or physical surroundings. Non situational factors include personality, gender, race, quality and size’s product or brand. All these internal and external factors influence the consumer’s buying behaviour. Some of these are more important than others and we can classify them (Slocum and Mathews, 1970).

Related to Schiffman and Kanuk (2000), consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources, such as time, effort and money, on consumption-related. Furthermore, others researchers exposed that: “consumer behaviour may be defined as the process and activity when the consumers use to evaluate, purchase or dispose goods and services to satisfy their needs” (Loudon and Bitta 1993: Solomon et al. 2002; Hoyer and Maclnnis 1997, P3).

2.2 Consumer Buying Behaviour Process

The buying behaviour process consists of a complex set of activities covering different points which begin before the purchase and continue after it (Hansen, Percy, & Hansen, 2004). The buying decision process consists of five stages: need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post purchase behaviour (Comegys and Hannula, 2006). The buying process starts long before the actual purchase and continues long
after. Marketers need to focus on the entire buying process rather than on just the purchase decision (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010).

a) **Need or Problem recognition:** is the first stage of the buying decision process where the consumer recognizes a problem or a need. Solomon (2009) explained that problem recognition occurs whenever the consumer sees a significant difference between his or her current state of affairs and some desired or ideal state. The need can be provoked by internal stimuli; such as hunger, thirst, sex, education or psychological factors, or by an external stimuli like advertisement (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010).

b) **Information Research:** is the stage in which the consumer is aroused to search for more information about the product or service (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). The consumer can obtain information from several sources. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010) these sources include *personal sources*; such as friends, family or acquaintances, *commercial sources*; like advertising, packaging, displays or salespeople, *public sources*; such as the Internet research or mass media, and *experiential sources*, like handling, examining or using the product. The degree of information search depends on the previous knowledge that the consumer has, and the perceived purchase’s risk. If there is a previous excellent knowledge about the product, the amount of information research is expected to be reduced (Comegys and Hannula, 2006).

c) **Evaluation of alternatives:** is the stage in which the consumer uses the founded information to evaluate alternative brands in the choice set. There is not special method for these evaluations. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) explained how consumers go about evaluating purchase alternatives depends on the individual consumer and the specific buying situation.
d) **Purchase decision:** includes all the alternatives that have been ranked in the previous stage. The first option is the most appreciated alternative by the consumer and is going to be chosen. However, there are two factors that could change the consumers’ mind: the attitude of the others and some unexpected situational factors (Comegys and Hannula, 2006).

e) **Post-purchase behaviour:** is the stage that concerns more the firms than the consumers. Companies have to take care of their customers if they want loyalty in return. Most of the time consumer’s satisfaction brings consumer’s loyalty (Comegys and Hannula, 2006).

There are some limitations when applying perfectly this model. According to Comegys and Hannula (2006) some purchasing does not follow this process such as impulse purchasing. Indeed consumer is only driven by his own emotions and does not follow any process.
METHODOLOGY:

First of all, the goal of the research is to discover change in consumer behaviour after they understood that they have been exposed to deceptive advertising. In order to achieve our researches, we need to focus on behavioural researches.

To begin, we will explain what quantitative and qualitative researches are and secondly we will decide which is the most interesting for our thesis.

1. Method:

First of all, qualitative and quantitative researches need to be explained. Newman and Benz (1998, p1) declared that qualitative and quantitative researches “have philosophical roots in the naturalistic and the positivistic philosophies, respectively. Virtually all qualitative researchers, regardless of their theoretical differences reflect same sort of individual phenomenological perspective. Most quantitative research approaches, regardless of their theoretical differences, tend to emphasize that there is a common reality on which people can agree”.

Furthermore, William Firestone (1987) claimed in an article “The Educational Researcher” how we can differentiate qualitative from quantitative research based on four dimensions: assumptions, purpose approach and research role.

