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The Impact of Multiscreening on the Consumer Information Processing within the Contemporary Media Landscape

by

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Abstract

Due to technological advances and innovations, the phenomenon of media multitasking and multiscreening, i.e. simultaneous or sequential use of multiple screens, has emerged and become a global trend affecting the consumer behavior. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how different media and devices impact the Consumer Information Processing Model as the current research within the area has only focused on motives and the effects of the media multiscreening as such. Based on the consumer behavior perspective as well as marketing communication theories, an inductive qualitative research has been conducted in Poland in form of online surveys and in-depth interviews. The main findings identified throughout the study indicate that: (I) the Consumer Information Processing Model remains linear and structured in spite of media multiscreening, however, the Information Search and Alternatives Evaluation stages occur simultaneously; (II) TV is no longer effective in generating product awareness and stimulating Need Recognition as consumers tend to avoid TV commercials and engage in activities on other screens; (III) friends and digital media are the most powerful influencers throughout the consumer decision making process. Based on these findings, the existing consumer behavior model was further developed in order to connect it to the current media landscape and explain the role and position of different devices within the model. The managerial implications state that: (I) due to a wide spread of social media and online fora, building relationships with current consumers is of high importance as the post-purchase level of satisfaction of one buyer expressed online determines the pre-purchase opinion of another; (II) integrated marketing communication needs to be applied as consumers have multiple brand touchpoints; (III) consumers require indirect and easy to digest visual marketing communication.

Keywords: *media multitasking, multiscreening, consumer information processing model, purchase decision-making, media consumption*

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1 Introduction

1.1 Problem Discussion – From Multiple Technologies, through Multitasking, to Multiscreening

Nowadays, we are surrounded by innumerable technologies that play a crucial role in our everyday lives regardless of sex, age, or even nationality. Technological innovations as well as social changes and developing telecommunication infrastructure increase availability of the latest technologies and facilitate their adoption. Once an exclusive device, often purchased to portray the person's status and welfare, saturates the market and eventually becomes a ubiquitous possession due to its widespread. Throughout the years, the time span of an innovation to achieve large market penetration has shortened. For instance, at the end of the 19th century, it took almost 70 years for a telephone to saturate 75% of the American market while television reached that penetration level in only 7 years (Dholakia, 2012). Over the past decades, not only has the number of technology options dramatically expanded, but also the number of available choices within each technology. Besides changing the way we live, the continuously advancing innovations also expand the number of ways we utilize a particular technology's function. Radio and TV used to be the main sources of entertainment while telephones and computers were initially utilized for the information and communication purpose. However, today, any screen device can offer all of these functions and more, even a smartwatch. Moreover, an introduction of handheld devices such as multi-purpose media players, smartphones, and tablets enabled anytime and anywhere consumption (Dholakia, 2012).

According to Dholakia (2012), the technological advancements have influenced consumer behavior as technology availability and use affect shopping behaviors and constantly reshape them. Besides the more common use of refrigerators and cars, he lists the following examples of technologies that have specifically impacted the buying behavior: (I) television that not only makes consumers more aware of available choices in the market by streaming commercials and infomercials, but also offers at-home shopping experience through TV retailers such as HSN and QVC, where an enthusiastic host engages with the viewers; (II) telephone and mobile devices that offer a wide array of choices from the use of toll-free numbers and catalog shopping to mobile apps - latter available on smartphones and tablets - enabling an easy access to customer's favorite retailers at customer's fingertips; and (III) digital technologies, including computer and broadband Internet, that allow customers to quickly access product information and online catalogs, purchase goods and services, and even customize specific products to their needs anytime and anywhere.

As the technologies have adapted over the years, so have done the consumers. People do not just own various devices and media, but often use them while performing other activities at

the same time. With smartphones, tablets, laptops, wireless connectivity, and easier Internet access in general, a multitasking phenomenon emerges and is usually practiced by time-compressed people, influencing the way in which they spend their time and conduct everyday activities (Dholakia, 2012). As Lin claims (2009, p. 155221), “[s]ociety with its ever-increasing complexity seems to move people toward juggling among multiple tasks rather than focusing on one task for a long period”. Consequently, multitasking appears to decrease cognitive performance, particularly when the performed task involves the attention allocation and the learning of the task (Ophir, Nass & Wagner, 2009).

Even though technology multitasking is a relatively young phenomenon, with the ever-increasing technological advancement it has already evolved to media multitasking and even multiscreening. Besides driving a car and listening to a radio or watching TV while ironing, people also mastered multiple-source media streaming such as reading a newspaper while watching TV or answering to emails while talking on the phone. What is more, the diffusion of handheld (touch) screen devices and the development of multichannel content facilitated multiscreening practices, experienced when people’s attention is focused on multiple screens (or open tabs) simultaneously or sequentially, typically with TV being the starting point (Marinelli & Ando, 2014). For instance, 81% of Americans while watching TV use a smartphone and 66% use both smartphone and laptop/PC (comScore, 2012). Furthermore, Facebook for Business (2014) reveals that “during a commercial or show, the number one thing people do is check email: 82% did so during commercial breaks, and 70% did so during the TV show itself.” As the simultaneous consumption of multiple media and extensive utilization of various devices become the norm, the numerous media landscape consequently influences and reshapes the today consumer behavior.

1.2 Research Purpose and Context

The networked environment, the rapid development of new electronic forms of interactive media, as well as the ever-evolving consumer lifestyle have impacted the way in which people use and consume media. In 2015, 68% of American adults owned a smartphone while 45% possessed a tablet and spent in total almost 10 hours a day on various screens (Smart Insights, 2015, Anderson, 2015). Also, Americans’ daily time spent with digital media has been increasing at a constant rate reaching 5.6 hours in 2015, with mobiles and connected devices accounting for a half of all the interactions versus only 12% in 2008 (Smart Insights, 2015). What is also important is the fact that nowadays, people search for information or connect with others not only on various devices but also on multiple devices at the same time. For instance, 49% of Australians use smartphones to multitask while watching TV (Deloitte, 2014). Furthermore, due to multiple factors, today’s consumers have become highly sophisticated and demanding media users whose attention is hard to grab. The decreasing attention span, ad skipping, and banner blindness are only a few consumers’ behaviors present in the contemporary media landscape, with the first one mainly caused by growing media consumption and digitalization.

Due to faster technology adoption rate, as well as increasing media consumption, social media usage, and multiscreening behavior, an average human attention span has decreased by one-third, from 12 seconds reported in 2000 to only 8 seconds in 2013 (Microsoft, 2015). In today's digital era, it is hard for people to keep their attention focused for extended periods of time as they quickly lose interest, especially the younger generations - the digital natives, who expect an instant gratification. People have developed a tendency to switch a lot between different subjects, tasks, or devices to find something that is more exciting and interesting. While the human capability to filter out distractions is not impacted when a single screen is in use, when the second screen is added, the selective attention (ability to filter out irrelevant stimuli) decreases due to multiple streams of media (Microsoft, 2015).

Besides decreasing attention span, ad skipping is another phenomenon observed in today's media landscape. Lack of paying full attention to brand's communication is one thing; not being exposed to it at all is quite another. As a result of leading a fast-paced lifestyle, people often tend to watch TV shows and movies on-demand websites or record them on a digital video recorder (DVR) to watch them later during their spare time. Thanks to watching a recorded episode people can not only catch up with their favorite show but also fast-forward it at any time, and consequently, skip over the ad breaks. The YouGov research done for Deloitte revealed that nearly 90% of people fast-forwarded through commercials every time they watched time-shifted shows (Plunkett, 2010). Also, many TV and satellite providers offer a special commercial skipping feature enabling viewers to watch their favorite shows uninterrupted. Furthermore, a survey conducted by a data provider for brand advertisers and agencies, Adroit Digital, on media multitasking consumer's online video engagement revealed that 56% of the respondents skip online ads and almost half of the respondents think that a video ad should not exceed 15 seconds (Gesenhues, 2014). Even ever-increasing in popularity YouTube offers a 'Skip Ad' button for their longer commercials allowing visitors to proceed to watching the intended video. Although the increased popularity of online videos brings a great opportunity for advertising, another survey conducted by YouGov for Deloitte reports that despite a growing ad spend on online video advertising, the video is not the most effective online ad format as its influence seems to be decreasing due to ad skipping (Hasenberg, 2011). Ad avoidance on the Internet emerges from customer's focus on the performed task and goal-oriented mindset that treats everything else as an irrelevant or intrusive content, which disturbs consumer's freedom of online private space (Cho & Hongsik, 2004).

Ad skipping is highly common on the Internet, but so is banner blindness. According to Resnick and Albert (2014), consumer's banner blindness is one of the main obstacles faced online as it is a derivative from inattention blindness, which suggests that if people do not pay close attention they may miss the most obvious and noticeable events. Banner blindness is a habit of a web user to disregard the presence of banner ads and anything that seems to resemble them on the page (Benway, 1998). This tendency mostly occurs when people expect ads to appear, when they do not anticipate to gain any valuable information from an ad, and when they treat advertising as an intrusive and distracting marketing tool (Resnik & Albert, 2014). A survey conducted by a digital advertising agency, Infolinks (2013), reveals that 86% of web users were banner blind and only three percent of the respondents found ads to be relevant.

As these changes in media consumption are becoming more ubiquitous and media multitasking is a global trend rather than a country-specific behavior (Hwang, Kim, & Jeong, 2014), a better understanding of ever-changing human consumption and interaction with multiple media simultaneously or sequentially can offer a great contribution to the consumer behavior field. As D'Alessio and Allen put it "if we want to know what media do to people, it behooves us to figure out what people do with media" (D'Alessio & Allen, 2007 quoted by Brasel & Gips, 2011, 527).

However, since limited previous research mainly focused on the motives (Bardhi et al. 2010; Hwang et al., 2014) and effects (i.e. Pilotta et al., 2004; Moore, Cennamo, Burton, Lockee, Doolittle & Billingsley, 2008; Brasel & Gips, 2011; Voorveld, 2011; Courage, Bakhtiar, Fitzpatrick, Kenny, & Brandeau, 2015) of media multitasking, there is a need to understand how the multiple media landscape affects consumer's cognitive, affective, and conative attitudes and consequently their decision-making process. As the media landscape has changed, so should have the consumer behavior models. Thus, it is interesting to research if the accepted decision-making process models, especially the Consumer Information Processing Model, are not outdated, and therefore, still applicable in the contemporary media landscape. Whether the process remains unchanged despite the evolving media landscape, and whether the exposure to and utilization of numerous media and screen-devices impact the way people become aware of brands and products, gain knowledge about them, formulate opinions, and in the end make their buying decision, or not. Therefore, it would be relevant to find out if the decision-making process in today's media landscape is still linear and includes all of the steps that follow the same order.

Besides these aspects, there are other unknowns that should be identified: what constitutes each step of the process, what media and screen-devices are used in each step, and how these media and screen-devices are utilized. The current theory lacks knowledge on what devices and media are used during the consumer information processing, where does each medium and device come in the consumer journey through the purchase decision-making, and how the different devices and media affect this journey. Also, it is crucial to understand how consumers integrate various media and particular digital devices in their everyday life and how the multiscreen practice influences their consumer behavior - the way they communicate with each other, seek entertainment, or shop. Finding out answers to these questions would be very beneficial for a couple of theoretical perspectives. Not only would it be valuable for a theoretical angle that looks at the consumer behavior itself but also for the second theoretical angle that includes company's perspective, which defines media multitasking and multiscreening phenomenon as one of the inhibitors to the effective marketing communication. Therefore, it is also significant to find out whether today's marketing communication is applicable and effective towards modern media multitaskers, or not.

Given the contemporary media landscape and the consumer preference for simultaneous media consumption, it is important to also investigate the effects of the phenomenon from the angle of marketing communication. The models applied in order to measure the effectiveness of the advertising, such as the Hierarchy of Effects Model (HOE), assume not only a linear movement of the consumers across the advertising steps but also an inherent and inseparable relationship of its consecutive stages. In regard to the media multiscreening, this study is going to focus on the first two steps of the HOE model, namely Awareness and Knowledge,

the cognitive aspects of the framework. Understanding the relationship between these two components is crucial, since media multiscreening might inhibit the process of gaining the Awareness, and thus, the product Knowledge acquisition. Taking into account today's media consumption, pure exposition to TV advertising might not generate the movement from one step to another. As a consequence not influencing the consumer need recognition or problem formulation in the known today decision-making models. The cognitive aspect of the marketing communication effectiveness models needs to be looked through the lenses of the consumer cognitive learning theories that explain the human cognition paradigm as well as mechanisms impacting the consumer knowledge acquisition processes.

Furthermore, the behavior of media multitasking, which at first can be identified as a distraction, should be seen by marketers as a great opportunity to integrate and enhance the brand experience through numerous media and devices. Advertising effectiveness is an important aspect of company's communication and promotion strategy for any organization that allocates its budget into this expense. Therefore, in order to meet company's business objectives and to efficiently allocate marketing budgets, marketers have to choose the right type of advertisement and medium that could effectively reach company's target (Breuer & Bretter, 2012). Therefore, in order to maximize the effectiveness of advertising campaigns and improve media budget allocation, it is crucial to learn and understand the emerging consumer attitudes and multiscreening behavior since so much media consumption occurs during media multitasking. As consumers are engaged with more media and screens at the same time, marketers are unaware of consumer's journey and more complex consumer decision-making process. Also, the increase of simultaneous media usage brings to an end the old assumption that each media exposure occurs in isolation, as today, each medium competes with another for consumer attention (Pilotta, Schultz, Drenik, & Rist, 2004).

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the above problem discussion and research purpose, we formulated the following research question that will guide us throughout this study:

How consumers form an opinion and acquire knowledge on brands and products in the contemporary media landscape with respect to the Consumer Information Processing Model?

We intend to answer this research question by providing answers to the three following guiding questions:

1. What is the Consumer Information Processing Model in the contemporary media landscape?

2. What is the role of different devices and media in the Consumer Information Processing Model?

3. How does a consumer acquire product/brand knowledge in relations to media multitasking and multiscreening behavior?

The rest of the thesis is structured as follows. In the beginning, the theoretical foundations of media multitasking behavior and consumer theories are discussed. This latter discussion includes the Consumer Information Processing Model (CIPM), the Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) model, and cognitive learning theories. Following the theoretical background, the empirical methodology research and the participant sample are described. The results are then presented, focusing specifically on how the today consumer's media multitasking and multiscreening behavior affects their brand or product knowledge acquisition, consumer's purchase decision-making process, as well as what media and devices are used throughout the information processing model and how the contemporary media landscape affects the overall marketing communication. Next, the thesis introduces the implications of these results for the theoretical understanding of media multitasking and multiscreening behavior on the CIPM model and guidance for marketers and advertisers on how to effectively reach media multitasking and mutliscreening consumers. Finally, the research limitations are noted as well as further opportunities for future research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this research, we introduce multiscreening as a specific case of media multitasking behavior. While media multitasking has been characterized as the concurrent consumption of various forms of media (i.e. Pilotta et al., 2004), multiscreening is described as a simultaneous or sequential use of multiple screen devices (Marinelli & Ando, 2014). Drawing upon this, we conceptualize multiscreening as the practice of participating in multiple exposures to two or more audio-visual screen devices at a single point in time, including television, laptop/PC, tablet, smartphone, and smartwatch. Multiscreening can occur during interactions with multiple screen devices, such as watching a program on TV and answering e-mails on a computer while messaging friends on a Facebook mobile app. As “watching TV is an activity traditionally compatible with other household activities” (Marinelli & Ando, 2014, p. 29), people began to simultaneously use the second screen device to look for information, manage social media, send emails, use mobile apps, and even shop.

The multiscreening phenomenon can be viewed mainly from multiple theoretical angles (Figure 2.1.). The first one constitutes consumer behavior theories that explain the drivers and motivational aspects of customers who are to undertake a particular purchase decision. This is very much a consumer-centered approach where the effects of the media multitasking and multiscreening phenomenon on the previously developed consumer decision-making models will be investigated. This is to understand how contemporary media landscape and multiple devices used to engage with a brand affect the consumer decision-making. To this end the most commonly used consumer decision-making framework will be applied. Understanding of the consumer behavior in the multiple media environment will be the major focus of this study as to date little has been researched in this area.

The second theoretical angle is more of a company perspective and defines the media multitasking and multiscreening phenomenon as one of the inhibitors to the effective marketing communication. The consumers that are exposed to multiple media at a time may have reduced levels of comprehension and attention, thus limiting the overall effectiveness of integrated advertising campaigns. The Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) theory assists in analyzing the effects of the communicational activity through the lenses of sequential stages that lead towards the purchase decision. In the marketing communication, each type of the communication has a different meaning and role from generating awareness to an adoption of the desired action. Herein, the emphasis will be placed on the relationship between the attention and knowledge, the first two steps of the HOE framework.

Moreover, the cognitive learning theories will seek to establish how and if the marketing communication towards the multiscreen users addresses its objectives in teaching the consumers about the products. Moreover, it is also important to understand how the consumers learn and formulate their opinions about the products and brands with respect to the media multitasking and multiscreening behavior. Product knowledge acquisition process and product information search (consumer learning) are important components affecting the stages of the consumer decision-making process.

Finally, the current research review is to provide insights into the motives for various types of media multitasking and the effects of the media multitasking on the persuasiveness of a message, and therefore, the consumer decision-making process, the effectiveness of marketing communication, as well as the consumer learning. Figure 2.1 represents the theoretical framework of the research.

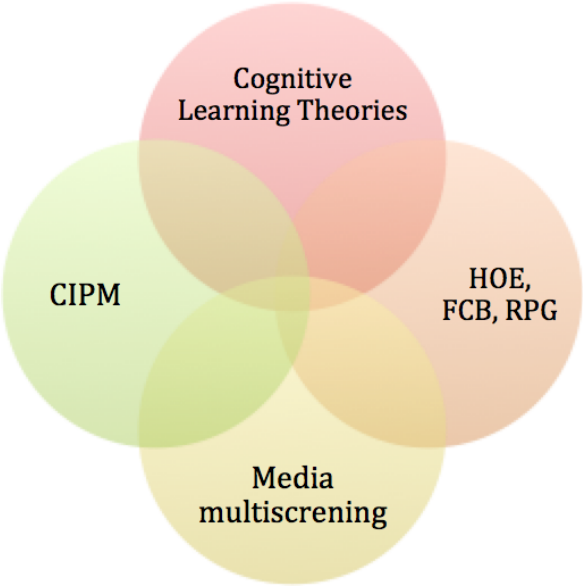


Figure 2.1 Venn Diagram of the Theoretical Framework of the Research

2.2 Consumer Theories

2.2.1 The Consumer Information Processing Model

In light of the simultaneous multiple media consumption, it is important to study the Consumer Information Processing Model (Figure 2.2), also referred to as the Consumer Decision Making Process, in order to understand how the media multitasking and multiscreening influence its consecutive steps: Need Recognition, Information Search,

Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision. The individual steps of the process are outlined and reviewed below.

