

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The results from the two experiments help to clarify that variations in format and content of warnings had an impact on consumers' information processing. Therefore, to increase warning effectiveness in the televised advertisements, both format and content of warnings had to be taken into consideration.

Format of warnings

Format of warnings should be considered on both warning conspicuousness and transmission mode, especially warnings' presentation in mutual dual modality and high conspicuous condition were found to be the best. For example, the effective warning presentation should be in a bold, black, large print size with a white background, placed in the middle of the screen, and with the announcer speaking at a normal rate.

To explore the effect of warning conspicuousness on warning recall and recognition, this study found that warnings presented in high conspicuous conditions in either visual only or dual modality had significantly greater warning recall and recognition than warnings presented in low conspicuous conditions for both drug advertisements. However, warning presented by audio only for *Paranol* has been found no significant differences between high and low conspicuousness.

When comparing the effects of each pair of transmission mode on warning recall and recognition for both drug advertisements, this study found that warnings presented in dual modality produced greater recall and recognition than warning presented in visual only. Dual modality warnings failed to produce higher recall and recognition than audio only messages. The effects of audio and visual warnings on both recall and recognition were unconformity.

There were no effects of warning format including warning conspicuousness and transmission mode on risk perception for both drug advertisements. However, warnings presented in high conspicuous conditions tended to have higher levels of risk perception than warning presented in low conspicuous conditions.

Content of warnings

Besides format of warnings, content of warnings also important for effectiveness of warning presentation. Content of warnings should be considered on warning specificity and number of warning statements.

The study found that there were no differences of warning recall and recognition between high and low conspicuous conditions in a general warning message. However, high conspicuous warnings produced greater recall and recognition than low conspicuous warnings in specific warning messages. These results lead to the conclusion that higher conspicuous warnings, the more recall and recognition increasing of specific warnings.

Although the results of this study indicated that warning presented in general form produced greater recall and recognition than warning presented in specific form, general warnings did not produce greater risk perception than specific warnings. The

results showed that specific warnings produced greater risk perception than general warning. Within specific warnings, four statements tended to have higher recall and recognition than two statements whereas increasing the amount of specific warnings from two to four statements did not increase risk perception. Therefore, to enhance risk perception of OTC drugs, it is important that warnings should be presented with specific information. However, the proper numbers of specific warnings is needed to further study.

Suggestions

According to the study results, some suggestions can be provided to Thai FDA and for future research as follows:

Suggestions for Thai FDA

In order to increase effectiveness of warning OTC drug on televised advertisements, public policies needed to be clarified for appropriate standard in both content and format. Especially, standardization for conspicuousness should be given more details such as type size, message contrast background, speaking rate, and position of warning messages. In the content aspect, the results from this study indicated that in order to create a maximum effectiveness of the health risk perception, the warning of OTC drugs must be presented in the specification format rather than the general form. Besides, the arrangement of the content, the data of this research implied that the warning messages must concurrently be shown to the consumer with high conspicuous condition as well. Regarding the results of this study, the

conspicuous standard for warning presentation, the suggested criteria for developing the high conspicuousness warning should contain the following issue;

1. The warnings should be presented in dual modality form.
2. The warnings should be presented in large size (for example, $\geq 1/25$ th of the screen height)
3. The warnings should be presented with bold, black print contrasts sufficiently with the white background.
4. The background should be a single color.
5. The warning message position should be presented on the middle of the screen.
6. The warnings should be announced in normal rate (approximately 250 syllables per minute).

The results from the study also suggested that standard for both format and content of warnings in televised OTC drug advertisements proposed are considerably important and useful in providing guidance to increase the likelihood for consumers to be fully informed about the products they purchase and use. These results must rapidly be generated further as a legally criteria in order to prevent the consumers from a misleading of drug use by announcing the Thai FDA regulation for warnings in televised OTC drug advertisements in particular way. Finally, for the fulfillment of the consumer protection, the policy makers should find the suitable strategy in convincing marketers to follow the setting regulation.

Suggestions for future research

There were a number of suggestions in this study for the future research. First, further study is needed to indicate the proper number of specific warning messages presented on televised OTC drug advertisements. These proper numbers should be enough to achieve sufficient information provided to consumers, whereas the marketers are willing to present them without adversely affected to their products. Second, for generalization of the results to other populations, the next study should be confirmed with participants from the general consumers such as including more diversification of the participant educational levels. Third, warning effectiveness in this study measured by warning recall, recognition, and risk perception, which were considered as intermediate measures in consumer information processing, were not absolutely implied the reality of the consumer behavior. With this reason, an attempt to identify another measurement that can certainly be used to evaluate the most effective warning presentation should be conducted. Research on warning label effectiveness has identified that the ultimate test of warning presentation effectiveness is behavioral compliance. However, investigating the effectiveness of warning presentation using behavioral compliance as a dependent measure needs to be careful with the situational and ethical restraints (Argo & Main, 2002). Finally, since homogenous participants used in this study would likely to have similar risk taking style and similar level of familiarity, involvement of self-medication was only one factor that has been used to control extraneous effect on consumer information processing in this study. However, other factors such as, warning familiarity and risk taking style might also have an effect on consumer information processing. Therefore, the next study should be concerned more on other extraneous variables.