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Table 2: Jean Lee (1992)
1.1 Qualitative Method:

Newman and Benz (1998, p2) tried to define the qualitative method, they explained that “qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”. They also explained what we need to use in order to succeed with the qualitative research like: case study, personal experience introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactions and visual texts. They described routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives…

1.2 Quantitative Method:

On the other hand, Horna (1994) defined the quantitative research by the assumption that human behaviour can be explained by what may be called “social facts” which can be investigated by methodologies that use the deductive logic of the natural sciences.

Moreover, Pacitti (1998, p322) explained, quantitative data analysis often deals with statistical data analysis techniques, specifically in the analysis of behavioural elements of performance. Some of the most commonly used techniques are: chi-square analysis, correlation analysis, factor analysis… “A quantitative data analysis plan generally consists of: raw data assessment; data entry and transfer; data processing; communicating findings; data interpretation; and completing data analysis”.

The use of a quantitative research has been chosen because as said before the research has to focus on behavioural researches. Furthermore, a quantitative approach is generally applied into behavioural sciences. Newman & Benz (1998) said that quantitative data is more useful for empirical or statistical studies. This way is the one used traditionally for psychology and behavioural science in respective investigations.

2. Types of research

In order to conduct the study we followed different steps. Firstly, the research has begun with an exploratory research (secondary data) and then continued with a descriptive research (primary data).

2.1 Exploratory research and Secondary data

At first, when we started our studies the research topic was not clearly defined because of our lack of knowledge about the problem. We had to go through numerous articles and papers in
order to obtain a better understanding of the subject. Although, exploratory research has helped us to define, in a restricted way, our research question (Churchill and Iacobucci, 2009). Exploratory research can be defined as an investigation into a problem or situation that provides knowledge to the researcher; the research may use a variety of methods such as trial studies, interviews, group discussions, experiments, or others tactics for the purpose of gaining information (Joseph S. Rabianski, 2003).

Joseph S. Rabianski (2003) defines secondary data as information from secondary sources, i.e not directly compiled by the analysis. These sources may include published or unpublished work based on research that relies on primary sources of any material other than primary sources used to prepare a written work.

In the aim of collecting various models and theories about the subject studied, we had made researches on databases on the internet. Thanks to the portal of Halmstad University we had access to many databases such as ABI/UNIFORM Global, Google Scholar and Emerald. We particularly used ABI/INFORM Global where we can seek a large variety of scientifically articles, thesis, journals, articles etc… We had to define some key words, in order to have suitable findings, such as “deceptive advertising”, “consumer behaviour”, “consumer buying behaviour”, “misleading advertising” and “deceiving advertising”. When we found articles we paid attention onto the references; in fact we could find others interesting documents and have more information. When we had a suitable reference, we tried to find the document on the database or on Google Books. Moreover, thanks to the library of Halmstad University we found some important books for our study such as “Principles of Marketing” by Kotler and Armstrong that helped us to better understand marketing tools.

2.2 Descriptive research and Primary data

After gathering models and theories on the secondary data, we made the descriptive research. The descriptive research defines the frequency with what something happens or the relationship between facts or variables (Joseph S. Rabianski, 2003). Descriptive research is mainly done when a researcher wants to gain a better understanding of a topic; the main goal of this type of research is to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied (Newman and Benz, 1999). In our research, we have tried to demonstrate the relationship between deceptive advertising and how customers perceive it.
Joseph S. Rabianski (2003) defines primary data as the information that researchers gather first hand. More precisely “primary data is a specific data and competitive supply and demand data, which deal with the subject property and comparable properties in the subject market, is most often obtained by appraisers themselves and therefore qualifies as primary data” (Joseph S. Rabianski, 2003, p1). In addition, the primary data used by one person becomes after a secondary data for another person interested in it.

However, secondary data might be not valid or useless because of the errors and issues it could contain. In fact, the data can reflect manipulation, confusion, careless or even concept error. That is why we also used primary data in order to avoid these issues. Primary data gives real and current information that complete the studies; moreover it helps to conclude the research.