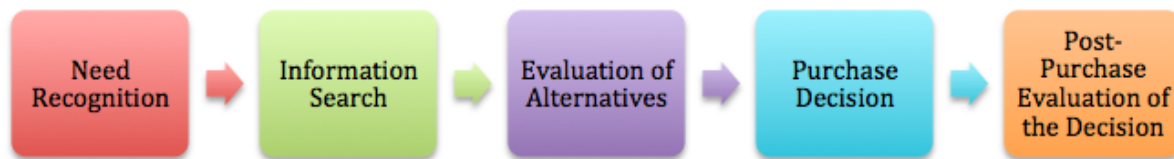


Figure 2.2 The Consumer Information Processing Model (Jobber, 2007, p. 119)

Need Recognition

The process starts by Need Recognition or Problem Awareness (Kotler, Pilarczyk, Mruk & Bartołd, 2005; Solomon, 2006; Jobber, 2007). The recognition of a need might be an outcome of depletion (daily needs) or breakdown of a particular device. This deals a situation when the need is functional and the thing in question has to be simply renewed or repurchased. Other types of need involve the emotional or psychological dimensions. For example, the purchase of designer's clothes, such as Prada or Gucci, might be dictated by the status need and desire, rather than only its functions, which might be similar to the other casual brands. Whether the consumer will decide to take a purchase action or not, will depend on the variance between the current situation and situation in demand as well as the importance of the problem. If the discrepancy between the current and desired situation is not considerable, the consumer may not decide to search for further product information. At the same time, if the importance of the problem is too small, the consumers might not feel inclined to search for the product, as there exist other relatively more important products than the one in question. It is crucial to understand, however, that the needs might appear in the consumers' minds as a result of stimulation. It is assumed this usually happens after the exposition to the marketing communications. As a matter of fact, some needs might not be caused by the lack of a particular product, but be inducted to the consumers by external influences. The external influences can not only provide information about products but also impact consumer' values, attitudes, and behavior in relation to the product itself (Schiffman, Lazar Kanuk & Hansen, 2012). According to Schiffman et al. (2012), the most influential of the input factors are the consumer's sociocultural environment and the firm's marketing efforts. The former relates to non-commercial influences such as comments of friends, recommendations from family members, and opinions of experienced consumers that are discussing products on special-interest Internet groups. Furthermore, social class and culture can also influence consumer's evaluation and adoption or rejection of a product. The other group of inputs is firm's marketing efforts described by Schiffman et al. (2012) as a marketing mix - product, price, promotion and place - and organization's advertising effectiveness to communicate product's benefits, and therefore, persuade people to buy the particular product.

Nonetheless, the contemporary and fragmented media landscape constitutes a challenge for making the consumers aware about brands and encouraging them to obtain further product knowledge and information. The usage of multiple media for daily entertainment might inhibit the consumer cognitive processes and the way people learn about the new products. According to the Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) framework (reviewed later in this chapter), the advertising is meant to move people from one stage to another, the question is whether it succeeds in doing so (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961). Especially when the consumer attention is divided among various screens, and thus, the product knowledge building might be reduced. Bearing the above in mind, it is critical to understand where the concept of need recognition stands in regard to the omnimedia consumption. It is likely that these days problem awareness may not be effectively initiated, even when the concept of integrated marketing communication is applied.

Information Search

The next step in the consumer decision-making process involves the Information Search. When a problem or need is recognized, the information search should begin. The information search includes “the identification of alternative ways of problem solution” (Jobber, 2007, pp. 121-122). The research process might be classified as the internal and external one. The internal process is based on the search of appropriate information in one’s memory while the external concerns personal sources such as relatives, friends, or advertising. The external seeking begins when the internal information is insufficient or lacking. The role of information search is to create an *awareness set* (Jobber, 2007), meaning a cohort of brands that provides a solution to a particular problem or need. According to Schiffman et al. (2012), the external search effort increases in inverse proportion to the product category knowledge, meaning that the less knowledge consumers have about the product category, the more time and effort they put into the information search process. Also, people that consider themselves as highly knowledgeable about the product category depend more on their own evaluations rather than on others’ opinions and reviews.

The concept of information search is, without a doubt, reshaped in the contemporary media landscape as the consumers have access to multiple and digital information sources. They can search for the information at the same time as they are in a store thanks to their smartphones enabling them to verify the information on the internet fora and read independent expert reviews. Also, they do not even have to leave their home to find out retailer’s inventory, prices, and product availability as websites can provide all the required and essential information. It is important to understand that the way the consumers search for the information may influence how they form opinions and knowledge about the products, and thus, affect the following step of the consumer decision-making process - the Evaluation of Alternatives and the Purchase Decision.

Evaluation of Alternatives

During the Evaluation of Alternatives, the *awareness set* is to be shortened, then shortlisted for reflection, and finally turned into the *evoked set* (Jobber, 2007). The products and brands in the *evoked set* constitute a group from which the final selection and purchase will be made. One of the most important variables for the consumer decision-making process and evaluation

is the involvement. This is understood as the degree of relevance and personal importance (Jobber, 2007). The more involving the purchase is, the longer the decision-making process takes, including information search and evaluation of the options. In most of the cases, this deals with the situation when the product expenditure or risk associated with it is high. Based on the customer's involvement and the attitude level, Vaughn (1980) introduced a model referred to as Foot-Cone-Belding (FCB) grid (Fig. 2.3) that integrates various sequence models - the Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) model and its variants. In this model, Vaughn distinguished four separate cases of communication responses that had been categorized in regard to two dimensions: the *high-low involvement* and the *think-feel* dimension. The first dimension, involvement, can be characterized as the “importance people attach to a product or a buying decision, the extent to which one has to think it over and the level of perceived risk associated with an inadequate brand choice”, while the second dimension, think-feel, is described as “a continuum reflecting the extent to which a decision is made on a cognitive or affective basis” (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van den Bergh, 2010, p. 87). The four situations that are distinguished based on these dimensions vary on the think-feel-do (cognitive-affective-conative) sequence of responses.

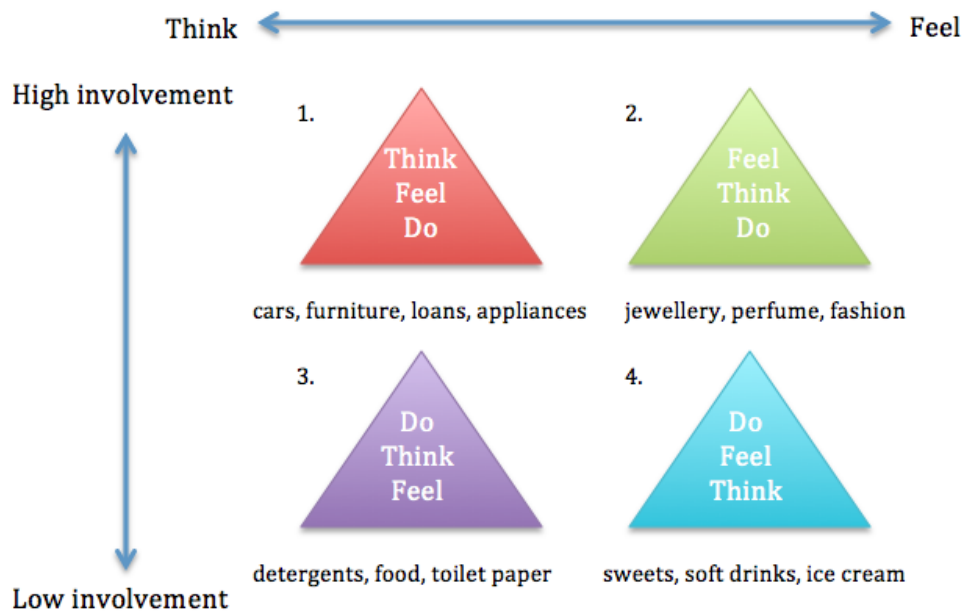


Figure 2.3 The FCB Grid (based on De Pelsmacker et. al, 2010, p. 88)

In the case of everyday products, consumers usually undertake fast and efficient decisions. In terms of high involvement purchases, the brand that the consumer is going to select must also fulfill certain features of the customer's belief and lifestyle. It could be also argued that within the contemporary marketing environment, the consumers will apply their beliefs and attitudes for low involvement purchases, for instance, when they select an eco-friendly detergent over the regular one. It is also important to remember that the individuals decide to purchase a product or brand as a result of external influences. Therefore, it is important to mention the

Rossiter-Percy grid (RBG) (Fig. 2.4), built upon the FCB grid, that also classifies products, buying decisions, and consumption behavior into four scenarios, but instead of the FCB ‘feel-think’ dimension uses the *informational* versus *transformational* buying motives (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). The informational buying motives reduce or reverse negative motivations by providing information and they include among others problem removal (from fury to comfort and happiness) or problem avoidance (from fear to peace of mind). On the other hand, the transformational buying motives include positive motivations that positively reinforce and enhance the user through “sensory gratification, social approval or intellectual stimulation” (De Pelsmacker et. al, 2010, p. 88).

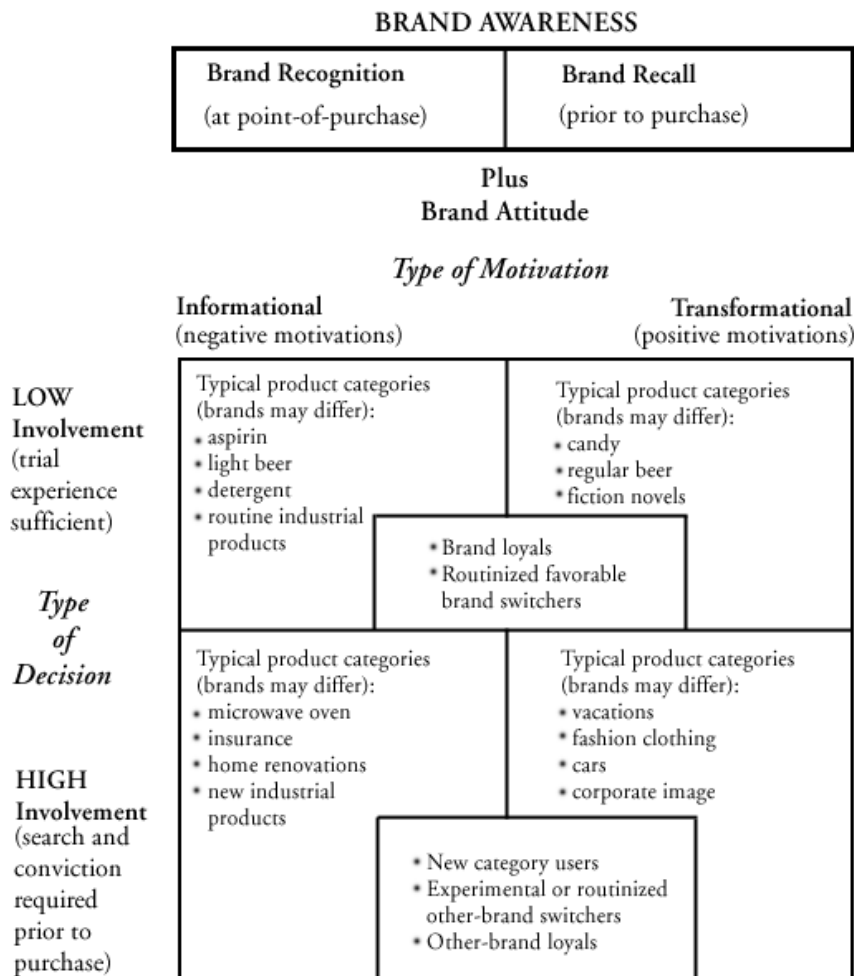


Figure 2.4 The Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter & Percy, 1987)

These models represent consumer’s attitude and how they approach products and brands. As a matter of fact, the consumers will judge the brand in regard to what their relatives, friends or society would think about them when they possessed the brand in question. Therefore, it is important to understand how the product evaluation process looks like in the marketing landscape of today and the multiple media usage for the rating purposes. These days the consumers have access to not only the opinion of their friends through a direct phone call or

text message but also online opinions of other users of the same product. The evaluation of the prices and options might be enhanced through various media, hence, the consumers could be even smarter than they used to be before and the entire decision-making process could be shifted in the digital world.

Purchase Decision

The purchase is simply an outcome of the decision-making process: need recognition, information search, and alternatives evaluation. At this point, the consumer has already decided what and where she wants to purchase based on the previously collected facts and opinions, assessed advertising and marketing campaigns, perceived values, and developed emotional connection towards available products or services. Therefore, the consumer is ready to move on to the actual purchase.

According to Schiffman et al. (2012), there are three types of purchase: trial, repeat, and long-term commitment purchases. The first one happens when a product or brand is purchased for the very first time, often in smaller quantities than a usually bought product. Therefore, this type of purchase is considered as an *exploratory phase* of purchase behavior since a consumer evaluates the product by using it. The second type of purchase occurs when a new product meets consumer's expectation and is equally or more satisfactory than the other products leading to a repeated purchase. Once consumers approve the product or brand they often establish loyalty and will use it again. However, not all the products and brands consumers can buy for a trial such as a refrigerator or a shower cubicle. The majority of those durable goods are then bought through a long-term commitment purchase. However, this decision-making process might also depend on or be impacted by other factors. Nowadays, retailers need to come up with new ways to attract consumers (Kiran, Majumdar & Kishore, 2012). Often a key factor at this stage of the information processing is the quality of the shopping experience- either the brick and mortar's setup, product display, and staff's attitude, or website's functionality and usability, for instance. Also, potential in-store promotions, discounts, and return policy can influence the purchase decision itself. If consumers decide to purchase a product, then they proceed to the last stage of the process, the Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision.

Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision

The last stage of the consumer decision-making process is the Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision. This stage is not only important from the customer perspective but also from the company view since it can influence the future purchase or lack of it. One of the major issues in this step constitutes the *cognitive dissonance* (Jobber, 2007; Schiffman et al., 2012). This phenomenon is understood as the discomfort experienced by an individual when two contradictory cognitive views appear simultaneously. This is especially well exemplified by the situation in which consumers evaluate in their minds whether they have undertaken an appropriate purchase decision, or not. According to Schiffman et al. (2012), there are three outcomes of the evaluation process: product or brand's performance has either met the

expectations, exceeded them, or under-delivered what was expected. If a product or brand has delivered or over-delivered communicated promise, met or exceeded the expectations, and fulfilled the need, then the consumer may become a brand ambassador, who influences others in their Information Search stage to purchase the good. However, if the evaluation has a negative feedback, then the dissatisfied consumer may impact a potential consumer to forgo the particular product. What is more, a satisfied consumer is more likely to become a loyal consumer who will repeat the purchase behavior in the future, while a dissatisfied consumer will most likely exclude the brand or product from the *evoked set* while repeating the decision-making process.

Since one purchase decision is usually an outcome of the elimination of other options from the *evoked set*, the consumers might need to search for further signs that reduce any uncertainties or doubts about the choice, and therefore, confirm their final buying decision. In order to do so, consumers attempt to rationalize that they have made a wise choice, search for advertisements that support their decision while refraining from looking at those on competitors, connect with satisfied users for reassurance, or try to persuade somebody else to purchase the same good, and thus, confirm their own decision (Schiffman et al., 2012). For instance, a person that buys a car is more likely to look at that particular brand's marketing communication and even join special-interest Internet groups where it is possible to discuss the benefits of the car with other members to get reassured about their decision and increase satisfaction with the purchase. However, sometimes people intentionally look for contrary information. A dissatisfied consumer may "rely on word-of-mouth to reduce cognitive dissonance, by letting friends and family know they are displeased" (Lamb, Hair & McDaniel, 2015, p. 97).

The Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision might be especially important when it comes to the multiscreening consumers. It is important to stress out that within the contemporary media landscape it is relatively easier to rate and give opinions about the purchased products thanks to online for a, price comparing services, and social media. Thanks to these tools, people can express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction on a much broader scale and the latter ones have the power to even harm a brand. It is possible that once linear Consumer Decision Making Model is more circular these days, as the consumers who purchased the product might induct others' Need Recognition, Information Search, and Alternatives Evaluation steps through an expression of their own opinion.

2.2.2 The Hierarchy of Effects Model

The model for predictive measurements of advertising effectiveness, also called the Hierarchy of Effects (HOE), has been developed by Lavidge and Steiner in 1961. The model (Figure 2.5.) was designed to look at advertising from the angle of what the advertising is meant to do and what its functions are. As a matter of fact, the consumers do not become fully convinced product buyers within only one step from seeing the marketing communication. To be more specific, the authors of the model argue that the advertising should be perceived as a concatenation of different steps that finally lead to the purchase decision.

The HOE framework consists of six linear steps that ultimately lead to the purchase decision of the consumer. The initial stage constitutes the awareness, which then transforms into knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and finally, the purchase. Pairs of the stages belong to different behavioral dimensions. What is more, the model calls for the advertising effectiveness measurement that examines which of the advertising stages are the most crucial in each product case, determining how many consumers are in which phase, and also, which individuals on which steps are the most critical to address to. The HOE model, however, undertakes more of a company rather than consumer perspective. Therefore, in relation to this study, it can be only applied with respect to the first two steps - the Awareness and Knowledge, meaning the relationship between being aware of the product existence and the ability to learn about it. It is important to understand whether the multiscreen consumers exposed to the marketing communication are able to connect the cognitive aspects of the HOE model with the Need Recognition right after seeing the advertising.

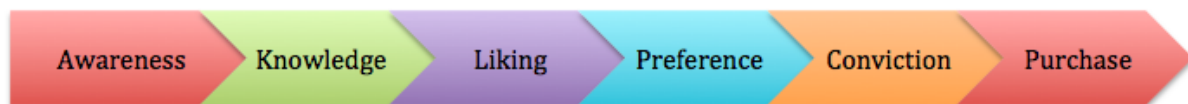


Figure 2.5 The Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) Model (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961, p. 61)

Awareness & Knowledge

The Awareness refers to the stage where the consumers are unaware and unfamiliar with the product or service. This is the first and critical step in the consumer journey towards the purchase. At the same time, the Knowledge relates to the potential customers that are aware of the product and know what it has to offer. These two steps together belong to the ‘cognitive component’ of advertising that is described as rational, intellectual, or mental (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961). The main aim of the cognitive phase of the marketing communication is to provide facts and information.

Liking & Preference

The Liking pertains to the consumers that have a positive attitude about the product; they can be described as potential customers, who simply like the product. The next step, the Preference, is a cohort of consumers that has favorable attitudes about the product and prefers it to all the other available options. These two stages form an ‘affective component’ of the advertising (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961) that is the emotional element, and therefore, the marketing communication at these two steps should be centered at emotions, change of attitudes, and feelings.

Conviction & Purchase

The Conviction concerns the consumers that are relatively close to the purchase decision. They connect the Preference with the willingness to purchase and the Conviction that the buying decision would be reasonable. The last, sixth step, the Purchase relates to the final stage where the potential customers take the decision and transform into the customers of a brand. The Conviction and Purchase together create a 'conative' or 'motivational' component of the advertising (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961), meaning states in which the consumers tend to perceive objects as either positive or negative. The advertising at those final phases should stimulate or generate direct desires.

It is critical to highlight that the model developed in 1961 assumes that the consumers who are exposed to the advertising will eventually become aware of the existence of the product or service. Moreover, the model does not include the aspect of impulse purchases or allow stages to happen independently in a different sequence (Karlsson, 2007). Apart from that, the framework does not involve the aspects of the attention and awareness, which together might lead to the consumer gaining the product knowledge. This is especially important in the contemporary and fragmented media landscape and the consumers using multiple devices for their media consumption (IRCenter, 2015; Voorveld, 2011). According to the study undertaken by Deloitte on the US market, 90% of consumers multitask when watching TV (Deloitte, 2015). Without a doubt, the exposure to the marketing communication is one of the most elementary requirements for reaching the audience, as the consumers tend to use multiple channels for daily entertainment, communication with brands, or information search. This is especially important from the standpoint of understanding the impacts that the marketing communication has on the Consumer Information Processing Model. The previously mentioned two-dimensional conceptualizations of products and brands, the FCB and RPG, recognize the significance of brand awareness while the HOE considers brand awareness as a precondition for brand attitude formation and purchase. However, it could be argued that since the consumers use multiple screens for their media consumption and there are documented cases of banner blindness (also on the Internet) and ad avoidance, the fact that the individuals have been exposed to the advertising does not imply it has caught their attention and transformed into product knowledge. Consequently, without the product knowledge there is no opportunity to appear in the consumer's *awareness set* and next in the *evoked set* on the individual's journey towards the purchase decision in the Consumer Information Processing Model.

2.2.3 Cognitive Learning Theories

Overall, the objective of all the marketing communication models is to move individuals from one stage of the consumer decision-making process to another, and finally, to the purchase. However, the functions of the contemporary advertising might be hindered not only by the fragmented media consumption, consumers using different devices for media engagement but also by the physical construction of a human brain. People tend to be a subject to various cognitive biases that distort the perception of the reality and influence the decision making process and the product opinion formulation (Gerrig, Zimbardo, Materska, Radzicki, 2011). These issues adversely affect the marketing communication, and thus, influence the consumer

decision-making process. In the next subchapter, the topic of the cognitive biases as well as its effects on the human learning in the light of marketing communication, and thus, the consumer decision-making process, will be discussed.

Classical Conditioning

According to the behavioral learning theories, learning occurs as an outcome of responses to external stimuli. In psychology, this approach ignores the internal thinking processes (Solomon, 2006). The consumer's mind is perceived as a 'black box'. The noticeable components of human behavior go inside of the box and go outside generating a particular behavioral response. This attitude is showcased by two major viewpoints on learning and knowledge acquisition, namely classical conditioning and instrumental conditioning. Individuals tend to form their experiences based on the feedback they collect through lifetime (Solomon, 2006). The same applies to the marketing communication. People react to brands or products based on the marketing stimuli and the associations they have acquired in their life.

The classical conditioning is considered to be one of the most elementary forms of learning and is especially important to understand in light of multiscreening behavior. During the classical conditioning, one stimulus or event allows predicting occurrence of another stimulus or event (Gerrig et al., 2011). An individual is learning to associate two new stimuli, the one that previously did not result in a particular reaction, and the stimulus that created the reaction naturally (Gerrig et al., 2011). One of the first observations of classical conditioning has been performed by Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov. The scientist paired so-called natural stimulus in the form of a bell with a stimulus that naturally caused salivation behavior in dogs – in that case squirted dried meat (Solomon, 2006). The powder constituted an unconditioned stimulus, as it was capable of generating the salivation response. After some time, the bell transformed into conditioned stimulus, as: “it did not initially cause salivation, but the dogs learned to associate the bell with the meat powder and began to salivate at the sound of the bell only” (Solomon, 2006, p. 63). It can be thus argued that the classical conditioning has effects on the marketing communications. For example, as the marketing communication aims at pairing the conditioned stimuli in the form of brand names or products, the individuals may learn to become hungry, desirous as they see the advertising and pair stimulus in their minds. This is, however, more difficult when the consumers are not focused on the stimulus they are exposed to or they simply skip it as it happens during the multiscreening behavior. As a matter of fact, multiscreening might reduce the effects of obtaining the brand awareness and product knowledge formulation and in turn affect the consumer decision-making process. At the same time, the positive outcomes of classical conditioning on marketing communication start to happen when the conditioned and unconditioned stimulus have been associated as many times as possible. The more exposures occur, the greater the chance to generate a particular stimulus-action pair (Solomon, 2006). Nonetheless, simply increasing the number of consumer exposures to the marketing communication may yield into diminishing results. When the brand or a product is overexposed in the market, there might occur an extinction effect (Gerrig et al., 2011) and the meaning and perception of the brand might be deluded. This could imply that more of the advertising communication on different screens of different devices could not generate the desired stimulus-action pairs.

Another risk and challenge during the marketing communication towards multiscreen users constitutes stimulus generalization. This refers to the situation when people perceive similar or “look-a-like” communication of some brand as the original brand they have in their minds (Solomon, 2006). For instance, individuals could see resembling shapes or colors of different brands and make a false association with the ones they have in mind. It might encourage them to search for the wrong type of products (Information Search) or not influence at all the brand awareness. Within the advertising aspect, it is thus important to create a coherent, but distinctive communication, as the consumers tend to use different screens to engage with a brand.

Information Processing Theory

According to the article by Lang (2000) that introduces the limited capacity model of mediate message processing, the individuals are information processors. One of the major objectives is “to perceive stimuli, turn them into mental representations, do mental work on those representations, and reproduce them in the same or altered form” (p. 47). It is important to understand, however, that there is a limited capacity of the information that can be processed at a time.

As previously mentioned, there are several reasons explaining why the message may not be properly processed. First of all, the receiver of the communication might use fewer amount of the resources to the activity than is needed. Second of all, the communication in itself might call for more resources than the receiver of the message can allot to the activity. Both situations reduce the efficiency of information processing, hence, adversely affect the process of learning and generating awareness - knowledge associations.

Furthermore, the limited capacity of information processing has particular implication for television viewing, as the Lang study further unveils. The television viewing might be perceived as the stimulus, source of audiovisual messages. According to the theory, information selected from the television for the encoding must be adequate for the goals of a person or provide new, disruptive type of messages. This in turn might lead to the attention of an individual and increasing the awareness. Finally, manipulating the number of edits in the message can ameliorate the effects of recognition scores on the television communication. The edits are understood as switches from one camera to another within the same scene. This positive effect can be ascribed to the higher allotment of the capabilities to the task encoding, which increases the levels of recognition and thus awareness. That constitutes another argument that application of audio-visual techniques that strengthen gaining the attention (Evans et al., 1996), could be especially critical for the multiple screen users. Moreover, it is argued that multiscreening can increase the attention when the advertising on the first medium is used to generate attention, create interest, and move into the marketing communication on other medium where it will be explored further (Voorveld, 2011) and product knowledge research process will start.

2.3 Media Multitasking and Multiscreening Phenomenon

2.3.1 Media Multitasking and Multiscreening

People are used to constant multitasking behavior, which became the ‘new normal’ in their fast-paced lives. As the pressure to do more things faster has been exponentially increasing, the need for more efficient and productive actions created a suitable environment for the growth of multitasking. Furthermore, the spreading high-speed information and communication technology increased expectations of human cognitive process capabilities to simultaneously collect, encode, process, and respond to information coming from multiple sources (Courage et al., 2015). As a result, technological developments and improvements in “web-enabled and multi-function devices, as well as lifestyle changes, have created a perceived need to stay ‘wired’ to multiple media sources” (Courage et. al, 2015, p. 5). Media multitasking is a behavior that involves engaging in two or more traditional, online, social, and entertainment media exposures at the same time (Pilotta et al., 2004; Foehr, 2006; Vega, 2009 cited by Lee, Lin & Robertson, 2012; Bardhi, Rohm & Sultan, 2010; Wang & Tchernev, 2012; Hwang et al., 2014), such as watching a show on TV while reading a newspaper, listening to a radio while buying a new pair of jeans on a mobile app, or simultaneously using multiple windows with separate content open on a computer.

In the United States, 78% of young adults (18-29 years old) own a laptop or a computer and 86% own a smartphone (Anderson, 2015). As computers have become the second most consumed media on a daily basis, outpacing print and radio, 40% of Americans under 30 use Internet while watching television (Brasel & Gips, 2011). According to Brasel and Gips’ research (2011, p. 528), constant and quick glances on different media sources decrease active cognition, conscious insight, and depth of processing, while “different physical screen sizes generate different levels of attention and arousal”. Moreover, in their research, they observed that during a 28-minute media multitasking activity, participants jumped between TV and computer screens 120 times, on average, not being able to focus on any of the screens for longer than five seconds at a time. In general, television attention consisted of many shorter glances, backing up the claim that a lot of television viewing is performed automatically and requires little cognitive effort or attention (Hess & Madansky, 2005 cited by Brasel & Gips, 2011).

2.3.2 Motives for Media Multitasking and Multiscreening

Based on the Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch Uses and Gratifications theory (1974), motives foresee uses, gratifications, and effects of media consumption. Therefore, if motives for multitasking can be understood, the differential effects caused by multitasking can be explained. Katz et al. (1974) claim that media consumption is triggered by a set of psychological motives to actively search for mediated content for gratification of specific needs, rather than a situation-based incidental act. “There are social and psychological origins of needs, which generate expectations of the media, which lead to differential patterns of media exposure, resulting in need gratifications and other consequences” (Katz et al., 1974, p.

20). A research conducted by Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) formed five meaningful needs categories that are met by media consumption (I) cognitive needs - related to acquiring information, knowledge, and understanding, (II) affective needs - related to strengthening aesthetic, pleasurable and emotional experience, (III) personal integrative needs - related to strengthening credibility, confidence, stability, and self status, (IV) social integrative needs - related to strengthening contact with family, friends, and the world, and last but not least (V) escape or tension-release needs - related to weakening of contact with self and one's social roles.

The Katz, Gurevitch and Haas research on analyzing correlation between psychological motives and media consumption is often used as a starting point in studies that intend to identify the motives for media multitasking behavior. Initially, researchers focused on learning motives for each medium during media multitasking, for instance, showing that television provides among others information, escape, and relaxation while the Internet is used for maintaining relationships or information seeking (Hwang et al., 2014). Thanks to firstly identifying motives for media use, latter research could concentrate on studying the major motives for media multitasking behavior itself. Bardhi et al. (2010) recognized that media multitasker use multiple media concurrently to have a greater control of their consumption, to more efficiently process information, to easily connect to others, and to enjoy the engagement.

A more recent study recognized five main motives for media multitasking including information, social, efficiency, enjoyment, and habit (Hwang et al., 2014). Participants were mostly engaged in media multitasking to gain additional knowledge about an issue, a brand, or a product, or to satisfy their curiosity, as well as, to save time. Next common reason was the fun and enjoyment factor of media multitasking. Furthermore, respondent wanted to feel a sense of belonging to a group and to express and share their opinions. What is interesting, people also media multitask because they are used to it, it has become a habit that enables them to pass the time. Even though habit is considered as one of the main five motives for media multitasking, it seems that it has no real purpose, and therefore consumers' actions cannot be predicted.

2.3.3 Effects of Media Multitasking and Multiscreening

There have been cases made for both positive and negative effects of multitasking impact on performance, with the latter one based on a concept of divided attention due to dual-task and task switching practice, that in media multitasking leads to 'continuous partial attention' (Courage et al., 2015). While each medium or task competes with one another for consumer attention (Pilotta et al., 2004), the consumer's information processing system is being weakened. In general, multitasking decreases performance as the reaction time for the second performed task is delayed when two tasks are executed sequentially (Moore et al., 2008). Furthermore, "[t]he shorter the interval between task presentations, the greater the increase in response time for the secondary task" (Moore et al., 2008, p. 4). Regardless of tasks diversity, contexts, a technology used, or individuals themselves, the activity of multitasking decreases performance speed and accuracy, and also is less efficient than an action performed on a single task (Courage et al., 2015). Moore et al. (2008) studied media multitasking influence

on performance and found out that performance scores were much lower when participants were engaged in multiple media activities simultaneously.

Media multitasking distractions interrupt and slow down information processes (Voorveld, 2011; Jeong & Hwang, 2012) as well as are associated with a cognitive difference. Heavy media multitaskers (HMMs), people who perform high levels of media multitasking, face a difficulty filtering out distracting information due to a wider attentional scope; and therefore, are capable of holding fewer or not as precise goal-relevant representations in their working memory (Uncapher, Thieu & Wagner, 2016). This consequently results in lower long-term memory performance. As media multitasking burdens working memory and long-term memory, it also hinders knowledge acquisition as people's ability to retain information is limited while simultaneously performing more than one task (Lee et al., 2012). Also, according to Ophir, Nass, and Wagner (2009), due to HMMs' reduced ability to filter out interference from irrelevant stimuli and representations in memory, they perform worse on task switching than light media multitaskers (LMMs). Their findings are quite surprising in that, intuitively, HMMs should be better at task switching, such as multitasking since the activity of frequent task switching became their strong habit. However, HMMs are inclined to pay attention to a larger scope of information instead of focusing on a particular piece of information; therefore, they become less selective when it comes to filtering information and tasks in front of them (Ophir et al., 2009; Lin, 2009).

Voorveld's study (2011) of the cross-media campaign effectiveness revealed that a combination of online advertising and advertising in offline media resulted in more positive affective and behavioral responses compared to using only one medium. Nevertheless, she also reported that media multitasking seems to negatively influence the recall and recognition of information. Consumer's divided attention between multiple media and screens not only diminishes his opportunity to effectively process information but also to recall the advertising content (Voorveld, 2011).

Many studies in the area of multitasking found that this type of behavior reduces message comprehension or recall. At the same time, other studies proved that multitasking might ameliorate the message acceptance as it inhibits ability to process information and counter arguing to the presented message (Jeong & Hwang, 2012). The study by Jeong and Hwang (2012) found that multitasking affected the ability to comprehend the information, but also hindered the individual's capability of counter arguing. The research also highlights that the degree of person's attention to the medium while multitasking is more critical than whether the behavior occurs or not in terms of comprehension. When it comes to the issue of counter arguing, the multitasking behavior may reduce ability to argue against the message. Thus it can be inferred that once the users focus their attention during the multiscreening behavior, persuasive messages could lower their cognitive ability and be more efficient in terms of conveying marketing goals. The only question is whether the acquired knowledge could lead to unbiased and appropriate consumer decisions.

Even though media multitasking has been shown to have negative effects on ad memory, there is a contrary opinion claiming that consumer's reduced opportunity to attend to advertising due to media multitasking does not always result in worse ad recall and recognition (Angell, Gorton, Sauer, Bottomley & White, 2016). According to Duff and Sar

(2015), on the one hand, people who process in an analytic style (look at fewer places for a longer time) show decreased ad recognition during media multitasking, but on the other hand, ad recognition does not decrease for consumers who process holistically and even present better recollection memory. They also claim that media multitasking is not solely a cognitive process, but a perceptual process dependable on how people perceptually encode their media environment and their motivations to do so. Another recent study revealed that the context of media multitasking impacts “a consumer’s motivation to process new things”, especially when the simultaneously performed tasks are congruent and aligned, such as tweeting a game score while watching a football match (Angell et al., 2016, p. 3). Angell et al. (2016) found out that ad recall and recognition for these situations increase.

2.3.4 Conclusions

In light of literature review and multiscreening, it can be concluded that gaining the attention might constitute the greatest challenge in the contemporary media consumption landscape. Without the attention there is no opportunity for initiation of the learning and knowledge acquisition process. This in turn may limit the problem recognition and induction of consumer needs through marketing communication. Understanding of that aspect is especially important since media multitasking, cluttered marketing communication environment together with human cognitive biases constitute a serious threat to the efficient marketing communication and might impact the Consumer Information Processing Model. Since there seems to be a gap between the Consumer Information Processing Model and the consumer behavior in the contemporary media landscape, therefore it has been decided to review and develop the model to adjust it accordingly.

The cognitive learning theories state that the consumer need to be exposed to the marketing communication at least a couple of times in order to build cues and association in the memory. At the same time increased number of exposition on different screen may be counterproductive and bring reciprocal effects. On the other hand, audio-visual techniques, presenting the important information in an audio form next to the visual ones, applying emotions, disruptiveness may enhance the attention as well as recall and positively affect the creation of the awareness set. At the same time it is not evident whether the awareness initiates product knowledge acquisition process as the HOE model states. So far the theory in the area of multiscreening is focused on consumer’s ability to recognize and recall marketing communication, however, there is no knowledge on how different devices are used for different purposes and how they affect cognitive processes.

Finally, we decided to base the study on the Consumer Information Processing Model to determine how it functions with respect to the fragmented media consumption. Nowadays, the media consumption is fragmented, very often unrelated to each other, not structured, people are omni media consumers, possibly using various screens depending on the stage of the decision making process. It is also very likely that consumers use various media platform in order to formulate the opinion and acquire product knowledge.

Last but not least, it is plausible that the theoretical models applied into the contemporary marketing communication, should be more circular than linear, allowing consumers to move between different steps more freely or join the process at any stage.

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Even though the general knowledge on consumer behavior and best marketing communication practices utilized to reach targeted consumers are quite broad, the existing theory lacks understanding of consumer's multi-device behavior, known as multiscreening. The reviewed previous studies reveal that the more devices are used simultaneously or sequentially, the shorter user's attention span is on a specific screen and message. As a consequence, media multitasking and multiscreening decrease performance, reduce message comprehension, slow down information processes, hinder knowledge acquisition, and negatively influence recall and recognition of information. However, the current research and theory still lack insights and deeper understanding of the media multitasking and multiscreening phenomenon in regard to consumer's information processing: knowledge acquisition, opinion formulation, and purchase decision. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how consumers integrate various media and particular digital devices in their everyday life and how the multiscreen practice influences their consumer behavior - the way they communicate with each other, seek entertainment, or shop.

Moreover, media multitasking and multiscreening give an opportunity to perform cross-media marketing operations and advertising practices that can keep viewer's attention on multiple channels, providing TV content and videos in a new way. However, an intense use of multiple media and screens simultaneously results in a shift with respect to focus of attention amongst various devices, and therefore, makes it difficult to measure the communication effectiveness of each channel. As consumers are engaged with more media and screens at the same time, marketers have become unaware of consumer's journey and more complex consumer decision-making process. Learning these emerging attitudes and behaviors would help organizations to better reach their target and more efficiently allocate their budget.

Therefore, this chapter describes the applied research methodology required to gain empirical material that enabled thorough analysis and allowed us to provide an answer to the research question. In order to do so, firstly the research philosophy will be presented that led to the research strategy and approach choice of deciding to use two methods, online surveys and in-depth interviews, to investigate the multiscreening behavior. Two methods needed to be applied in order to obtain the total picture of the behavior, its motives, and especially, avoid confusion and biases in reporting as well as describing the multiscreening by the consumers. What is more, the surveys provided a solid background and understanding of the phenomenon that have been later explored during the in-depth interviews. The research strategy and approach section is followed by sample description, and research design itself. Last but not

least, the critical reflection on research method, as well as research weaknesses will be discussed.