Nicholson & Bennett (2008) said primary data should be relevant, accurate current and unbiased. They stated there are three methods to gather primary data: observation, survey and experiment.

3. **Population and Sample**

3.1 Population

According to Byrne (2010), population is a concept to all the possible cases in which we have an interest for their study. Moreover, Bryman and Bell (2007) stated population constitutes all the units from which the sample is going to be chosen. Furthermore, Thyer (2010) defines a population as a large group of persons, objects or phenomena in which researchers are interested to learn.

In order to respond to our research question we chose to study French population. We use a unique general population survey to assess the impact of deceptive advertising on consumers and how they perceive it. We chose a general and global population to touch a maximum of people. Each household is different in the income earned and their consumptions.

According to the INSEE (2013), the French institute of statistics and economics studies, France counts up 65, 8 million of inhabitants. The French population does not stop to increase, +0,67% compared to 2011.
3.2 Sample

Thyer (2010) explained that a population can be divided into different and numerous segments, through sampling process which can be described as the use of different methods that allow researchers to identify groups of persons, objects or phenomena that were selected for marketing research and used to represent the total population. Furthermore, according to Byrne (2002), a sample is used to draw aggregated characteristics of a population from the aggregate characteristics of the sample through an inference process. In addition, in order to develop a good sampling plan, three steps have to be followed: sampling unit, sample size and sampling procedure.

The sampling unit refers to the unit studied. In our case the unit corresponds to French people from social middle class. The question of the middle class has long been a controversial topic in sociological discussion (Lui, 2001). Moreover, as Eisenhauer (2008) explains, there is no clear consensus of which are the boundaries that separate the middle class from the upper and lower classes. Furthermore, the author added that “the notion of the middle class remains vague and arbitrary” (Eisenhauer, 2008, p113).

A suitable sample size is needed if we want that our research’s results to have a right level of confidence (Benefits and pitfalls of patient questionnaires, 1998). The more responses received from the more varied French people from social middle class, better would be our study in a validity way. The middle class can be distinguished by occupation, education, and income. Although social class is most often associated with income, it is occupation that best discriminates between classes (Morton, 2004). Moreover, according to INSEE (2013), people who earn between 2,000€ and 3,500€ per month belong to the social middle class. However, in order to achieve a balance between our assumptions and the received answers, and the lack of time we have to reach our survey, a sample of around 150-200 people seemed to be sufficient.

Furthermore, concerning sampling procedures, according to Whitman and Huff (2001), we can divide them into probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling. A probability sample, the selected technique, uses random techniques bringing all the units of the population a known chance of being selected. Whereas non probabilistic sampling means that some units of the population have more possibilities to be chosen than others for the research (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The benefits for using a probabilistic method is that bias can be removed from our sample. The more used methods of probability sampling are the random
sampling. These methods can be classified into simple random sampling and systematic sampling (Thyer, 2010). Although, we decided to use a simple random sampling; it allows all the people to have the opportunity of being included into the sample.

3.4 Instrument to collect data

First of all, to be able to understand consumer’s reactions after have been exposed to deceptive advertising, a study had to be lead in order to have information. As Buyukozkan & Maire (1998) explained, all studies have generally to follow the same structure: a well designed questionnaire, data collecting though spreading the questionnaire and data compilation and analysis.

Realize a survey was necessary and suitable for our research, in order to use primary data to complete the secondary data already found. Our survey will allow us to ask consumers how they perceive deceptive advertisement and what their reactions are. In order to fulfil our survey, we chose to realize a questionnaire.

The process of writing a questionnaire involves in different steps that has to be perfectly followed. The questionnaire has to be well structured, and must deliver an effective image to respondents if we want the answers to be more reliable as possible (Don, Jolene and Melani, 2009). The same procedures cannot be followed by all types of questionnaire. According to Williams (2003), three characteristics have to be pursued by all questionnaires: validity, sensitivity and reliability. Moreover, other points have to be taken into consideration, such as the length of the questions. Questions have to be short and as specific as possible. More difficult questions will either produce an inaccurate response or more likely the respondent will give up and fail to complete the questionnaire (Williams, 2003). Furthermore, three main points have to be taken into account in order to write in a good way our questionnaire: type of information desired, question structure and wording. As Don, Jolene and Melani (2009) explained, it is necessary to send individual messages; in fact participants will feel essential for our study. In addition, in order to motivate respondents to answer our questionnaire we will add phrases such as “many thanks in advance for your participation” or “we appreciate your help”.