3.2 Research Philosophy

As the existing research and theory still lack knowledge and general understanding of the media multitasking and multiscreening phenomenon in terms of consumer information processing model, we conducted an inductive research to search for patterns among participants' behaviors, and consequently, identify new behaviors and develop a model that derives from our empirical data and findings. To do so, we adopted a constructionist framework assuming that there is no absolute truth. Thus, through conversations with research participants, we intended to understand a complex social world with people playing an active role in the knowledge creation process (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012). Social constructionism is an ontological position claiming that "social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors" (2012, p. 22) and that the reality is shaped by person's knowledge and beliefs (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Accordingly to this, our research assumed media multitasking and multiscreening in the consumer's information process to be a socially constructed phenomenon as social actors' perceptions and actions influence it. We did not create any preconceived hypotheses to test, but rather took an open minded view of what we wanted to find out, framed simple questions that enabled rich data collection from which we could make sense, link them to theories, and therefore, induce ideas (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002). Consequently, in order to study the topic of the research - Poles' behaviors, motives, attitudes towards the simultaneous use of media and devices, and the way they acquire knowledge and go through the consumer decision making process; we had to focus on developing a better understanding of the ambiguous situation gained by learning participant's point of view and perspective (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Furthermore, since the aim of this study is to provide deep understanding of consumer's information processing in the new media landscape through the perspective of media multitaskers as social actors, we took an interpretive stance as an application of the scientific model to a study of the social world does not seem to be applicable. The focus of the study is to understand consumer behavior and social actions in relation to media multitasking and multiscreening, rather than to define and describe these phenomena themselves (Bryman & Bell, 2015). We adopted the interpretivist stance, as we believed that the researched matter could be examined through interpreting media multitaskers' feelings, attitudes, opinions, and actions regarding their knowledge acquisition and opinion formation prior to making a buying decision.

As a rich data collection from a small sample would enable us to create and develop new ideas, we decided to conduct a qualitative research involving an analysis of surveys and in-depth interviews. Since qualitative research produces a more detailed description of a researched situation and "contextual understanding of social behaviour", these two methods facilitated a more detailed investigation and analysis of the media multitasking and

multiscreening phenomenon in terms of information processing (Bryman & Bell, 2015; p. 406). This will be further described in the following ‘research strategy and approach’ section.

3.3 Research Strategy and Approach

In order to access relevant data enabling thorough analysis of the studied phenomenon, the qualitative research was conducted in two stages with online surveys followed by in-depth interviews. As described by Van Maanen (1983 quoted by Easterby-Smith et al., 2002, p. 85), the qualitative methods are “an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world”. However, before deciding on conducting the study in two stages with online surveys followed by in-depth interviews, we took into consideration a couple of other research methods that would enable us to gain more insights into the consumer’s media multitasking and multiscreening behaviors and their influence on the decision-making process.

Firstly, we took into consideration observational method, as observation is a direct method of collecting accurate and reliable data, and would enable us to see the true, not interrupted or biased, media multitasking and multiscreening behaviors (Bryman & Bell, 2015). What is more, according to Brasel and Gips (2011), majority of media consumption is performed as a habit or a non-conscious and automatic activity. Therefore, ad hoc and post hoc personal recollections and self-insights tend to be limited as people cannot accurately recall their multitasking behavior, making direct observations the most appropriate method to study media consumption and multitasking environments (Brasel & Gips, 2011). Even though, classical observations seem to be the most appropriate method for this purpose, the multiscreening is usually performed at home, and therefore, not only getting an access to people’s homes would be difficult, but also we would not be able to predict how much time it would take to collect the desired data. Even if the multiscreening activities were to be observed, it would be difficult to see the content accessed on each device without interfering and interrupting the process. Also, we would not be able to learn participants’ motives and attitudes towards multiscreening. For all these reasons direct observations turned out to be an inappropriate method for this particular study.

After considering direct observations for the research method, we intended to use diaries instead, as they enable people to construct a daily record of their actions, behaviors, and attitudes over time (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Although this method would provide us with valuable insights about participants’ media multitasking and multiscreening behavior, motives, and attitudes, we learned that besides finding it difficult to recall media multitasking behavior, people tend to underreport their multitasking behavior of media consumption by 50% in comparison to their video recorded behaviors (Papper, Holmes & Popovich, 2004 cited by Brasel & Gips, 2011). For this reason, as well as potential participant’s lack of willingness to commit to keeping a diary for a couple of days, we decided to forgo this method as well.

Consequently, in order to access relevant data enabling thorough analysis of the studied phenomenon, we decided to combine two methods in the end, online surveys followed by in-depth interviews. Even though prior studies on media consumption imply that self-insight in post hoc surveys is likely to be limited in multitasking environments (Brasel and Gips, 2011), this implication should not negatively influence the research as it does not focus on studying the limited ability to recall media multitasking behavior, but rather concentrates on understanding the multiscreening behavior itself - when people media multitask, what media they combine, what actions they engage into while multiscreening - and how multiscreening impacts consumer's opinion formulation and knowledge acquisition in the information processing. Thus, the online survey was mainly used to facilitate a better understanding of each respondent's multiscreening behavior in a particular situation, as well as to provide a context for the following interview enabling respondent to easier understand what multiscreening stands for and involves. The online survey was utilized to provide some initial background on respondent's multitasking behavior, for instance combination of the simultaneously used devices and the visited websites/used apps while multiscreening, without interrupting the act of multiscreening itself. Therefore, the online survey seemed to be the most feasible solution to collect primary information on media multitasking and multiscreening.

Following the analysis of the online surveys, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the same research participants. The semi-structured form of the interviews was selected to ask participants a carefully prepared series of relevant questions, which were written prior to one-on-one meetings based on the collected answers from the surveys and other interdependent matters that we intended to study. Simultaneously, this research method also allowed respondents to freely express their overall behavior, motivations, and drivers behind the multiscreening behavior. Moreover, the semi-structure interview provided us with enough flexibility to further discuss and explore relevant topics brought up by an interviewee and nest new questions on the matters that emerged during the interview that seemed to be of a great value for the research (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Thanks to implementing this research method, we were able to generate insights into how research participants see the world and how they act, as well as provided an opportunity to witness non-verbal clues, such as tone of voice and facial expressions, that led to secondary questions (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002).

3.4 Research Design

The research design according to Bryman and Bell “provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data” (2011, p. 40). This simply translates into appropriate framework that helps to connect the data with respect to the research question, purpose, and theoretical framework of the study. Apart from that, the research design should facilitate the process of understanding the behavior and observing intersection of different variables (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence and effects that the consumer multiscreening behavior has on the marketing communication in light of the first two steps of

the HOE model and consumer journey through the Consumer Decision Making Process within the contemporary media landscape. The methodology applied in order to investigate the described phenomenon is based on the concept of qualitative research, namely online surveys and in-depth interviews.

3.4.1 Sampling Strategy

Even though media multitasking is a global trend rather than a country-specific behavior (Hwang et al., 2014), cultural factors play a very significant role when it comes to studying the multiscreening phenomenon as members of a particular nation represent distinctive values, beliefs and practices. Consequently, this research will solely focus on the Polish market for a number of reasons. First of all, both of the researchers are Polish natives. Therefore, they are fluent in the local language and aware of most cultural specifications, customs, and habits, limiting to a minimum any cultural clash and language barrier. Moreover, Poland is one of the largest emerging markets in Europe with a huge growth potential in regard to a growing number of Internet users, and as a result, growing market of connected users that brands could target. What is more, previous quantitative research on the Polish market revealed that majority of Poles frequently multiscreen - over 60% of people use a laptop/PC while watching TV and over 50% of them look at their phone's screen, with the latter number continuously increasing (IRCenter, 2015).

Numerous studies (Jeong & Fishbein, 2007; Rohm, Sultan & Bardhi, 2009; Brasel & Gips, 2011) have established that younger generations are more likely to multitask and use multiple media simultaneously than older generations - this is simply driven by age-related changes in perception and cognition. Moreover, Brasel and Gips (2011) specified that mostly people who are under 35 perform media multitasking. Furthermore, as this study focuses on studying media multitasking and multiscreening behavior, the research sample representatives need to meet a socioeconomic status that allows ownership of multiple screen devices as well as live in a geographical location that enables a ready access to the digital world through an Internet access.

Therefore, the sampling criteria were: born between 1981 and 1993, university educated, white-collar occupation, digital natives or immigrants who are heavy technology users and own multiple screen devices. Since this research focuses on studying media multitasking and multiscreening behavior in general, gender was not chosen as one of the sampling criteria.

In order to choose a sampling method that is suitable for a qualitative research and maximizes the opportunity to generate a representative sample that meets all the predetermined criteria, we decided to use a purposive sampling method. This method enabled us to choose 15 participants who were available and willing to participate, but simultaneously matched the predetermined sampling criteria necessary to provide useful information and insights into the research question (Berg, 2001). We decided to pick for the participants people with whom we were friends or acquaintances as this way, we were able to ensure that all the participants did

regularly perform media multitasking and multiscreening, and consequently, could provide valuable insights and opinions necessary to study these phenomena. We decided to choose 15 participants for the survey part of the research to ensure that we had a large enough pool of potential interviewees for the second part of the research, the in-depth interviews. Moreover, for the purpose of learning male and female perspectives on this matter, the research sample contained an equal distribution of men and women. However, the sample size for the second part of the study, face-to-face interviews, was not specified prior to the research as it was dependent on the required amount of information that would allow seeing patterns and lead to highly credible answers to the research questions. Therefore, we intended to continue the data collection process until we reached theoretical saturation and realized that further data would not add anything new (Bryman & Bell, 2015). We started noticing similar patterns and trends in behaviors after interviewing seven people, but deciding to continue the data collection process to ensure the trends' reliability. In the end, we interviewed nine of the 15 participants. A detailed list of all the interviewees is listed in Appendix A.

3.4.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The research process outline has been adapted from Bryman and Bell (2011) and consisted of six, interrelated steps (Figure 3.1.). During the first step, the general research questions have been established. In the second stage, previous literature review has been performed and compared with statistics and theories applicable to the multiscreening behavior. Next, the data relevant for the study have been collected. The process of interpretation of the data and conceptual framework has been complemented by gathering further information and narrowing down the research question. Finally, in the sixth step, findings have been discussed and transformed into research implications.

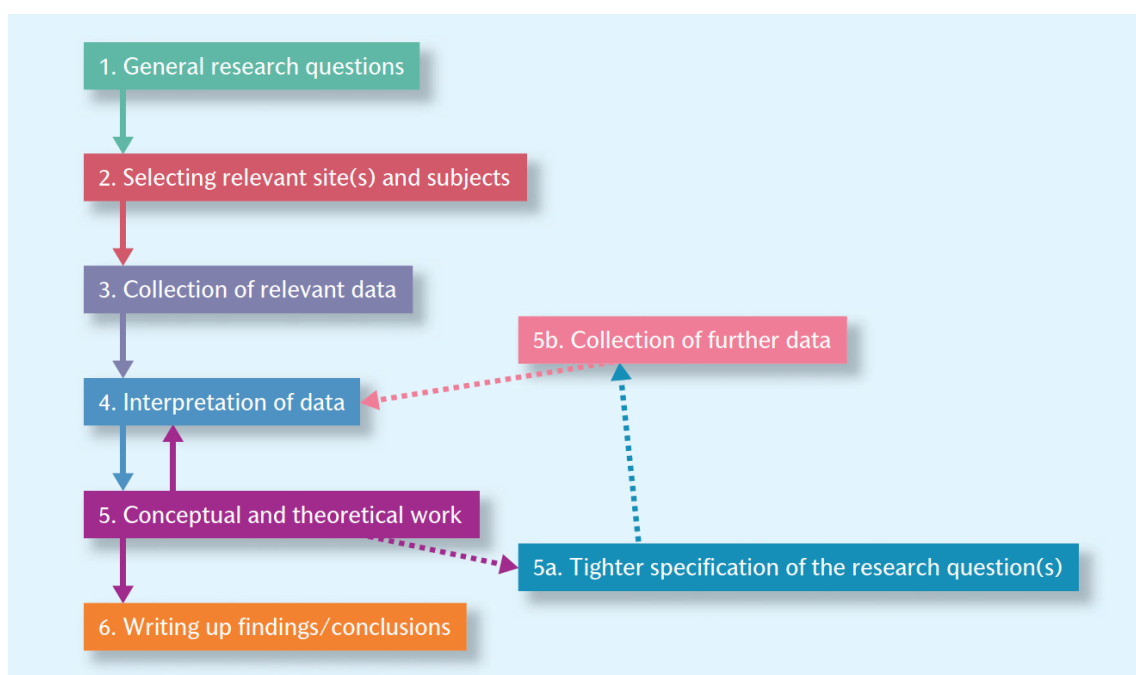


Figure 3.1 An Outline of the Main Steps of Qualitative Research (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p. 390)

The study in question has started by asking the consumers who have considered themselves as media-multitaskers and possessed electronic devices equipped with screens or touch screens to watch a popular TV show aired weekly on the Wednesdays' evenings. Before that had happened, the researchers briefly explained the objectives of the study without describing the actual behavior that would be tested. The participants were asked to watch the TV show in their home surrounding; in the way they usually do it (usage of electronic devices was allowed but not imposed). The only thing the participants were required not to do was to switch the TV channel during the entire time when the program lasted. The respondents watched the program alone. Moreover, the research participants have been fully informed about the purpose of the study and provided with their responses after the in-depth interviews, so that they could decide whether they wanted their input to be included in the multiscreening research or not. These research techniques applied allowed to reduce the biases ensuing from consumers' unnatural behavior or inferring the desired responses in the survey.

According to the previous research (Pilotta, Schultz, Drenik & Rist, 2004), the evening airing time between 7 and 11 pm constitutes the prime time for combined television and online exposure. In other words, that is the moment of the day when the consumers watch TV and use other media simultaneously. Given the above and requiring the TV show that is popular among the target audience of the research, 'You Can Dance' program has been selected. The show - 'You Can Dance' - is the Polish equivalent of the American program "So you think you can dance" (Youcandance.tvn.pl, 2016). The TV show is about searching for undiscovered dance talents. The program starts at 21.30 o'clock and lasts two hours including, usually, three commercial breaks of approximately twenty minutes in total. It is worthwhile to stress out that the show has been watched one week before the actual one in order to verify whether the commercials are the same. This has not been the case for the 'You Can Dance' show.

Approximately ten minutes after the show was aired, the users who had agreed to participate in the study, were e-mailed a link to the online survey (see Appendix B). The questionnaire consisted of open questions and few multiple-choice questions. Allowing the participants to express and describe their multiscreening behavior motivated the dominance of the open questions. Apart from that, they enabled the participants to provide unusual responses and did not suggest particular types of answers; thus, facilitating exploration of the new areas (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Moreover, these question were also supposed to test in what moments the participants used other than TV devices, understand what features of marketing communication attracted their attention, what triggered them to search for product information and in what manner. Furthermore, the descriptive nature of the questions was aimed at revealing the behaviors the users could not be aware they perform, and finally, provide a solid ground for the in-depth interviews where these issues were further examined.

The multiple choice questions dealt only two particular cases, when consumers were asked to check the boxes with the devices they used while watching the show; select the advertising they have seen during the commercial breaks. What is more, the latter question consisted of twelve checkboxes, where six advertisements were the actual ones that appeared during the commercial breaks while the other six were made up. The fictitious ones were similar to the actual brands presented during the commercial breaks, i.e. if Pepsi commercial was actually aired; Coca-Cola, Sprite and Fanta would be presented as the false one. The reason for such

method was to observe how many commercials the consumers have been aware of and whether they have been capable of recognizing particular products or just the overall product category. This is especially important to acquire the understanding of the influence of multiscreening on attention as well as memory, and consequently the consumer learning process.

The data obtained from the surveys have been firstly analyzed in search for patterns, trends, differences, general behaviors, and opinions. This was especially important to understand the impact of multiscreening behavior on the consumer awareness and product knowledge formulation, as well as whether the consumers felt inclined to search for product information being exposed to marketing communication on different media platforms (Need Recognition, Information Search). Apart from that, the preliminary analysis of the gathered data allowed for the follow up interview sessions with the consumers, who participated in the survey. The semi-structured interviews based on the questionnaires provided the research with further insights and understanding of the consumer behavior during multiscreening as well as the consumer journey through the Consumer Decision Making Process. The interviews allowed to explore the consecutive decision-making process steps with respect to the contemporary media landscape, investigate the manner in which consumers formulate opinions and acquire knowledge about the products. The semi-structured interviews method facilitated going in-depth of the research problem along with the collection of the cultural and interpersonal insights additionally influencing the described phenomenon. Both the survey and the interviews have been conducted in Polish to reduce the impact of cross-cultural boundaries and making the consumers describe their behavior at ease. The interviews were held individually, maximum four days after the participation in the survey, so that the consumers would be still able to recall the TV show and discuss it with the researchers.

The semi-structured interview consisted of 14 guiding questions (see Appendix C) that were constructed in such a way that similar, but differently phrased, statements occurred at different stages of the conversation. The rationale behind such interview guide design was to mitigate the effects of the answers that could be directly inferred from the posed questions and also cross check the interviewees' feedback with the one provided in the surveys. The interview questions were mainly aimed at understanding the particular stages of the Consumer Information Processing Model. However, it is important to highlight that the questions were designed, so that the respondents needed to recall from their memory the last purchase decision, and also the process that lead them to that particular decision. This has been facilitated by the open question that encouraged the consumers to "imagine that...", "describe how..." they reached decisions without directly asking them about it. The behavioral aspect of the questions, meaning that the respondents had to imagine a situation in which they would like to buy a particular product and describe the underlying decision steps and media used, allowed to remove the boundaries associated with problems in explaining the decision making process. In fact, most of the people follow the same pattern until they reach the decision, nonetheless, nobody thinks about it when shopping. Examples of the questions and themes discussed during the in-depth interviews involve: (I) describe what devices and media you have used today (guiding: describe your day by the devices used and for what purposes); (II) can you recall an interesting purchase you have undertaken during the past few days - how did you learn about that product (guiding: what sources of information); (III) imagine you are going on holidays overseas, please explain why do you select a particular destination, what do

you do to insure your choice will be correct; (IV) whose opinion is important for you when you buy something (guiding: do you need a confirmation from anybody that your decision is right? Why?). Different types of questions to investigate the same phenomenon were asked randomly during the conversation. This has been especially important to later on verify the reliability of the answers and verify whether any trends are visible in the gathered material.

What is more, during the interviews, the respondents were allowed to express freely their thoughts. However, when the consumers were unable to answer the question or answered on a different, unrelated subject, the question was rephrased by the interviewer or additional one has been asked. It is crucial to stress out again, that the interview questions were only the guidelines for the interviewers, not a rigid framework to be strictly followed. The main issue was to obtain answers related to the research area and context. Finally, when it comes to timing and location, it took around one hour and fifteen minutes to conduct the interview at the respondent's home.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed to facilitate the content analysis process. The respondent base has been divided into two groups (eight and seven people, together 15) and each of the researches undertaken the interviews on their own. Prior to the interview the participants were asked to give their permission for recording and were ensured about their anonymity. Then the two researchers met together and analyzed the interview transcripts using the technique of coding. Before that happened the answers provided by the respondents have been clustered accordingly to their position in the Consumer Decision Making Model. The process of coding in itself is supposed to divide data into component parts, which are ascribed particular names (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In other words, the coding can be explained as giving more abstract names to observed behaviors and phenomena.