After collecting secondary data, we had to make a plan to gather our primary data. We chose to make a survey thanks to a questionnaire destined to customers. We made a first questionnaire, but we wanted criticisms to improve it as much as possible. We showed it to a
small group of people, whom told us what to change and improve it. Taking in accounts their opinions, we made modifications such as questions’ structures or basic questions concerning the customer’s characteristics. First, we wanted to focus on a global population, but it was too wide and without sense with a statistics standpoint. Finally, we focused our questionnaire on French population from middle social class, with suitable sample. In addition our tutor guided us in the way of making the questionnaire.

3.4.1 Consumers’ questionnaire

First, in order to spread our questionnaire, we used the international social network the Facebook (www.facebook.com) and our personal e-mail contacts. Moreover, we used Google Docs to put in form the questionnaire. This tool was very also useful, because the link could be easily used and spread. We wanted our questionnaire to have snowball effect. This affect can be defined as a technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on. This strategy can be viewed as a response to overcoming the problems associated with sampling concealed hard to reach populations such as the criminal and the isolated (Atkinson and Flint, 2001, p. 1). That is why we selected one person from each sample and asked him or her to spread it through his or her personal circle.

Furthermore, as we chose a French population, our questionnaire was in French language, but we also made one in English. The questionnaire began with a small presentation of us to let the respondents know who make the research and what the aim of this study is. After the presentation, we presented our thesis in a few words and what it stands for. Moreover, we highlighted that it was very important for our research to receive as much answers as possible. The aim of this introduction was first to present our research, but also to create a relationship with our respondents letting them know who we are and what we wanted to do. Moreover, we wanted to include them in our study as actors, to make them feel important and touch them emotionally.

This presentation was followed by a structured questionnaire made of twelve closed-end questions. Close-ended questions are questions that give respondents a list of answer choices from which they have to select the answer that fits the best for them (Don, Jolene and Melani, 2009). The three first questions are about the respondent characteristics, such as the gender, the age and the income’s category. We made those questions in order to have demographics data and in a sense it gives precisions about our sample. Furthermore, we made questions
about advertisement in general to ask their opinions and slowly bring the subject into the respondent’s mind. After that, we made questions about the way they perceive deceptive advertising and how they react. We divided questions according to their feelings towards deceptive advertising to offer more possibilities in the answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of information</th>
<th>Information collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>· Gender, age and income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>· The most suggestible type of advertising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· To what extent the customer feels influence by advertising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceptive advertising</td>
<td>· The more deceptive products.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Are deceptive advertisements easy to identify.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· The customer’s reactions facing deceptive advertising.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· The customer’s feelings facing deceptive advertising.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· The customer’s opinion about deceiving advertising.</td>
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EMPIRICAL DATA

First of all, the gender of the participants can be useful for further analysis. Men and women can have different way of thinking, or behaviour. As we can observe, there is a high rate of participation from women with a score of 60% whereas only 33% of men answered. For our questionnaire we had more exactly 134 answers from women and 66 from men.

This graph represents the three categories of age that we decided to choose. For our study, these categories were relevant because it is believed that consumers differ in their behaviour and way of thinking depending on their age; and today almost everyone is affected by deceptive advertising.
Since we can observe on the graphic, the major rate of our respondents was 74% belonging to the first category “18-30 years old”; it’s normal because we have chosen to spread our questionnaire first of all on social media. We had 148 respondents on 200 belonging to the first category. The next category of age is the one concerning people from 30 to 50, with 14% of the respondents it means 28 on 200 people answered the questionnaire. The last category affected people from 50 and more, with 12% (24 on 200 people answers).