Without a doubt, it is crucial to mention that the pilot study has been run before the actual research has been conducted. One week before the study, three people have been asked to watch the same show and fill in the online survey. This allowed to test the questions included in the survey and verify whether they are easy to understand. On the top of that the questions were tested from the angle of reliability of the answers they provided. Finally, and perhaps the most importantly, the pilot study permitted to observe whether the consumers performed the multiscreening behavior during the TV show and commercial breaks. The positive outcome of the mock study allowed to continue with the actual investigation and improve the elements of the research design.

The selection of two methods to investigate the multiscreening behavior was dictated by the nature of the phenomenon as such. In order to obtain the total picture of the behavior, its motives, and especially, avoid biases in reporting as well as describing the multiscreening by the consumers, two methods needed to be applied. The surveys provided with a solid background and understanding of the phenomenon that have been thus explored during the in-depth interviews.

3.5 Critical Reflections on the Choice of Method

The nature of the business study requires three criteria for the assessment of its quality. To be more specific: reliability, replication, and validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The reliability is mainly focused at answering the question whether the research could be replicated in the future or not. The concept of reliability is critical for the quantitative research. At the same time, it is important to think of qualitative study in light of results of the investigation as being repeatable. Moreover, the issue of originality seems to be more important as the study is supposed to go in-depth of a new phenomenon, explore its meaning for the marketers and define its position within the already existing theoretical framework. It is therefore difficult to assess this research in terms of stability of the measures as it could be done with respect to quantitative investigation. The reliability in case of multiscreening qualitative research needs to be perceived through the lenses of trustworthiness of the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2011), mechanism hindering biases in the consumers' answers, as well as the ability to draw conclusions ensuing directly from multiscreening not multitasking. The research design described above has been constructed in a manner that would counteract these threats. To sum up, the reliability and replication constitute two interconnected areas of the research. The replication should allow other researchers to initiate similar study, in order to test the relationship between the outcomes and evidence (Bryman & Bell, 2011) or search for other associations tied to the original research questions.

The validity is concerned with the completeness of the conclusions ensuing from the research outcomes (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The most applicable to the qualitative research spheres of validity involve internal, external, and ecological validity. The internal validity deals with the strength and degree of the relationship between two variables or more (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In case of multiscreening research this translates into the relationship between the consumer awareness and consumer knowledge as well as consecutive steps of the Consumer Information Processing Model. The external validity concerns the topic of research being applicable above the research context (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is especially important to know how the sample size for the research has been selected. In case of the multiscreening study, the consumers needed to fulfill certain criteria in order to be representative to observe the behavior and draw proper conclusions. Finally, according to Bryman and Bell (2011), the ecological validity represents the idea of how much the research findings are applicable to the natural, daily life. Due to the fact that, this research has been conducted in a natural setting of the consumers, who watched the popular TV show at home, surrounded by multiple screen devices, the study can be thus considered as close as possible to the reality of the multiscreening behavior.

Also, it is worthwhile to explain more profoundly the rationale for the application of the mixed methods. As the multiscreening is a relatively new phenomenon that is yet to be fully investigated, a combination of two methods needed to be applied in order to go in-depth of the behavior. Advantages of such approach include increase in validity of the research outcomes, and hence possible theoretical contribution (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). The disadvantages involve the ability of the researches to properly apply differential methods and combine contrasting results that ensue from the nature of each of the methods (Easterby-

Smith et al., 2012). At the same time, the two mixed methods used in this multiscreening study are based on one another. Moreover, both of them belong to the group of qualitative methods; there is no strong connection to the quantitative methods. All of the above is why the study can be regarded reliable when it comes to the usage of two different qualitative methods.

Even with the best research method applied, there always exist weaknesses of the technique used to investigate the phenomenon with respect to the research objectives. In so far as this research, the major flaws could be ascribed to the unconscious relationship between the Awareness and Knowledge formulation that together might transform into Need Recognition. The survey along with the in-depth interview is only capable of indicating the conscious purchases that ensue from the exposition to the advertising. The methodology applied does not measure the unconscious impact of the marketing communication towards multiscreening users that transforms into the purchase decisions.

Secondly, some of the interview questions did not work and required rephrasing and rethinking during the process as they neither yielded in creation of the new research material nor confirmed the already existing one. At the same time there always exists a chance that the respondents somehow infer the desired answer from the question or guidance of the interviewer. Even though few mechanisms have been applied (discussed before) in order to mitigate the effects of such situation, there always exists possibility that the consumers have presented themselves in the most desired manner they would like to perceived through.

Thirdly, in order to obtain the conclusive and in-depth insights from the study, only Polish market has been selected for the investigation. On one hand it provides critical outlook on one and uniform market, on the other hand it could be argued whether that market is the most appropriate one for the multiscreening research. As a matter of fact Poland is an emerging European market when it comes to the Internet penetration rates as well as ownership of smartphones and other digital devices. At the same time the sample has been selected so that it represents the most global perspective.

Finally, as the technology progresses, the media landscape along with the devices used for daily entertainment and contact with the brand change fast. It is likely that within the next few years, or even as this study is being conducted, the way people consume media will change and be enhanced by some other new devices or platforms. Hence the methodology applied to measure the effects of multiscreening would need to even more extensive and involve simultaneous application of various qualitative methods.

4 Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the survey and in-depth interview will be presented and analyzed, including a discussion of empirical findings on media multitasking and multiscreening in relation to the current theoretical knowledge on the consumer's journey through the Consumer Information Processing Model, and an interpretation of the findings. Therefore, in the 'Empirical Findings' subsection, besides illustrating the impact of multiscreening behavior on awareness and knowledge that was studied in the pre-interview survey, the first subsection will follow the structure of the consumer decision-making process including all the five stages.

In the second half of the chapter, the empirical data will be critically discussed and interpreted to illustrate new behaviors and behaviors that characterize the consumer decision-making process in the contemporary media landscape. Subsequently, the empirical data collected from the surveys and in-depth semi-structured interviews as well as data interpretation will provide a foundation to frame an answer to the research question: "How consumers form an opinion and acquire knowledge on brands in the contemporary media landscape with respect to the Consumer Information Processing Model?". Finally, based on the results from the empirical research, an existing model of the consumer decision-making process will be modified and explained to reflect the nature of media multitasking and multiscreening phenomenon in the contemporary media landscape.

4.2 Empirical Findings

4.2.1 Awareness and Knowledge

Before the in-depth interview, the study participants had been sent a survey that checked if the multiscreening behavior occurred, measured their awareness level, and investigated the behavior as such. It can be concluded that all of the 15 research participants were involved in the multiscreening. During the TV exposition, all of them used a smartphone to browse the Internet or communicate with friends. The second most frequently used device by approximately 30% of the participants was a laptop. This is somehow in line with the research undertaken by IRCenter (2015) on the Polish market on the sample size of 483 respondents. According to that study, the smartphone usage during multiscreening is growing, however, the second most popular screen after the TV still constitutes a computer (62%), while the third place is taken by the smartphones (52%).

When it comes to our research and the awareness level of the TV commercials aired during the ‘You Can Dance’ show, the participants remembered almost none of them. The respondents were unable to select the advertisements that had been actually aired during the commercial breaks. Very often they pointed at the advertising that had not even been shown during the breaks. This is in line with the previous research stating that multiscreening leads to partial attention (Pilotta et al., 2004; Moore et al., 2008; Courage et. al., 2015). In fact, the only commercial that has been properly identified by 50% of the respondents constituted Zalando’s marketing communication. Zalando is a German click only clothing store that operates in several European countries (Zalando.pl, 2016). The reasons behind this situation can be explained by the distinctive, celebrity endorsed communication. What is more, the commercial involved catchy music background, appropriate lifestyle context, as well as country customized last scene ending with the question “Poland, where is your park?” (in English).

Interestingly enough, only one out of all the respondents expressed willingness to search for product information right after the commercial has been aired. Nevertheless, this answer has been verified during the in-depth interview and appeared not to be true. Hence, none of the consumers searched for the product information on the other medium after being exposed to the commercials. At the same time, it is hard to predict how the marketing communication subconsciously affects the consumers during the actual purchase, however, all of the respondents claimed it has no influence on them whatsoever. According to the learning theories introduced in Chapter 2., the consumers have to be exposed to the communication multiple times in order to be able to build appropriate brand – product ties in their memory. Without a doubt, this process is strongly hindered and it could be argued that TV advertising has diminishing effects on product knowledge acquisition as it had in the past. The consumers are not even a subject to the classical conditioning as their attention is divided and the learning process is blocked. Moreover, during the in-depth interviews the majority of the respondents claimed TV constitutes a background for their other activities:

‘In the morning I turned on TV, but only to kill the silence. I was engaged in doing other things’ (Agnieszka);

‘Today I turned on the TV, it was just a sound in the background, I did not even pay attention to it’ (Paulina).

Furthermore, most of the respondents did not remember the marketing communication that had occurred on the second device they used while watching the show. Only few of them were able to recall some content elements of the Internet banners they had seen. Interestingly enough, none of the banners has been associated with the marketing communication aired during the commercial breaks. This implies a negative relationship between the awareness and multiscreening behavior. The consumers are not absorbing the product and brand information from either of the devices, which confirms that people are unable to properly store the information when performing a couple of tasks at a time (Lee et al., 2012). This is also in accordance with the classical conditioning learning and information processing theories that profoundly explained the reasons behind such effects (Voorveld, 2011; Jeong & Hwang, 2012). At the same time, our study strongly opposes the view that multiscreening does not necessarily lead to worse ad recall and recognition (Angell, Gorton, Sauer,

Bottomley & White, 2016). Finally, the only question that remains yet to be solved by future research is how to effectively communicate with the users when the multiscreening behavior is simply against the basic principles of the human cognitive processes, and thus, blocks the creation of the *awareness set* ensuing from the marketing communication.

4.2.2 Need Recognition

During the interview, the study participants were asked to explain in what manner they most frequently discovered existence of the new products or brands. The consumers were also asked to explain why they select these sources and why they consider them appropriate and reliable given the contemporary media landscape. Most of the respondents recognized the product need through their friends or relatives. This point can be best illustrated by the following quotes:

'Friends very often tell me about new, interesting products they have heard of or bought' (Agnieszka);

'Most frequently I find out about new brands from my friends and family' (Gaba).

The above could be perceived as the 'traditional' channel of the need recognition process that perhaps has not changed ever since the Consumer Decision Making Process has been developed as the previous research claims (Solomon, 2006; Jobber, 2007; Schiffman et al., 2012). The traditional word of mouth seems to be still crucial when it comes to product problem formulation. This is also in line with the concept of the sociocultural inputs that affect the consumer Need Recognition. According to Schiffman et al. (2012), friends and family constitute the so-called non-commercial sources of information. Moreover, the 'influencers of social class' impact how consumers approach and form opinions about the products. This is also what this multiscreening research confirms.

The second, equally important, source of the need recognition constitutes social media accessed through multiple devices (smartphones, tablets, and laptops). The medium used the most willingly for the need recognition is Instagram. Instagram is a platform available mostly through mobile application and used to share life's moments with friends through a series of pictures (Instagram, 2016). The application is available for other devices, desktop computers included, however, most of the users claim it is the most convenient to use it through mobile phones. What is more, Instagram is used by individuals, but also companies and celebrities to promote themselves. It is important to stress out that this medium allows for conveyance of highly visual content, very often associated with the person's lifestyle. At the same time it does not require reading, but simply 'scrolling down' the content. The Instagram usage context can well exemplified by the following quotes:

'I follow some famous people on Instagram. If I see Jessica Mercedes [popular Polish fashion and lifestyle blogger] on Santorini, I might feel inclined to go there too' (Basia);

'About clothes I learn from Instagram. There, I can easily see who wears what'
(Agnieszka).

A similar tool – Pinterest, complements Instagram usage. According to the company on its own, Pinterest is “the visual bookmarking tool that helps you discover and save creative ideas” (About Pinterest, 2016). Both of the tools, as the interviews reveal, are of the high importance when it comes to the need recognition of fashion products, furniture, and design. This is again due to the visual aspect of these products. The above is in line with the research of Wind (2008) stating that the consumers need multiple channels to interact with a brand and appropriate search and decision tools.

Another ‘visual’ need recognition tool identified by the majority of the respondents is YouTube. However, this is not understood as the advertising that is displayed before a particular movie or clip, but product tutorial videos. One of the most important observations within this area is that a great deal of the respondents said that they do not recognize their product need through TV advertising. This is not solely an effect of the media multitasking that has been revealed during the initial survey and in support of the previous research in the area of ad skipping as well as banner blindness (Benway, 1998; Plunkett, 2010; Infolinks, 2013; Gesenhues, 2014; Resnik & Albert, 2014). It is also caused by the fact that consumers find this sort of communication irrelevant, intrusive, irritating, and finally perhaps the most importantly paid, thus not trustworthy. For instance the respondents said:

'I seldom watch TV advertisements. When I see them I either change the channel or start watching YouTube on my phone. I pay attention to only interesting and attractive TV commercials, but I do not believe in a single word they say. No way!'
(Jacek);

'The TV commercials are never a source of information for me. Once they start I immediately change the channel or start browsing the Internet on my smartphone'
(Wojtek).

It is also worth pointing out that during the interview one of the participants had quite a confusing opinion about the TV advertisement and its effects on one’s need recognition. The interviewee, Basia, contradicted her initial opinion about her negative attitude towards TV advertising after she expressed that she had learned about particular brands from the commercials. While answering a question where interviewees were to simply explain in what manner they most frequently discovered existence of the new products or brands Basia strongly stated that:

'The TV commercials don't influence me at all as they don't meet any of my needs. Therefore, I don't seem to gain any knowledge or information out of them.'

However, during the same interview when Basia was asked in the second the last question to imagine planning an exotic trip to a completely new place and to walk us through all the steps she would take before making the final decision, she said in the middle of her answer:

'I would then move to searching information at the specific travel agencies. I often learn about travel agencies from TV, such as Grecos or Itaka.'

Similar phenomenon as in the case of TV commercials, applies to the bloggers. People read blogs, but they do not consider them as a source of product information:

'I do not trust the information provided by the bloggers, since I feel they are getting money for the recommendation of the products' (Paulina).

The last source of need recognition identified by some of the users is specialized press and, surprisingly, street billboards. In case of the press, the individuals have either pointed at lifestyle press such as Vouge, Vanity Fair, Harper's Bazaar or highly specialized, hobby related magazines. At the same time, the individuals spoke about articles written by experts or opinion leaders, not the advertisements that appear in the magazines. Similarly as in the case of TV commercials and bloggers, that type of product communication is considered paid and unreliable. This is best illustrated by the following quote:

'I do not trust the products presented in press advertisements. I do not find it reliable as I know that somebody has paid to put the product in there' (Basia).

In terms of street billboards, the consumers said they help them to identify the new products as they go for a stroll or see the banners while stopping on the traffic lights when they drive a car. This is in accordance with the integrated marketing communication approach, where the brand should speak with one uniform voice across different media channels (Tarczydło, 2014) as the media consumption is fragmented and individuals need to be exposed to various stimuli simultaneously, so that they are able to put all the brand 'puzzles' together.

Another interview question within the area of the Need Recognition was aimed at understanding the motivational aspects behind a particular product need. For instance, what makes the consumers want the product or brand. Apart from the pure depletion or breakdown of a product, the consumers usually want to possess the product in question in order to demonstrate their status, position or the match between their lifestyle and the brand. The consumers said:

'I want to satisfy the needs that ensue from my lifestyle. I want the products to be in accordance with the way I live' (Basia);

'I want to look good, poses pretty things [...]. I buy nice clothes as I feel they could help me get promoted at work [...]. I also want others to think that I am cool' (Agnieszka).

Furthermore, as people recognize their needs, they tend to think about the social acceptance of their purchase decision just as the Solomon (2006) mentions. In other words, what people would think about them when they had a particular product. Interestingly enough, sharing the information about the product of their interest through social media is also a subject to the social approval. The 'judgment' of the society is measured as function of likes the information shared earns on Facebook - the more, the better. This concept is also vital with respect to the purchase decision undertaken by the consumer.

What is more, the consumers were asked to categorize the types of their buying needs along with the way individuals recognize these needs. The participants have mainly identified three types of needs. Namely: functional, impulsive/emotional, and 'expensive'. The functional needs are considered the ones that are an outcome of depletion; the need recognition process with respect to this type of buying problem is internal and not easily influenced by the marketing communication. These needs usually constitute everyday products that consumers buy habitually without thinking about the brand choice. They most frequently select the brands they purchase usually as it is fast and the quality of the product is known. The functional needs usually concern the everyday products such as groceries or cosmetics. For example:

'When I run out of anything, I just buy the same brand over and over again as it is the fastest' (Fryderyk).

The second sort of needs identified by the consumers – impulsive/emotional - are usually recognized out of blue, do not respond to any particular problem, are spontaneous, and supposed to supply with an instant feeling of pleasure. For instance:

'When I am in a store and something is just looks so nice, I will buy it ad hoc' (Anika);

'Emotional needs for me are usually associated with what I have seen previously. They are spontaneous and do not solve any particular problem' (Basia).

The last type of need was described by the respondents as the "expensive", requiring extensive thinking and information search. They are usually recognized as a result of depletion, breakdown or willingness to possess extraordinary, high-end product. This has been best illustrated by Paulina:

'Serious shopping concerns furniture, electronics. It usually requires extensive research before I buy anything'.

These findings are in line with the consumer behavior theories stating that there exist purely functional type of need ensuing from routine depletion, as well as the emotional or psychological needs (Jobber, 2007; Solomon, 2006). The theories do not cluster need in the exact same manner as the consumers did on their own, however, if the "expensive" need is perceived as a combination of functional and impulsive/emotional one depending on the product, the need scheme remaining similar.

To summarize, the Need Recognition is mostly identified through friends and relatives, secondly through social media, and finally through lifestyle and specialized press. In case of fashion, designer products, furniture, and interior design, the need is recognized via visual channels such as Instagram or Pinterest and YouTube. It's important to stress out that the TV advertising and bloggers do not help people to recognize the product need. This is due to the fact that individuals find this type of communication intrusive, irritating, and finally, paid thus not trustworthy. However, billboards sometimes help people to become aware of the product as they are mostly seeing them while walking outside or driving a car, and therefore their attention is not divided. Just like in terms of the regular purchases, the need is very often

fulfilled in order to satisfy the lack of a particular product or to show-off, feel better. People are dependent on the opinions of others, interestingly enough, also in the digital environment social approval is important. With respect to the device that the most efficiently induces consumer's Need Recognition is smartphone - this is the second place after friends and relatives.

4.2.3 Information Search

In terms of Information Search, the study participants were asked what devices and media they use in order to search for product and brand information. Smartphone is the device used by the majority of the respondents, while still a few of them use laptop for that purpose. It is important to notice that the smartphone is usually designated for immediate use, very often in the point of sales (i.e. to compare prices, check product features). Another device used in terms of willingness to use constitute tablets. At the same time, the laptop is used for more extensive product search and analysis when the consumers have more time or during the breaks at workplace. For example:

'I use laptop when I need to do a lot of searching and reading - it is so much easier'
(Maciek);

'Looking for something on laptop is often easier. More tabs, bigger screen'
(Fryderyk).