This pie chart represents what kind of advertising is the most suggestible for the participants. They have the choice between four categories of advertising. It allowed us to notice that on average people think that the most suggestible is “TV advertisement” with 75% , a bit more than the half (106) of the participants are agree with this. Then, the percentages are very low for the other types of advertising; the next one is “Magazines and Newspaper” with a rate of 10% (14 answers), afterwards it is the “Billboards” (11 answers, 8% of the cases). The last one, “Internet advertisements” is less suggestible in the mind of the people with a low rate of 7% (10 answers).
This pie chart depicts the opinion of the people, more precisely if they feel influenced or not by advertising and what they think compare to the others. We can observe that 62% (122 answers) of the respondents are convinced that they are influenced equally such as the other people; whereas 36% of the respondents are persuade that they are less influenced than others with 71 answers out of 200. The last quarter represents the people who think they are more influenced by the advertisement than the population, with only 2% (4 answers).

After asking more general questions in order to introduce our subject, we began to collect data about deceptive advertising to the respondents.
In this bar graph we wanted to collect data concerning products advertising which are deceptive for people. We decided to add different categories of products which are more likely to be deceptive such as food products, washing products or make-up.

The most remarkable answer is the washing products, 30% of the respondents are convinced that this category of product is the most deceptive. Consequently, 29% of the participants think that food products are deceptive. Then the rates are lower, with 14% for the medicines and 13% for healthy products. Even more, 10% of them are persuaded that services advertisement are more deceptive and only 4% of them think make-up is used in misleading advertisement.
We wanted to know thanks to this question, if our respondents agree with the fact that deceptive advertisement is easy to identify or not. On this pie chart, we observe that 66% of the population for our questionnaire takes into consideration that is not easy to identify deceptive advertisement (131 answers). On the other hand, 34% of the respondents that is to say 66 answers; think that it’s quite easy to identify misleading advertisement.

The pie chart represents the reaction that people can have facing deceptive advertising.

The two answers possible were “You care” or “You do not care”. As we can see, 60% of the people, it means 120 out of 200 respondents, care of deceptive advertising and pay
attention to it. However, 40% of the asking population do not care about this advertising technique. They do not have a special reaction.

This question aimed to know what specific reaction the consumer can have facing deceptive advertisement if he cares about it.

Moreover, the pie chart shows that a large part of the people do not buy the brand product anymore, with a rate of 52%. In addition, 33% of the respondents talk about their experience around them; it means to their family, friends, neighbourhood. These two answers were the more relevant. Furthermore, a smaller part of the people asks for their money back with a percentage rate of 6%. Finally, the reactions “write to the company”, “give the product back” and “spread their experience through social media” have all obtained the same rate, with 3% each.
Reversely, this question was for people who do not care about deceptive advertising. However, it has the same aim as the previous question; as to know what the reactions of the consumer are after facing deceptive advertising.

We can observe large differences on the answers’ rates. In fact, 68% of the people who do not care about deceptive advertising, do not buy the brand products anymore after facing misleading advertisement. Reversely, we can observe that 19% of the respondents buy the brand product even though. Moreover, people talk about their experience around them, with a rate of 11%. Finally, 2% of the asked people spread their experience on social media.
The bar chart shows different states of minds that consumers may have after have been deceived by an advertisement.

We can see that the two more relevant states of mind are “You are disappointed” and “You feel manipulated, with respectively rates of 23% and 25%. Moreover, 19% of the respondents feel stupid after have been deceived by an advertisement. We also can observe that 13% of the people feel betrayed by the company that mislead them. Furthermore, the two states of mind “You are mad” and “You feel stolen” has obtained the same rates with 9% each. In addition, only 2% of the respondents do not care to have been misled by an advertisement.
The pie chart presents the opinion of the people about deceiving advertising in general.

We can see that 42% of the people think that misleading advertising is a marketing technique. Moreover, 16% of the respondents think that all the companies use it today. However, 28% think this type of technique should be forbidden. Furthermore, 14% of the people find deceptive advertising is unethical.
ANALYSIS:

In this chapter we observed and analyzed the results obtained in our survey that had been already explained in the previous chapter, relating the answers of the survey to the frame of references presented after the introduction. By doing a deeper analysis, the research question could be answered; achieving the purpose of our thesis.

1. General Analysis

Before carrying out our survey, we found some references based on which kind of advertising is the most suggestible. First of all, Macias, Pashupati & Lewis (2007) argued that consumers are easier to manipulate thanks to the television; in fact, the emotional appeals are more used to be present in television in order to target the population most vulnerable to persuasion. Indeed, these advertisements on television are more likely to mislead viewers. Moreover, Alessio (2009) stated that television is an influence way to make people buy things they don’t really need. These statements coincide with our collecting data. We have observed that 75%, almost unanimously, of the respondents agree with the fact that television is one of the most suggestible type of advertisement.

On the other hand, Macias Pashupati and Lewis (2007) affirmed that printing media is viewed for consumers more like an informative and credible way of giving information. Besides, Bronner and Neijens (2006, p92) claimed that “print media has been found to have a stronger transformative impact on affect and product attitudes than television”. It means that people are more likely to believe the information and advertisements found in printing medias than on television. However, regarding our survey, print media, such as magazines and newspapers, is the second most suggestible kind of advertisement in the mind of consumers with only 10%.

Concerning Internet advertisement, Rosie (2013) stated that media, such as television and radio, were the less influential source of information and lead consumers thinking a lot before to make purchases; whereas in-store and online were the most influential. Furthermore, it is difficult to imply this statement to be true, because the results have concluded that Internet is at least the last suggestible type of advertising in the mind of consumers, with only 7%, that is to say around 10 respondents out of 200.
Thus, we are able to affirm, such as we had previously explained in the frame of references, that television, according to some researches, is the most suggestible kind of advertisement in the mind of consumers.

In order to focus on our main research objective, our study required to collect some data concerning the way of thinking of the consumers to understand better how they react after deceptive advertising. First of all, Armstrong, Gurol & Russ (1979) defined how it is easy or not to identify deceptive advertisement for consumers by the “susceptibility”. Furthermore, Darke and Ritchie (2007) stated that susceptibility can also defined the psychological mechanisms of being deceived and the effect of regulatory resorts.

In order to know if consumers are able or not to recognize deceptive claims, we can observe that it exist two types of identification. The first one is related with the fact that consumers are able to realize before purchasing that advertising is misleading, they do not have time to be disappointed. On the other hand, the second type of identification considers consumers more like victims; that is to say that consumers understand that they have been deceived after purchase. In fact, regarding our collected data 66% of the respondents consider that it is not easy to identify deceptive advertisement.

Komal Nagar (2010, p9) argued that “advertising can lead to consumer’s misinterpretation of advertisement”. Besides, Armstrong, Russ (1975) and Grunert and Dedler (1985) claimed that sometimes consumers draw conclusions from advertisement that means not necessarily that they have been misled. Moreover, Komal Nagar (2010) affirmed that some consumers used to identify the claim as false; it means they do not believe it to be true that is to say in reality they were not really deceived. However, the results show that this category of consumers only represents 34% of the whole respondents. Furthermore, Gaeth and Heath (1987) stated that these kinds of consumers are used to be in general young adults, because they are less susceptible to some deceiving techniques. We decided to analyze whether if this statement was true according to our collected data.
This pie chart represents the young respondents who are between 18 and 30 years old; 66% of them agree with the fact that deceptive advertisement is not easy to identify. Whereas 34% of this young population finds easy to determine whether if an advertisement is deceptive.

The last category, which counts people from 50 years old and more, looks much more interesting for our survey. Indeed, half of the respondents agree with the fact that deceptive advertisement is easy to identify.