When it comes to the media, Instagram is used in search of pictures, while thematic Facebook groups are used for particular brand or product information seeking. The respondents consider subject related Facebook groups the most appropriate place for obtaining the information. People within the social media groups usually poses the product and thus have objective recommendation and after purchase thoughts. All of the respondents indicated Google search engine as the first place where they begin their information search, regardless of the device. The consumers said:

'I mainly use the Internet connection on my phone to find a product on Google. In most of the cases I start with Google in order to find links to fora or sites with product reviews. Internet fora and Facebook groups are very important means of information search too' (Anika);

'Facebook groups are very good for information seeking. People have the same thing I want and express their thoughts about it freely. I do not think anyone would provide unreliable information there' (Fryderyk).

According to Schiffman et al. (2012), the Internet has changed the way people shop. Not only because they can purchase products online, but perhaps the most importantly, conduct an extensive research without leaving their homes. The research in this area reveals that increased external search effort, for different product categories, positively affected the shopping attitudes and time left for the actual shopping.

Another information source that some of the respondents identified were the experts' websites. Some of the product categories have a certain type of 'Wikipedia' information platforms. For instance:

'When it comes to the cosmetics, I search for the information on Beautypedia. In case of modern technologies, I go for Mashable. I use these websites since they are independent' (Basia);

'I regularly read perfumomania.wordpress.pl because it has articles about the colognes I have never smelled. What is more, the articles are written in a very nice, funny and intelligent way' (Jacek).

Interestingly enough, the product learning process has a strong influence on the Information Search as it helps to build the *awareness set* that is then transformed into the *evoked set* in the consecutive stage of the Consumer Decision Making Model (Jobber, 2007; Schiffman et al., 2012).

The digital consumers also point at product tests and rankings as one of the critical information sources. They are beneficial to the consumers as they present aggregated data, comparing various products in one place, clearly showcasing the advantages and disadvantages. This supports the view that the consumers need to be able to find and compare product information easily (Spenner and Freeman, 2012). At this point YouTube is also mentioned as a tool to verify how the product looks like in three dimensions and how it works. The great majority of the respondents still use manufactures websites to search for the product information. They do it in order to obtain "pure" product information; the data provided directly by the producers is still considered one of the most reliable sources. This can be illustrated by the following consumers statements:

'I go the producers websites to find product information. They usually present stark information' (Agnieszka);

'It is good to see what the producer has to say about his product' (Maciek).

Finally, friends and relatives are mentioned in many cases as the source of information search. For example:

'When it comes to traveling I very often ask friends if they have any places they could recommend' (Paulina);

'Sometimes I ask people on Facebook (as a status) whether they suggest something in the area of...' (Gaba).

Therefore, asking whether somebody uses a particular brand or has the product is still important. People tend to believe in what their friends say as they have no incentive to sell the product or impose any purchase decision. The above allows to conclude that product quality and the opinion has strong implications for its market success. As a matter of fact, maintaining positive brand image and relations with the customers may contribute to the sales performance of the products (Kotler et al., 2005). Reliability and independence of the

information is definitely the key in that stage of the Consumer Decision Making Process. At the same time, the syndrome of *search regret* has been identified by Schiffman et al. (2012) which is understood as after search dissonance that is an outcome of inappropriate before search purchase. The *search regret* may negatively affect the retailers that is why it is important that all the stakeholders engaged at different stages of the Consumer Decision Making Model, provide sufficient amount of information to consumers, reduce out of stock situations and training of sales force.

To sum up, the most common way to look for product information is to simply google what is needed. What is more, YouTube becomes an equally important information search tool as Google, especially when people want to see how-to videos and tutorials. Apart from that, people prefer 'all in one place' forms of information where they can find either product comparisons. Furthermore, if the consumers recognize a need, they most likely will turn to their friends to ask for feedback concerning a particular product or service. Interestingly enough, traditional word of mouth still plays a vital role in the information search process, however most often it happens through online communicators (on demand). Visuals are important for in fashion and travelling industries, where the look of a product or place is of crucial significance for the decision. Smartphone and tablets are the most used devices for the information search process.

4.2.4 Alternatives Evaluation

For the stage of the Alternatives Evaluation, the study participants were asked to describe how they compare selected products before undertaking a particular purchase decision. It is important to notice that the process of the Alternatives Evaluation is highly dependent on the degree of involvement that the decision requires. This is in accordance with the Rossiter-Percy Grid, where the consumers who are in search for low involvement products will not apply extensive research prior the purchase (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). For evidence, one of the consumer statements can be recalled:

'I buy everyday products in the nearest stores as they are nearby, convenient. I'm deciding whether I buy something or not on the spot. I usually take the products that I am accustomed, without looking at the price tag' (Anika).

The low involvement decisions are usually based on the trial or experience. The opposite is true for the high involvement decisions, where the consumers search for conviction that is needed before the purchase decision. In terms of making that purchase decision, closest friends and relatives significantly push individuals to undertake a decision. Thanks to texting and Snapchat, people can quickly ask their friends a "hot or not" question in order to receive a reliable feedback. Snapchat, a mobile messaging app, allows people not only to send messages but to take and share pictures and videos with friends knowing that the message will disappear in 10 seconds (Snapchat, 2016). For example:

'Before undertaking a particular purchase decision, I send a - hot or not - snap to my friends. I am taking a photo in a fitting room and send it to my friends for the evaluation' (Basia).

That is the most frequently recognized within the fashion category, designer products, where the people in the last stage of the evaluation send snaps or images of the selected good to make sure their individual choice is in accordance with what their friends think.

Moreover, the consumer's *evoked set* in the contemporary media landscape seemed to consist of the "brands that consumer is familiar with, remembers and finds acceptable" (Schiffman et al., 2012, p. 74) as the model predicts. Following the Information Search process, the consumer shortlists brands that are then being evaluated and the final one is purchased. The features of the products that are being a subject to the evaluation of alternatives are most often defined in regard to the key traits of that product (Schiffman et al., 2012). For example, in case of the CD players, the potential customer might assess the mega bass, while in terms of personal computers, processing speed and amount of memory might be of the crucial importance.

According to our research, the consumers first and foremost use the Internet fora in order to evaluate the different purchase options. The consumers said:

'I mostly compare selected products by reading reviews previously found on the Internet fora' (Anika);

'Very often I compare things by reading reviews on the fora' (Jacek);

'I am trying to find the products that I consider for appropriate for the purchase on the Internet fora. I don't think people would lie in there' (Maciek).

The respondents explain that as a need to find independent and reliable sources of information that are not contaminated by the marketing communication. What is important for the respondent is to find fora where they can read opinions of other consumers who already possess the brand in question, and can thus, provide reliable information.

The second powerful tool used during the stage of Alternatives Evaluation is the price comparison websites. They are used at home on the desktop computers, especially in the case of the high involvement decisions, as well as, on smartphones at the point of sale. The consumers tend to check on the spot whether the product available in the particular brick and mortar store can be purchased somewhere else, at another store or online, for a lower price. If this is the case, the consumers will leave for that store and buy the product there. For example:

'If I want to purchase something specific, I go to ceneo.pl and nokaut.pl [note: both are price comparison websites for all product categories], I search for the product in a good price. When I'm in the store, I do it straight away on my phone; however, the websites are very often maladjusted for the smartphones. That is extremely annoying!' (Agnieszka).

Interestingly enough, some of the respondents still complained on the issue of websites maladjusted for the smartphones. Obvious as it may seem these days, not all of them easily adapt to the screens of mobile phones. For example:

'I do the shopping only on my computer, it is simply more convenient - bigger screen, keyboard and mouse. On the top of that, some web pages look weird on Android phone system' (Wojtek).

Another convenience issue that the respondents complained about was the ease of navigation through the websites regardless of the device used. Few of the participants said they even leave the website if it is too difficult to browse.

Moreover, the respondents have also identified YouTube as a highly valuable place for comparing the purchase alternatives. As Gaba said:

'I use YouTube to search for product information when I'm now thinking about it. I like that I can see there a 'life product' without a need of going to the store'.

Apart from that, the rankings and product tests are also considered important source of alternatives evaluation. This is the case of the majority of the respondents.

Finally, the opinion of the qualified salesperson is still regarded critical by a significant number of the respondents. They believe that the trained sales force is capable of presenting the features of particular products within the price category and recommend the best option among all the alternatives. This can be exemplified by the following statement:

'It is good to ask the salesperson/store clerk about his/her recommendation. They know what products they have best in what price range and also receive extensive product training' (Fryderyk).

To sum up, one of the very basic mechanisms recognized in the theory is also applicable in the digital world when it comes to the high or low involvement decisions. With respect to the Alternatives Evaluation, people use independent Internet fora, price comparison websites. Although people still declare they go to brick and mortar stores to see and test the products, they tend to compare prices online at the point of sales using their phones and if the price is lower they will buy the product via the Internet. The devices used to compare the alternatives are: computers at home due to their bigger screen size and navigation features (many tabs at a time, computer mouse), while the smartphones are extensively used in stores.

4.2.5 Purchase Decision

While in the Alternatives Evaluation stage friends, fora with reviews from current product/brand users, product rankings, and price comparison website are the most important decision influencers, in the Purchase Decision stage the most important factors seem to be the transaction safety, consumer-friendly environment, and convenience. Since the purchase is an outcome of the previously taken steps, consumers already know what they want to buy, and therefore, proceed to make the purchase. Here, the consumers decide whether to purchase the product in a brick and mortar store or online, whether to buy it on their computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Our interviews reveal that even though all the participants are heavy media multitasker and multiscreening consumers who are technology savvy, they still prefer to buy majority of products in a traditional store. They still find it quite important to test electronics and to try on clothes, for instance. Also, buying products in brick and mortar stores gives the ability to talk to a salesperson/store clerk, who is often perceived as a specialist or even an expert in a specific field. This point was particularly expressed when we asked participants to imagine planning an exotic trip to a completely new place and to walk us through all the steps they would take in order to make a final decision. Some of the interviewees' answers were:

'I would buy the trip at the travel agency office unless I saw that it was cheaper online. In general, I prefer to buy trips at the office because there's always a nice person who sits down with me, offers coffee, and also recommends extra things' (Maciek);

'Right before making the purchase I would go to a chosen travel agency to make sure that I have understood everything correctly in their offer and that there's no hidden fees, for instance. If the trip cost at the agency's office was the same as on their website, I would pay for the trip right away. If not, I would go home to buy it online' (Gaba);

'I would go to a travel agency to listen to what a specialist has to say on the particular matter. However, as prices tend to be lower online I would buy the trip on the laptop' (Basia).

The listed quotes also reveal that a significant price difference is the main reason why participants decide to shop online. Also, product availability can move the purchase from a traditional store to the online one. These can be illustrated by the following statements:

'If I want to try on something, I go to a traditional store. However, more and more often prices are much lower online. Also, if the piece of clothing that I want to buy is not available at the store, then I go home to buy it on my laptop' (Basia);

'Sometimes I try on clothes in a dressing room, but then I end up buying them on the Internet - it is cheaper there and I get home delivery' (Agnieszka).

Participants also agreed that if a retailer offers affordable home delivery as well as a return policy with attractive terms, they tend to choose the online shopping method:

'When it comes to clothes, I like to buy them at Zalando because they have a lot of different products and brands there, [...] they ship to my house, and it is super easy to return things for free if they don't fit' (Fryderyk).

Also, the purchase involvement and perceived value of the product or its functionality influence where media multitaskers prefer to shop:

'On the Internet I usually buy plane tickets and smaller and cheaper things that don't require to be tried on - it's more convenient and faster' (Gaba);

'Things that are less 'demanding', fishing bait, I tend to buy online as it's more convenient and often cheaper. To buy something more expensive such as a fishing reel I usually go to a store to test it before paying. I need to make sure it works well. Since I'm already at the store testing a product, I just buy it there' (Jacek).

Availability of discounts also became evident as a factor influencing the place where participants shop. Moreover, possibility of activating a promotional code online or receiving a discount at a store can not only result in the purchase method preference, but even lead to a last minute change of the initial product choice:

'Before placing an order online, I went to a store just to make sure what my shoe size was in that brand. In the end, I bought there a newer and more expensive model than I planned originally only because I received a very good discount and they had my size. [...] I do often buy these things on which I can get a discount' (Maciek).

Even though media multitasking and multiscreening consumers do not have a noticeable preference for online versus offline shopping, they do have a strong preference in regard to a device used for placing an online order. Our empirical data revealed that laptop is the only device used for online purchases. Laptops, in comparison to tablets, smartphones, or regular phones, are perceived as the most reliable and suitable device for placing orders online, and are associated with transaction safety and convenience. One of the quotes that illustrates this aspect is:

'I use my computer to buy things - it's easier to print confirmations as well as to find information and instructions for money transfers. It is simply easier (...) Using a laptop is more convenient and I'm more certain that everything went well this way in comparison to using a phone' (Paulina).

4.2.6 Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision

When tapping into the Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision stage, this research showed that the participants share their post-purchase thoughts usually in two extreme cases: when they are either highly satisfied with the product or very dissatisfied. If they are really upset, they leave comments and feedback ad hoc on their phones, without thorough reflection or analysis, while the satisfied users take their time to come up with a supportive and in-depth review that is written using a laptop. The customer's feedback and review approach can be illustrated by the following quotes:

'I must be very satisfied or very disappointed with a product or service to leave a comment. I never leave comments on Facebook, to remain anonymous and not to cause any drama, well unless I'm beyond disappointed with something and I simply want to release my anger' (Fryderyk);

'Not too long ago I bought vacations from a bed and breakfast establishment. Since I was very happy with my stay, I decided to leave a positive and informative

comment on their Facebook page to help the owners with promoting their place. It's so easy and quick to leave a comment using Facebook, and you can add pictures, too.' (Anika).

These two comments also refer to our interviewees' media preference for leaving comments. The interview revealed that participants usually want to stay anonymous, especially while expressing their negative experience and disappointment. Therefore, they usually do not use Facebook to leave negative comments and prefer fora where they can provide feedback without the need for signing up or creating an account:

'I don't leave comments on websites where I need to open an account to do so. It's too much work that I don't feel like doing' (Fryderyk);

'I often intend to leave a comment about a product, but as soon as I see that the website requires an account I just give up. I don't want my name to be listed on the page' (Paulina).

Once interviewees decide to write a review or opinion, they tend to leave comments on the same fora or websites as they have used before for the information search:

'Sometimes I leave comments at those websites where I have found useful information that helped me with making my decision' (Maciek).

However, as we found out, most of the participants freely utilize their social media pages to post statuses allowing them to voice their opinion without any consequences. Besides writing comments to express the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, it became evident that people also post information, and more often pictures, online to simply show off and let others know that they own a trendy product or have been to an exotic place, for instance. It seems that the social media are therefore often utilized not to evaluate the purchase itself, but rather to create an online presence and strengthen one's identity. Thanks to portraying a more attractive and socially approved version of oneself, the social media members are able to build their personal brand through earning friends and followers' admiration and acceptance. However, this aspect was only mentioned by the female participants:

'After I buy something that is currently cool or very trendy, I often take a picture with that thing and post it on Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat, or all of those. On one hand, I do this to simply show off. On the other hand, getting 'likes' and positive comments makes me feel good about myself' (Gaba);

'Sometimes, I just want others to see that I have something. [...] I also want others to think that I am cool.' (Agnieszka).

It seems that females are more willing to turn to social media to receive social approval that reassures them about making the right purchase decision, or at least women are more willing to talk about this matter in comparison to men.

What is more, we confirmed that our participants, who are media multitasking and multiscreening consumers, avoid or skip commercials in general as they prefer to get on

another device in the meantime or simply switch a TV channel. However, once they notice a commercial, banner, or a review of the other products that were taken into consideration during the Evaluation of Alternatives stage they try to ignore it. One interviewee stated it plainly:

‘Once I buy something I intentionally don’t watch other brands’ TV/online commercials and don’t look at their ads. I don’t wanna regret the decision I made, I don’t want to learn something new that I had possibly missed in my research that would have made me pick the other brand over the one I bought’ (Wojtek).

Consumers simply do not want to undermine all the work put into the research and discredit their rationale for choosing a particular product. However, nowadays it seems to be harder to avoid communication, as media multitasking and multiscreening consumers are bombarded with marketing communication from all sides... and devices.

4.3 Discussion of Empirical Data

4.3.1 All in One Place

During the course of the interviews we found out that in the contemporary media landscape consumers want to look for information sources where all the available data regarding a particular product category is cumulated in a single place. Even though the Consumer Information Processing Model, outlined in the section 2.2.1., consists of the five individual and consecutive steps with the Evaluation of Alternatives occurring right after the Information Search stage, our findings suggest that these two stages happen simultaneously rather than sequentially. The interviews revealed that after participants realize their need, they usually begin the information processing part by googling rankings instead of taking time to identify “alternative ways of problem solution” (Jobber, 2007, pp. 121-122). This point may be illustrated by exemplary quotes:

‘When I start looking for a product I often begin with looking for different rankings, for instance ‘best laptops 2016’. This way I don’t have to go through each and every producer’s website and have dozens of tabs open on my computer screen. Then, I compare different rankings with each other and I pick, let’s say, 5 products that most often repeated among the rankings. After this, I open websites of each brand to find out more information’ (Fryderyk);

‘I’m looking for rankings where in one place I see reviews of all the products available in a category, pros and cons, general opinion, and price’ (Gaba).

Interviewees prefer rankings as they list multiple products within one category, such as ‘best laptops for gaming’, ‘best mountain bikes for kids’, or ‘best family cars’, according to product’s features, test results, or consumer satisfaction. This record of products’ performance provides an evaluation of many alternatives on one website, one screen, without the need to have multiple tabs open simultaneously and comparing all the crucial features themselves.

What is more, the study also reveals that consumers like to shop online on websites such as Zalando and the Polish equivalent of Amazon, Allegro, the e-tailers that allow an easy access to innumerable products and brands in one place and convenient filter options that reduce the number of choices to display only the most suitable options. For the same reason, interviewees prefer to use fora such as TripAdvisor, where they can access “350 million reviews and opinions covering more than 6.5 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions” (TripAdvisor, 2016). Moreover, TripAdvisor is a multifunctional website that not only enables people to read and leave reviews, but also to find restaurants and book hotels and flights. The following quote greatly represents the interviewees’ motives for using fora:

‘I read fora because there’s an easier access to the various information that I’m interested in. (...) To look for information about food and hotels I’d use TripAdvisor because content there is more specific and more ‘filtered’ so I wouldn’t have to read through things that I’m not interested in’ (Jacek).

The contemporary media multitasking and multiscreening consumer may prefer the ‘all in one’ websites for the same reason they like Facebook - they can access a lot of different information in one place, friend’s updates, popular videos, news, or songs:

‘I’ve stopped visiting different websites because Facebook is a synthesis of all the important information. Facebook tells me what I’m supposed to be interested in at the moment’ (Agnieszka).