In fact, the collected data cannot imply that Gaeth and Heath (1987) statement is valid. In fact, the results are similar for the people between 18 and 30 years old and these who are between 30 and 50 years old. In both cases, people do not find easy to recognize deceptive claims with a rate superior to 60%. Even though, people from 50 years old and more, are equally divided about the subject. As a result, the findings do not permit to claim that age is an important factor into the process to recognize deceptive claims in advertisements.

Furthermore, Barone et al. (2004) revealed that gender can be a factor that influence the way of perceived deceptive advertising.
As we can see in the first pie chart, 62% of the men think that deceptive advertising is not easy to identify whereas 38% think the contrary. On the other hand, the second pie chart depicts the women respondents; 65% of the women do not find easy to detect deceptive claims, however 35% do it more easily.

As we can observe, Barone et al. (2004) point of view’s is not justify with our data. men and women opinions are quite similar. Both genders think at around 65% that deceptive advertisements are not easy to identify. As a consequence, we cannot declare that gender is determinant factor when to identify whether if an advertisement is deceptive.

2. **Analysis of the Reactions**

In order to answer our research question and achieve our purpose we have to analyze the way consumers react facing deceptive advertising. The results show that 60% of the respondents care about deceptive advertisement against 40% who do not pay attention to it.

The European Parliament (2006) stated that the misleading nature of advertisements could affect the economic behaviour of consumers. In fact, as have shown the answers of the survey people who care of deceptive advertising, but also these who do not care, have different reactions towards this type of advertisement.

Firstly, Folkes and Kamins (1999) stated that consumers are more loyal towards companies that behave right. Moreover, Carrigan and Attalla (2008) stated that consumers punish company’s unethical behaviours by not buying the products anymore or warn others not to buy certain products (Laczniak et al., 2001). This statement is in agreement with our results; 52% of the people who care of deceiving advertising do not buy the brand products anymore after being deceived, and 68% of the people who do not care have the same reaction.
However, this last reaction is paradoxical; as Attas (1999) explained, individuals prefer their beliefs to be true. It means, even if they state that they do not care of deceptive advertising, the misleading technique influences their behaviours anyway. Darke and Ritchie (2007) suggest that once consumers recognize the risk of being deceived, a defensive motivation can be activated. These responses serve a preventive function of reducing the risk of being deceived and can be strong to consider alternatives. The consumer, who stated he or she does not care of deceptive advertisement, may have recognized the deceiving aspect of the advertising and the response would be not to buy the brand product anymore.

In addition, after recognizing deceptive advertising, negative responses of the consumer can be observed, such as distrust (Darke and Ritchie, 2007). Moreover, the consumer may be able to feel sufficiently discontented to rebel against the firm (Helm, 2004). The result of our survey shows that consumers in general express their dissatisfaction talking about their experience around them, to their families, friends and neighbourhoods; with a rate of 33% for the respondents who care of deceptive advertising, and 11% concerning the persons who do not care. Furthermore, some people who care about deceptive advertising ask for their money back and write to the company to complain about their actions. Acting like this, these consumers want to punish the company, and show them that they know the way the firm acts.

However, some people, from the sample who do not care about deceiving advertising, still buy the brand product after being deceived; with a rate of 19%. Carrigan and Attalla (2008) explain this behaviour arguing that consumers have a lack of information concerning the products and its company not to purchase their offerings again.

Bar and Kellaris (2000) stated that consumer’s susceptibility to advertising refers to the extent to which individuals attend to and value commercial messages as sources of information for guiding their consumptive behaviours. Each consumer has his own susceptibility, and so, feels different after have been deceived. Moreover, Helm (2004) explains that when consumers are misled they often appear angry and feel discontented. In addition, our study shows that one quarter of the people feel manipulated by the firm and disappointed. Helm (2004) added that consumers can also rebel themselves against the firm; we can see this type of reaction with the part of the people who are mad after deceiving and who feel betrayed. These feelings are often related to the fact that they feel stupid of being
deceived; to reduce their impressions they want to punish the company with the reactions explained above.