4.3.2 Convenience is a Must

The findings of the undertaken multiscreening research revealed that the consumers in the contemporary media landscape treat convenience as one of the crucial components of their decision making process. Even though the individuals did not acknowledge high importance of this aspect for the products they select, it could have been inferred from their statements. At the current level of the omnimedia marketing communication the convenience might be still slightly neglected by the marketers, however it will have a bigger and bigger impact on the consumer’s decision in the future, as the preference for online search of information and purchases develops. As one of the interviewees mentions:

‘I use my laptop to read reviews and test results. I don’t like reading text on my phone when I have my laptop around. However, I prefer using my phone to look for images and pictures to using a laptop. It’s so much easier to swipe things rather than to click on while using a laptop’ (Jacek).

In order to provide an example, some respondents have already mentioned smartphone irresponsible web pages as one of the main obstacles in the fast information search or product purchase. Although most of the consumers carry smartphones in their pockets and could almost shop on them ‘as they walk’, the consumers still select laptops as a more reliable and convenient place for online shopping.

Without a doubt the ease of website navigation is necessary. As Spenner and Freeman (2012) argue, the critical for the company consumer engagement in the online world is ensuing from the 'decision simplicity index'. It is all about "how easy it is for consumers to gather and understand (or navigate) information about a brand, how much they can trust the information they find, and how readily they can weigh their options" (Patrick & Karen, 2012, p. 110).

Interestingly enough, one of the interviewees indicated targeted mailing and newsletters as a source of Need Recognition. The conditions that needed to be fulfilled in order to make this type of communication useful were either direct discount offers or highly customized product information that matches the interests of the consumer. For example Agnieszka stated that:

'Sometimes newsletters received on the phone encourage me to instantly take opportunity of an offer or ad hoc purchase, because there is something good available at a good price [...] Mailings from the airlines very often inspire me to go on holidays or taking advantage of the hotel discounts they offer'.

Finally, this consumer study reveals that the individuals tend to use the brick and mortar stores for the Information Search and Alternatives Evaluation. At the same time, they search for cheaper and more convenient options online as they are in the traditional stores. The consumers are smart, and they all keep the most powerful research tool within reach, namely smartphones. In addition, they even prefer to order certain product online due to the convenience of the door-to-door delivery. This is especially common in the case of bigger products, such as furniture, however it also applies to clothes and other fashion related products.

4.3.3 Friends

One of the strongest, if not the strongest, findings of this research is that friends and relatives matter a lot for the overall decision-making process of the individuals. There is nothing more powerful than the recommendation from a friend who has had a good experience with a product or brand. Thus, the research findings support the importance of the traditional word of mouth (WOM) for the media multitasking and multiscreening consumers. Moreover, it could be also argued that only friends may have enough influence to affect the low involvement decisions such as everyday, automatic purchases. Furthermore, almost all of the consumers pointed at their 'local' opinion leaders for different product categories. For instance:

'I have a friend that I ask what is new in fashion. I have a friend that knows everything about modern technology, different one for cars, restaurants, and so on...' (Maciek).

The friends and family have been mentioned in all of the stages of the Consumer Decision Making Model with a particular emphasis on the Need Recognition, Information Search, and Evaluation of Alternatives. The influencers in form of relatives and colleagues have the power to affect the purchase decision of individuals or even decide for them when the consumers send 'is that product hot or not?' messages through Snapchat.

Since the reliability and objectivity of the product recommendation is extremely important for the consumers, it naturally follows that friends and family are the best sources of unbiased product information given the contemporary, cluttered marketing environment. At the same time, the companies cannot easily influence the recommended brands of the ‘home opinion leaders’; therefore, they should pay attention to their reputation and positive image that could transform into sales success (Greysier, 2009). It seems to be crucial to maintain good and strong relations with all the customers, care about all the opinions, and treat the customers with proper interest since anyone can become a brand ambassador these days.

Although our findings indicate that friends and word of mouth have the strongest impact on the consumer decision-making, there has been one response that related to specialized Facebook groups, where other consumers who are more experienced and knowledgeable about the topic exchange the product information, tips, and reviews. For that respondent, Anika, friends are not considered to be different category specialists, therefore, their opinions are not considered to be different category specialists, therefore, their opinions matter as much as the opinions of thematic Facebook group members. Since they are experienced consumers within a particular field or topic, they can provide knowledgeable answers to specific questions:

‘Honestly, friends do not matter for me when it comes to the source of product information. I mostly use Facebook groups for that. I follow them regularly.’

4.3.4 Paradox

Over the course of the interviews we have also discovered a very interesting finding, a paradox of the participants attitude towards marketing communication. Thanks to the first part of the research, the online survey, we found out that the majority of the participants did not pay much attention to TV advertisements. This behavior did not only occur because consumers tend to engage in other activities on their phones but also because they find this type of communication intrusive, irritating, and not trustworthy. Consumers do not consider TV commercials and magazines ads as a reliable source of information as they are perceived to be manipulative and bogus, making people believe in something that is not totally true. As one of the interviewees plainly pointed it out:

‘I never take information from commercials into consideration while making my decision, because everybody just wants to encourage and persuade me to buy their product rather than tell the whole truth, look at Volkswagen for instance [laugh]’
(Wojtek).

As none of the interviewees admitted that they pay attention to commercials and advertisements during their purchase decision-making process, only a few of them admitted they occasionally read blogs and follow social media opinion leaders. Although some people read blogs, they do not consider them as a source of reliable product information, as the blog content is often imposed by company’s marketing department. Similarly to TV commercials and advertisements, participants referred to blogs as an untrustworthy source of information with one person stating:

'I don't trust bloggers because they are marketing freeloaders who write nonsense and take money for that' (Jacek).

Even though people do not believe commercials, advertisements, and blogs, as they all just want to persuade potential consumers to buy the particular product, surprisingly the majority of the interviewees appreciate, and even rely on, the salespeople and store clerks opinions and recommendations. They believe that the trained sales force is capable of accurately presenting the features of particular brands within the price/product category and recommend the best option among all the alternatives. However, they do not take into consideration the fact that salespeople are also paid for promoting particular products as they are given sales objectives that need to be met. Therefore, it is not uncommon that salespeople recommend particular product due to product's margin, to meet set sales objectives, or to increase sales of a slow-moving stock, and consequently, create space for new inventory, for instance.

4.3.5 The Media Multitasking and Multiscreening Consumer Information Processing

Our research findings support the concept that consumer decision-making can be identified in terms of its continuum process according to the level of involvement, time spent on research, and product cost, for instance (Lamb et al., 2015). Based on the level of continuum, there are distinguished three types of decision-making: routine, limited, and extensive. The findings from our study support the existence of all three of these types. However, in order to represent the consumer behavior in the contemporary media landscape, we have slightly adapted the Continuum of Consumer Buying Decisions model by specifying the source of information, as well as adding two new rows - *media* and *devices*, which are mainly utilized for the Information Search and Alternatives Evaluation purpose (Fig. 4.1).

As regularly purchased, low-cost products or services are usually identified with *routine purchased behavior*, they can be referred to as low-involvement goods since consumers do not spend too much time on researching and deciding before buying the good (Lamb et al., 2015). In general, consumers are familiar with a few various brands within the product category, but pursue just one. According to Lamb et al. (2015, p. 98), "consumers engaged in routine response behavior normally do not experience need recognition until they are exposed to advertising or see the product displayed on a store shelf". However, our research revealed that consumers in the contemporary media landscape do not pay attention to marketing communication; what is more, they even intentionally avoid it. Therefore, the need is usually recognized either once consumers lack a product or when friends and relatives talk about a particular brand. Also, for this type of purchase consumers do not really engage in information search and information evaluation processes. They tend to automatically reach for their favorite brands that they have bought before and only an in-store promotion or friend's recommendation can influence them to change the brand. Thus, the final purchase decision is made at the store. As one of the interviewees plainly stated:

'I don't waste time to search for extra information about the everyday products as I have my favorite brands that I stick to. [...] I'm loyal to my favorite brands' (Wojtek).

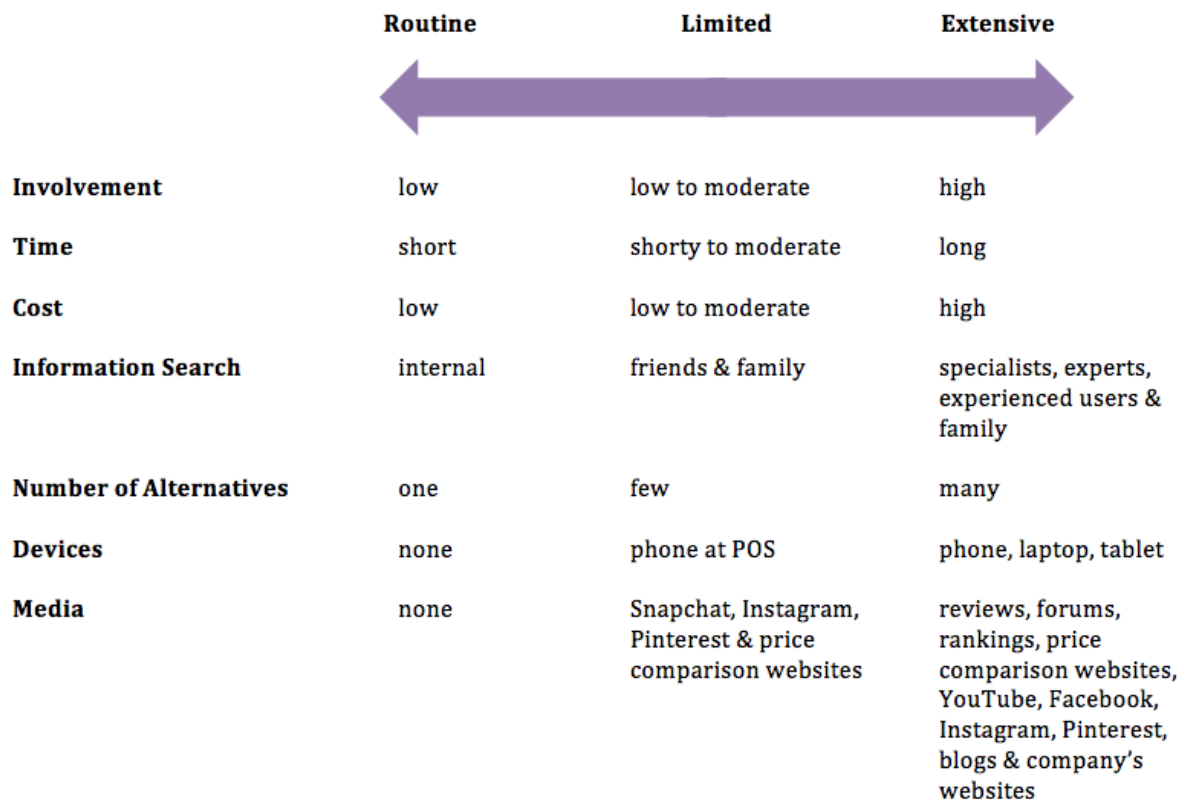


Figure 4.1 The Continuum of Consumer Buying Decisions (modified based on Lamb et al., 2015, p. 97)

In the limited decision-making, buyers are usually familiar with the product itself but may be unaware of the currently available brands. Therefore, in comparison to the routine decision-making, this type is associated with a bit higher level of involvement as consumers take more time to explore and consider multiple alternatives of more expensive product categories. Based on the research we found out that this is when friends and family are often engaged with the decision making process, as consumers seek for reliable and honest recommendations and opinions regarding making a purchase. This was mostly evident in the example, mentioned in section 4.2.4, that described the use of Snapchat for asking the ‘hot or not’ question while shopping for clothes. Also, during this process consumers will often turn to their phones at the point of sale to quickly check prices in other brick & mortars and online stores.

Last but not least, the extensive decision-making occurs when consumers intend to purchase an expensive product that they are not familiar with or that they rarely buy. Consequently, this process is characterized by the highest-level involvement as people intend to learn as much as possible about the products category and brands. In order to so, consumers spend a lot of time looking for information and evaluating the available choices. During this process they utilize all their devices to study rankings, reviews, fora, YouTube videos, social media feeds and pages, Pinterest, blogs and companies websites in order to look for valuable information and feedback provided by experts’ or people who already own the brand or product.

Based on the research findings, we have also realized that nowadays, traditional marketing communication does not influence or assist consumers with the decision-making unlike it was implied in the previous research and models (Kotler, P. et al. 2005; Solomon, 2006; Jobber, 2007). Not only is marketing communication absent during the Need Recognition stage as consumers are immune to TV commercials and advertisements but also it does not facilitate the Information Search and Evaluation of Alternatives processes as consumers believe that marketing communication is an unreliable source of information, which is manipulative and bogus. What is more, the above also implies that the conditioning learning process might be reduced. This is because of the fact that the consumers exposed to the marketing communication do not use it to build product-need cues in their memory (Gerrig et al., 2011).

The research findings did not only reveal that the information processing model remains structured in the contemporary media landscape, but also helped us identify within each step specific devices and media utilized towards making the purchase decision (Fig. 4.2). Based on the data obtained from interviews we observed that there are multiple devices used in the Need Recognition stage, with smartphones being the prominent device. Ultimately, smartphones are at consumers’ fingertips allowing them to freely and easily access any information at anytime.

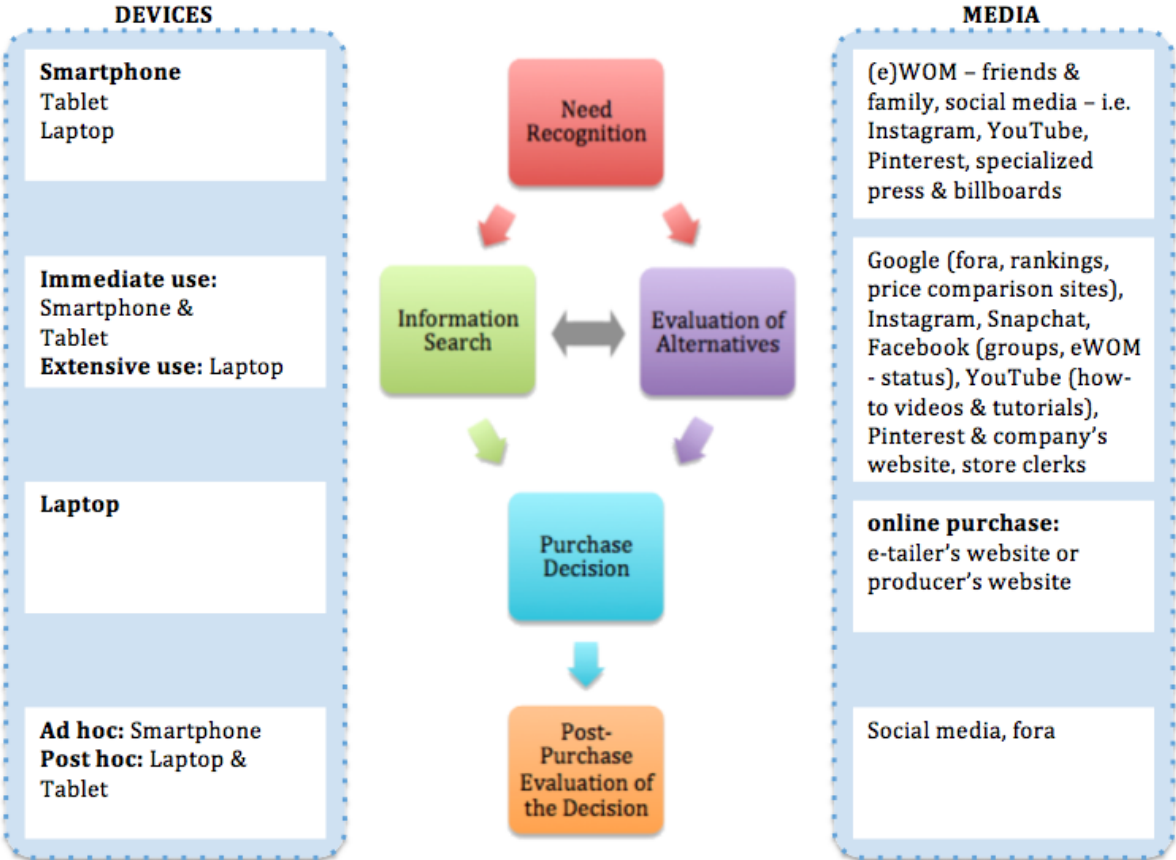


Figure 4.2 The Media Multitasking and Multiscreening Consumer Information Processing Model

Furthermore, our findings indicate that in the media multitasking and multiscreening consumer's decision-making process, the Information Search and Evaluation of Alternatives steps occur simultaneously rather than sequentially (Solomon, 2006; Jobber, 2007). The interviews revealed that after participants realize their need, their first step towards making a decision begins with the Google search of rankings and fora, where in the same place they can access straightforward and convenient product comparisons and reviews with pros and cons written by product category experts and specialists. For the immediate use the consumers choose smartphones to obtain product information while the extensive research is done at home, or work, on the laptop. However, the purchase decision is undertaken only on the laptop as it is considered as a more reliable and safer device than a smartphone or tablet, and also provides a bigger screen and an easy access to multiple tabs.

Based on the data obtained from the interviews, we found out that smartphones are used for the ad hoc feedback (usually negative), while laptops and tablets are preferred post hoc. Although the Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision in form of reviews and comments left on the Internet fora does not affect the consumer satisfaction of an individual that has undertaken the purchase decision in question, these comments might be later used by some other consumers for the product Information Search and Evaluation of Alternatives purposes. Therefore, one buyer's comment or reviews can influence others' purchase decision-making, with positive comments facilitating the process and negative feedback inhibiting it.

The current findings on the media multitasking and multiscreening consumer information processing reveal that in the contemporary media landscape the decision-making process for more involving goods is quite complexity based on the variety of utilized devices and media. Consumers want to make educated decisions that they will not regret afterwards. Therefore, they make a use of all of their devices to gather information from fora, rankings, social media, producers' websites, blogs, and press. Consumers do not have a specific preference, or limitation, to search information only at home, but they can do it anywhere, throughout the whole day, utilizing the best available device, or the best device for the particular decision-making stage that they are at:

'If I want to check something I do it right away not to forget it - I use my phone because it's always with me. [...] On my way to work I would read reviews on my phone. [...] If I need to learn more about a product I search the Internet on my laptop, read reviews, watch YouTube videos. I cannot afford spending money like water and buying new things like that, that is why my decision must be thought through' (Gaba);

'To get more familiar with available products I use the Internet on my phone, laptop, and computer. [...] At work, I use the computer to look for product specifications or reviews, but during my free time, I use a smartphone. I also use my phone when shopping in the store, so that I can compare prices right away. [...] When at home, I use my laptop to 'Google' places where I can buy something. Sometimes I make my decision while searching online; sometimes I go to a store to try on/test things' (Agnieszka);

'For the information search I use my smartphone and iPad. In general these two devices are for a quick information check. [...] Also, I look online, on my laptop or tablet, for the things that I wanna buy. I often use my phone to search for information while watching TV. [...] However, I use my computer to buy things, because it's more convenient and I'm more certain that everything went well this way in comparison to using a phone' (Paulina).

Last but not least, our research findings suggest that consumers tend to be engaged in different decision-making behaviors in accordance to their personality or the product that is being purchased. Even though the main research finding reveals that in the Media Multitasking and Multiscreening Consumer Information Processing Model the Information Search and Evaluation of Alternatives stages occur simultaneously with the Purchase Decision coming next, some of the consumers also tend to make their purchase decision while looking for information and evaluation available options. However, in this context the 'purchase decision' does not mean buying the product itself, but rather deciding when, where, and how it will be purchased, as the actual purchase occurs later.