Furthermore, concerning the consumers’ opinion of deceptive advertising, Bowie (1982) argues that making deceptive advertisements in order to gain a competitive advantage is morally wrong and unethical. Carson (2010) also commented the fact that deceptive advertising harms consumers gives a presumption for thinking that such advertisements are unethical; 14% of the population agree with this statement. Bowie (1982) added that if deception in advertising were a universal practice, no one would trust advertising and no one could gain an advantage by means of deceptive advertising. In addition, Aaker (1974) stated that deceptive publicity has been around since the inauguration of time and is still common today. These two statements well define the opinion of the respondents. In fact, around half of the people think that deceptive advertising is a marketing technique, and 16% think that all companies use it. People, thanks to their experience and memory, have seen numerous different companies using deceiving advertising; that is why this type of advertising appears common for them. However, many agencies in the world, such as FTC, AMA and the European Parliament, fight against deceptive advertising. The European Parliament stated that advertisements which mislead or which may mislead the people who receive them are forbidden. According to our survey, only 14% of the people agree and want this advertising technique to be forbidden. This number may look like little, but people may use to face deceiving advertising and develop knowledge to fight against them.
CONCLUSION

In this part, we will expose the general findings of our paper, showing how customers react after facing deceptive advertising. After having done the analysis, we could answer the research question in order to achieve the purpose of our thesis. Moreover, we will make some suggestions concerning further researches taking into account the limitations of our study.

1. Conclusion

The purpose of our study was to determine the different reactions of the consumers after have been deceived by advertisements. After researching for secondary and primary data we could draw some conclusions; all of them confirmed that most of the consumers do not accept deceptive advertising.

First of all, our findings revealed that the most suggestible type of advertising was television. The nowadays society is always in direct contact with television. Television brings information about news, entertainment but also advertisements. It is impossible to watch television without face an advertisement. This type of communication allows to touch a maximum of people, using mass marketing technique.

Furthermore, concerning the main purpose of our research, most of the people do not find easy to identify whether an advertisement is deceptive. Moreover, criteria such as age and gender were not relevant for our research. Concerning the main consumers’ reactions, the majority of the people cares of deceptive advertising. An interesting point was that people who stated they do not care of deceiving advertising do not buy the brand products anymore. Thus, it proves that in one sense they care of the advertising technique. In addition, most of the people do not buy the brand product anymore, and feel distrust face to the company. Furthermore, they talk about their experience around them and show their discontentment. Thus, consumers would like deceptive advertisements to be forbidden and punished.

The results of this study can be very useful for companies which would like to deceive their customers thanks to advertisements. Thanks to this thesis we can prove that consumers are against this type of advertising and would like to fight against.
2. **Limitations**

When developing our thesis, we encountered some limitations. Moreover, we assumed that we could not avoid some limits even though we tried to reduce them as much as possible not to damage the reliability of our work.

While searching for secondary data, we used the resources available in Halmstad University, such as the library and the university online databases. This can be a limitation since we would have used more academic researches by amplifying our methods of searching. Moreover, most of the library’s books were available in Swedish language, thus we were not able to read and understand them.

Finally, concerning our collected primary data, other limitations could be added. Our study’s primary data were collected through a survey answered by French people from middle social class. However and despite the efforts made to spread the survey to reach as much different people as possible, the sample obtained represented an important rate of young people, between 18 and 30 years old. Our questionnaire has been in majority spread through social media, and thus answered by young people, who constitute the main users. Conducting our research to an extent age category, the results would have been more reliable. We could have gathered different and various reactions concerning older people. However, we prove that our sample was relevant and valid to complete our study.

3. **Further research**

Our thesis is about deceptive advertising and the way people react facing it. We think that it could be interesting to evaluate how much deceiving advertisements has changed with the time. Moreover, at the same time consumers’ reactions could be compared and analyzed.

Furthermore, we focused our analysis onto French middle social class; further researches could be made about the perception of advertising according the social class. We think that reactions after facing advertisements in general are not the same according to different social classes.
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