'For instance while I was searching for a bike for my child, I first went to a store so that my child could test different models. After my wife and I have decided which ones were our favorite, I used the Internet on my phone to compare prices of those bikes to the online prices. Since the prices online were lower I decided to buy the bike on Allegro [Polish equivalent of Amazon]. I placed the order at home on my laptop since it has a larger screen, keyboard, and mouse.' (Wojtek).

5 Conclusion

5.1 Objective

This research has focused on investigating and understanding how consumer media multitasking and multiscreening behavior affects the Consumer Information Processing Model and each stage along it. Whether the process remains unchanged in spite of the increased consumer exposure to and utilization of numerous media and screen-devices simultaneously or sequentially, or whether this ever-evolving consumer behavior impacts the way people learn about brands and products, gain knowledge about them, formulate an opinion, and make the purchase decision. Another aim of the study has been to identify what media and devices are used during consumer's journey throughout the purchase decision-making process, where they come in during the process, and how they affect it. Also the research has been set out to determine how consumers acquire brand and product knowledge in relations to the studied phenomenon. As this matter is not only interesting from the consumer behavior perspective but also from the company's angle, specifically the marketing communication and its effectiveness on modern media multitaskers, it has been of our interest to find out the relationship between the media multitasking and multiscreening behavior and the Awareness and Knowledge steps of the Hierarchy of Effects Model. In regard to both of the models and the Cognitive Learning Theories reviewed in Chapter 2., we have conducted a qualitative study that has allowed us to provide a thorough answer to the research question:

“How consumers form an opinion and acquire knowledge on brands in the contemporary media landscape with respect to the Consumer Information Processing Model?”.

Based on the analysis of the collected data through online surveys and in-depth interviews, we have realized that the current Consumer Information Processing Model is outdated, media multitasking and multiscreening behavior limits the effectiveness of marketing communication, and consumers do not tend to build a relationship between brand awareness and knowledge.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

Media multitasking and multiscreening behavior becomes more and more common and ubiquitous due to technological advancements and constant innovations. As the availability of technology is globally increasing, besides only getting affected, the consumer behavior is also getting reshaped. Since the technologies have evolved over the years, so have done the

consumers, and consequently, their decision-making process. Therefore, this research extends our knowledge and enhances our understanding of the consumer information processing in the contemporary media landscape.

The study has shown that the Consumer Information Processing Model in regard to media multitasking and multiscreening consumers remains linear and structured as it was previously indicated in the literature (Kotler et al., 2005; Solomon, 2006; Jobber, 2007). Based on the research findings we were able to distinguish all of the five stages: Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision. However, the Media Multitasking and Multiscreening Consumer Information Processing Model has certain special characteristics that differ from the ones in the commonly used framework. Our adapted model implies that the two middle stages preceding the purchase, Information Search and Evaluation of Alternatives, are interrelated and occur at the same time during the decision-making process, rather than successively as the original model indicates. Due to the fact that the Internet is the fount of knowledge and people in general highly value convenience and ease, consumers have become quite practical and efficient while looking for information and evaluating available options. Therefore, they tend to look for, google, information sources where in one place they can access all the available data regarding the particular product category - products' advantages, disadvantages, specifications, and performance. These information sources do not only enable quick, but thorough analysis, but also enable consumers to learn as much about their feasible choices as possible. As the media multitasking and multiscreening consumers search for information online, they can access unlimited number of fora, rankings, and special interest groups, usually on Facebook, to gain all the required data. Furthermore, we have also noticed that people seem to have different decision-making behaviors depending on the purchase. Sometimes, during information search and evaluation of alternatives, consumers also tend to make their purchase decision. However, this does not mean buying the product, but rather deciding when, where, and how it will be purchased, as the actual purchase occurs later.

Moreover, as this research set out to identify the role of different media and devices used in the contemporary consumer decision-making process, the analysis of the online surveys and in-depth interviews revealed that contrary to the common belief, TV is no longer considered as the media that through commercials and infomercials allows consumers to recognize the need and find out more about products and brands (Dholakia, 2012). In fact, the TV advertising is absent throughout the whole decision-making process in the contemporary media landscape. The research has shown that nowadays the most important media for any of all the five stages is the Internet, where social media (Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat) stimulate the consumer need; fora, rankings, price comparison websites, and YouTube provide information and facilitate product evaluation; e-tailers' websites are the most preferred place for online shopping, and again social media and fora give a great opportunity to express consumer's level of purchase satisfaction. As the TV is excluded from this process, surprisingly press and billboards are still present, occasionally influencing and stimulating the consumer need recognition. The predominant device used across the decision-making process is laptop that also turned out to be the only device used during the Purchase Decision stage thanks to consumer's perceived safety and convenience factors (larger screen and keyboard). The second most used device is a smartphone since consumers always carry it around, and therefore, it is at consumer's fingertips. Also smartphone enables quick access to information

anywhere and anytime. As a result, it facilitates the need recognition, information search and evaluation of alternatives - especially for the immediate use at the point of sale, as well as post-purchase evaluation of the decision. For the same reasons, tablet is used during the same stages as a smartphone.

As mentioned before, in contrast to the literature, TV is not present at any of the stages of the Media Multitasking and Multiscreening Consumer Information Processing model, since nowadays consumers tend to use TVs as the background noise. What is more, modern consumers are immune to marketing communication and they do not only avoid commercials by simply switching the channels but also, or even preferably, by turning their sight away from the TV screen onto their smartphones or laptops. The study reveals that consumers avoid TV advertising, and marketing communication in general, as it is perceived to be manipulative, irrelevant, intrusive, and untrustworthy. Similarly, they choose not to obtain brand information from blogs as many of the bloggers are paid for product placements and reviews. However, in spite of the common opinion that commercials, advertisements, and blogs facilitate sales, to our surprise, the research reveals that people still appreciate, and even rely on, the salespeople and store clerks product recommendations. Consumers see them as experts, rather than employees that have sales objectives to meet.

Also, the current findings confirm that media multitasking and multiscreening behavior leads to partial attention and that consumers are immune to marketing communication as the consequence. Since consumers do not pay attention to marketing communication, therefore, they are not exposed to advertisement that could build the product awareness, which could be later transformed into knowledge, and finally result in the purchase. Thus, the HOE model does not seem to be applicable in today's marketing environment, as consumers tend to learn about brands and products from their friends and other people's opinions. Moreover, our study also confirms that multiscreening users are naturally a subject to the principles of human learning, for instance information processing, classical conditioning, and divided attention, as they are unable to effectively process the marketing communication that they are exposed to.

Furthermore, the research findings add to a growing body of literature on the importance of word of mouth (WOM). Since in the contemporary media landscape, marketing communication is considered to be intrusive and bogus, the media multitasking and multiscreening consumers prefer to obtain knowledge 'on-demand' by incorporating social media and electronic word of mouth (eWOM). This self-motivated initiative enables them to look for a specific piece of information, rather than to be 'bombarded' with unrelated communication. Our findings indicate that friends and eWOM have the strongest influence on the consumer decision-making since friends and family have been mentioned in all of the stages of the Consumer Information Processing Model with a particular emphasis on the Need Recognition, Information Search, and Evaluation of Alternatives. The relatives and colleagues are extremely important in the process not only because they are the best source of unbiased product information but also they have the power to affect the purchase decision of individuals or even decide for them whether to buy a product or forgo the purchase. What is more, the social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, are more often utilized for the Post-Purchase Evaluation of the Decision. While consumers post statuses to voice their opinion and describe level of purchase satisfaction, pictures, on the other hand, are updated

simply show off. This finding suggests that social media are not only used for purchase evaluation, but rather for strengthening one's identity by earning social approval and acceptance from 'friends' and 'followers'.

Last but not least, this study supports the notion that the post-purchase evaluation of the decision of one buyer influences the information search and evaluation of alternatives of another consumer. Due to media multitasking and multiscreening, consumers are more exposed to others' feedback, opinions, and current trends thanks to the social media popularity and widespread of technology. Therefore, consumers can not only easily post online their opinions and reviews but also their expressed level of post-purchase satisfaction often influences someone else's decision-making, either facilitating it or deteriorating.

5.3 Managerial Implications

When it comes to the business implications ensuing from the findings of this study, the key conclusion is that the contemporary consumers are highly sophisticated users of media and know how to effectively use it during all the stages of the decision-making process. The consumers are highly sensitive to paid marketing communication in sense that as soon as they notice any features of advertising in the content they are exposed to, they skip it and seek for other reliable sources of product information. Trustworthiness and convenience of finding unbiased product information matters significantly for the consumers. Thus, companies should aim at informing consumers about the products and building relationships, rather than spend time on simply increasing the reach and frequency of the marketing communication.

Moreover, since the development of the Internet and increased ease of finding information as well as development of the online communities, consumers are able to easily exchange their feelings about a product or brand. Therefore, nowadays, both traditional and virtual word of mouth matter. As much as the consumers still rely on the opinion of their friends and relatives in the decision-making process, they seek product information on the Internet fora to complement the traditional word of mouth. The above again supports the need for maintaining proper relations with not only existing customers but also the potential ones. As a matter of fact, satisfied and dissatisfied consumers express their thoughts over the Internet. This sort of information is then used by other consumers, who have not undertaken the purchase yet, but search in media for product opinions and reviews that are going to bring consumers closer to the buying decision. Apart from maintaining proper relations with the consumers, an efficient customer service or a specialized call center could be developed in order to assist all the individuals who are currently in their Post-Purchase stage and need further product information or simply experience problems with it. Furthermore, since friends and relatives still have a strong impact on the consumer decision-making process, the friendship aspect could be incorporated in the marketing promotions to build relationship with bigger groups of people, communities.

From the angle of the consumer satisfaction and experience, it is especially important that companies pay attention to digital devices adjustable web pages. The same applies to ease of

navigation through the websites. Simple principle holds in here, namely: the simpler, the easier to compare the options and make the final choice, the better. Similar principles refer to the application designated for the digital devices. Companies should also try to present all the relevant product information in one place, so that the potential consumer does not need to conduct an extensive research, but finds aggregated product data in one place. At the same time it is important to remember that the consumers value the product information that relates to them. Product promotions, especially in the online environment, should directly respond to consumers buying needs and lifestyle.

It is important to understand that the media consumption is fragmented. Our study confirmed that consumers skip marketing communication and are banner blind, therefore, it is almost impossible to attract the attention of multiscreening consumers. As consumers are 'everywhere' and their media consumption is random, applying the concept of integrated marketing communication might help to achieve better return on marketing investment. When the individuals are exposed to multiple brand touchpoints simultaneously (e.g. billboards, press, TV, internet), the greater the chance is that the consumer will put together information from different media into one total picture.

Even though the TV commercials do not directly lead to awareness and high spending on that type of media should be reconsidered, there exist some audiovisual techniques that might enhance the efficiency of this type of marketing communication. For instance, 'catchy' music, repeated slogans, disruptive and highly visual communication might contribute to the higher scores of as recognition and recall. This can be additionally strengthened by the integrated marketing communication when a brand speaks with one, uniform voice across different media platforms.

Finally, as the contemporary consumers are highly digitalized, use different devices to interact with a brand, and require advertising to be easily digested; the marketing communication should incorporate as many visual elements as possible. Images and videos help to convey the product features in reality and do not require significant effort to browse. On the top of that, the consumers should be engaged to co-create the brand, upload their own stylizations (eg. fashion) to show how they use products and what could be ameliorated. This should facilitate building strong relationship with consumers and maintain the level of their satisfaction even when the company fails to deliver on one of the promises.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

The limitations of this research can be first and foremost associated with the cross-cultural applicability of its results. The study was conducted in the capital of Poland, Warsaw, where the consumers fulfill certain demographic criteria. The above might imply that there exists a set of certain factors that influences research participant's behavior, and thus, the outcomes of the study could have limited applicability. Furthermore, Poland is an emerging market, where the development of different media used in the consumer journey is slower. Therefore, the media consumption and consumer behavior with respect to the Consumer Information

Processing Model might be different in the USA, Sweden, and even Poland itself. As a matter of fact, future research could test whether there exist considerable cultural barriers that affect the multiscreening behavior as such.

Moreover, the results of the study might be dependent on the personality of the consumers. Everybody has their own way of consuming media, formulating opinions, shopping, and undertaking the purchase decision. Therefore, the media multitasking and multiscreening behavior might look differently depending on the age, income level, place of origin, and personal experience.

It is also important to bear in mind that the pace of technological changes and emergence of the new types of media affect the multiscreening behavior. It is therefore important to think about the time frame of this study. As soon as new media and ways to purchase products along with other external stimulus occur, the consumer behavior might be a subject to change.

Finally, every research method has its implication for the applicability of the study and quality of the empirical material it generates. The methodology applied (online surveys and in-depth interviews) could be strengthened by some other method, such as observations or experiments. Given the time constraints of this research, only two methods could have been applied in order to produce valuable conclusions. The future research in the area of multiscreening could therefore test our findings by the usage of different methods and different population sample.

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Appendix A

Research Sample Information

No.	Name	Gender	Age	Owned Screen Devices	Usual Media Behavior	Interview Length
1.	Agnieszka	female	30	TV, laptop, tablet, and smartphone	TV: watched during meals and in the evening, no particular purpose Laptop: press review, work, emails Tablet: used for catching up with social media updates, YouTube Smartphone: communication purpose, has a lot of social media and mobile messaging apps: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Viber, and Whatsapp, also Uber; taking pictures	55 minutes
2.	Anika	female	28	TV, laptop, and smartphone	TV: watched throughout the whole day – movies and TV shows Laptop: Facebook, 'window' shopping - looking at pictures Smartphone: used only for the communication purpose, no messaging apps besides Facebook; shopping; taking pictures	60 minutes
3.	Basia	female	30	TV, laptop, and smartphone	TV: rarely watched, only in the evening - movies Laptop: work, emails, online bank payments Smartphone: communication tool and source of information, also used for looking at pictures, do not have too many apps – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter; listening to music and taking pictures.	50 minutes
4.	Fryderyk	male	25	TV, laptop, tablet, and smartphone	TV: watched during meals and whenever an interesting movie or show is aired Laptop: work, emails, and shows on-demand Tablet: YouTube and press review Smartphone: communication purpose; has a lot of social media and mobile messaging apps: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Viber, Whatsapp, and Tinder; taking pictures	55 minutes
5.	Gaba	female	27	TV, laptop, tablet, and smartphone	TV: watched in the evening – TV shows, and during volleyball games Laptop: used for everything – Facebook, YouTube, emails, information search, watching movies and shows on-demand, and streaming live games Tablet: used for social media updates and YouTube; Pinterest; taking pictures Smartphone: communication purpose, has a lot of social media and mobile messaging apps: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Skype, Viber, and Whatsapp	65 minutes
6.	Jacek	male	31	TV, laptop, and smartphone	TV: watched in the evening – shows on-demand and football games Laptop: used for everything – work, emails, shopping, movies, online bank payments Smartphone: used for communication and entertainment purpose, has a lot of apps: Bank, Zalando, Airbnb, Uber, Sports Game Results, Facebook, Skype, Viber, and Whatsapp; taking pictures and videos	60 minutes
7.	Maciek	male	27	TV, laptop, and smartphone	TV: movies and TV shows, sports games: football and volleyball Laptop: emails, source of information, games Smartphone: predominantly used for texting and emails; has all the messaging apps: Facebook messenger, Whatsapp, Viber, and Snapchat; games; taking pictures	50 minutes
8.	Paulina	female	26	TV, laptop, and smartphone	TV: watched during meals and in the evening Laptop: press review Smartphone: used for communication purpose; has a lot of social media and mobile messaging apps: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Viber, and Whatsapp; taking pictures	60 minutes
9.	Wojtek	male	33	TV, laptop, and smartphone	TV: news, football games, and historical documentaries Laptop: games, source of information, emails, YouTube, online bank payments Smartphone: used for calling and texting; no messaging apps, just games	65 minutes

Appendix B

Online Survey

Instructions

This survey consists of 13 questions. After clicking on the “next” button, we kindly ask you to respond to all of the consecutive questions without going back to the previous ones in order to make changes. Each participant can take part in the survey only once.

Thank you for your help and cooperation,

Piotr & Joanna

Questionnaire

Please note: YCD = You Can Dance

1. Which electronic devices did you use while watching YCD?

(more than one answer allowed)

- PC
- Laptop
- Smartphone
- MP3 Player
- Smartwatch
- Other (please specify)

2. During which moments of the YCD did you use the electronic devices indicated in the previous question?

(multiple choice question, more than one answer allowed)

- Introduction of the dancers
- Dancing performance
- Jury evaluation
- Commercials
- Solo dances
- Summaries

3. Please list the commercials of the products/brands that have been aired during YCD and that you remember. Why are you able to recall these commercials?

(open question)

4. Please describe what you did on each of the devices used (apart from TV).

(open question)

5. Please mark the brands that you have seen during the YCD commercial breaks.

(multiple choice question, more than one answer allowed)

6. Can you recall advertisements (eg. video, banner, pop-up ads) that you have seen on another device you have used. If yes what brands/products did they communicate?

(open question)

7. Did any of the commercials emitted during YCD made you stop using the other device? If yes, which commercial was it and why?

(open question)

8. Did any of the commercials inspired you to search for additional information about this product/brand?

(yes or no question)

Yes

No

9. Did you search for additional information about the product right after seeing it on TV?

(yes or no question)

- Yes
- No

10. Please specify which device you have used to that additional product/brand information?

(more than one answer allowed)

- PC
- Laptop
- Smartphone
- MP3 Player
- Smartwatch
- Other (please specify)

11. Have you noticed any products during the YCD show that seemed to look like an advertisement (so called product placement)? If yes, what was it?

(open question)

12. Please list all the YCD sponsors that you can recall.

(open question)

13. Name:

(open question)

Appendix C

Interview Guide

1. Please list and describe the media that you have used today? What functions do these media play for you? (eg. TV – informational, phone – communication).
2. In what way do you most frequently learn about existence of new products? Which sources do you use (it might be friends, opinion leaders, types of media)?
 - a. Why these sources?
 - b. Why do you consider these sources reliable and appropriate?
3. Which media/devices/webpages/applications do you use in order to find information about new products?
4. How do you compare products before you buy them?
5. What helps you in deciding whether you buy something or not?
6. Which steps do you take before you buy something?
 - a. Which media do you use?
 - b. See the relationship to Consumer Information Processing Model (only a remark to the interviewer).
7. How do you most frequently learn/discover that you need to/want to buy something new?
8. What makes you want a product? What triggers your desires? Why do you want to have it?
9. How would you group your shopping needs?
10. Whose opinion matter to you in terms of searching information about products that you would like to buy? (eg. cosmetics, food, etc)
11. Whose opinion matter when you finally buy something?
12. Could you describe how looks the process that leads you to a purchase?

13. Imagine that you are in the travel agency and planning to go on holidays abroad (to some new place you have never been before). Please describe how you search for the information about new place, whether and how you compare different options and where do you “buy” the holidays in question.

14. Do you share your thoughts online after the purchase of a product/service? If so, can you recall and describe any specific situation?