
Impacts Of Advertising On Indian Values And Culture

Introduction

To understand or analyse the impacts of advertising, we must first understand what advertising essentially means for the society. The term advertising simply put can be defined or explained as a tool or means to inform and persuade the audience and/or customers of the product or service offered to meet and/or satisfy their needs. It is said with great power comes the fear of misuse, advertising is also one such power, that comes with both good and bad, thus the effects or impacts of advertising on the society are seen prevailing in both the forms positive as well as negative. It remains in most cases however largely subjective unless there's an involvement of facts that were stated or claimed otherwise. You see, advertising believe it or not can be accepted as a form of art, for no other reason but that advertising applies the use of art to promote services and product.

To quote Plato, "Art is powerful, and therefore dangerous." Any and every form of art, all of art moves people, powerfully. Poetry, theatre, music, paintings, dance all evoke and stir up extremely strong emotions. They remain as an aware of or an unaware of constant influence on the behaviours, lifestyle, ideologies and even the character and intellect of people. Thus it is a given that advertisements largely influences the mass audience or the preceptors.

Advertising has existed since the beginning of time, only in less developed forms, for example the mere use of simple methods of communication, some prevail today as well, like the hawkers or vendors biding against one another louder each time narrating their own jingles with facts and schemes or in the form of bhopus or whistles or bells like that of an ice-cream truck or the dhaar wala. These methods of advertising or promotions are largely different from the traditional bookish advertising, but they did and in certain positions still do work to grab attention and promoting products and services.

Advertising being a medium oriented communication to or for the society, according to changes in the medium and technological advancements, it has updated itself. The growth of industrialisation and entrepreneurship has lead to a significant growth and need of advertising industry. Advertising as an industry is subjected to moderations and advancements depending on innovations and discovery. Simply put, it is an industry that is subjected to change from time to time according to the discovery of new mediums and platforms to reach and communicate to or with the end consumer or the mass audience.

Talking about the core purpose of this paper, how media affects or the impacts of advertising on the society. Like any other form of art, advertising is also subjected to the perception of the viewer that absorbs the data being presented to him. Generalising and talking about the effect of advertising on society arguments can be made on a number of factors, negatively as sometimes the claims made might be false in reality, they could be deceptive and misleading, possibility of being misinterpreted, other times as it helps boost monopoly or aids price rise, creating a false need of a product or service. Positively, as creators of change, creating awareness, encouraging healthy competition, generation of employment, enhancing creativity and out of the box thinking.

Indian Culture & Advertising

India is a culturally rich country and has always been deeply immersed and drenched in traditions and values. As geographically vast the country is, the diverse the people are. The people of the country follow different practises, have different faiths, eat different food, speak different languages however the temperament of the masses remains rooted, unique and most importantly similar throughout the nation. The core concepts or fundamentals of the Indian culture are honesty, modesty, adaptability, pride, innovativeness, light-heartedness and of course unity. Religious beliefs play an important role in culture, the core values of religions across the country are more or less similar. Thus the core values across the boundaries of the states are more or less at the core the same.

Advertising is a tool that is key to every business enterprise to succeed and establish themselves in the modern world. Advertising not only helps business tap or reach the existing markets but also helps expanding the market. Advertising plays a vital role in creating or evoking a sentimental attachment or stirring up an emotion towards the brand, product or service in the minds of the audience that makes the market or the consumers. India has one of the fastest growing advertising industries in the world. Television in India remains the most booming and ever-lasting platform or form of advertising for ads among the traditional means and forms of advertising. The rise of this Industry reflects the country's rapid transformation.

Impacts of Advertising

Advertising is a power and with great power comes greater responsibility. The advertising industry today is aware of the influential strengths of their industry on the local masses. Advertising though a boon and oxygen to the lives of business plays a lot of tricks that may or may not have fruitful impacts on the society.

Research shows that modern advertising seems to be encouraging the concepts of spending more, saving less, borrowing more, and consuming larger or greater quantities of material goods. Promoting concepts of piling debts and borrowed loans to buy or purchase material goods or utilize luxury services that may or may not be essentially of greater magnitude or need.

Values are also an aspect that has seen a deal of effects and impacts by advertising. Through dramas and stories relating to modern times with a slight change for better or for worse, that reflect the community or society at a certain decree, advertising promotes the 'normalising culture.' Now, this works two ways, normalising the right things are extremely important. Normalising the period and pads through ads that cast lead actors like Akshay Kumar, work for the betterment of the community. While on the other hand, an advertising campaign that promotes fairness or lighter skin tone being true confidence and attractive over dusky skin tones gives out wrong and incorrect moral message when we as a country have such rich diversity, having almost every type and shade of colour, have grown up united.

Advertising campaigns like Jaago grahak Jaago, and Do boond zindagi ke naam - the polio campaign have created lasting impacts for bringing about change and spreading awareness about matters of great magnitude and importance. Advertising not only spreads awareness but also is supposed to be a reliable source of information.

Monetising the deeply rooted values of togetherness by depiction of sentimentally driven advertisements like the ICICI life insurance campaigns by emotionally targeting their consumers to evoke the feelings of need of security for the family as an imperative responsibility. Such campaigns monetise by emotionally targeting the soft family values that prevail across the society and arouse the consciousness of the consumer.

Portrayals of heavy stereotypes in the advertising industry tends to mould the society further more in those specific directions. For example the depiction of women restricted to or confined in the kitchen or the four walls of the house, root the wrong traditions of women being treated wrongly or even the portrayal of women in the J.K Cement advertisement, showing a women in a bikini, now what does a women in a bikini have to do with cement? A violation of dignity and respect is what I believe it to be, while some people might enjoy this.

Westernising and conflicts arising there after are common domino effects witnessed in the advertising industry. Certain ads that westernise the community to negatives extents such that they contradict to the existing values of the Indian traditional system create multiple backlashes and also influence the young naive minds to follow and adapt to western cultures entirely. While they also help curb the traditions that should have never existed in the first place and that is a positive difference.

The advertising industry has realised the potential and nature of the market, they know the thought process and psychology of their audience, to manipulate and hit the write emotion and points to hit, and after taping the market, how to appropriately follow them to deliver them such that it leaves a direct and lasting impact on the mass audience. Indians are governed by their emotions, even our practical and logical reasonings and states have an emotional influence.

Some survey helped me understand that advertisements also generate or arouse in the minds of the masses a superficial need of a product. Simply put, there was created a need, for a product that is not in reality a need perse. Such manipulation, often leads to people purchasing unnecessary goods and service just for the sake of it.

Some surveys also saw the participants making references to the jingles or slogans of the brand or product and service when asked why were they purchasing certain products.

Festivities are of extreme importance, generally, in our country. Every household may not be hosting an extravagant celebration but all in all every citizen has their spirits high as a whole.

Creating ad campaigns around topics and subjects of festivities, influences the mass audience. Such campaigns largely engage values, traditions and culture depicting values of togetherness, sharing and love. Campaigns like Cadnury's kuch meetha hojaye, have had fruitful and positive impacts on the society and community.

The recent case of the tanishq advertisement, that portrayed a united front, and the beauty of a cross culture marriage, we saw the brand withdrawing the ad from all social media platforms due to the fear or already being the recipients of cruel backlash. When in reality, that advertisement was nothing but peaceful and beared a vital positive message that today's society needs to hear. Despite the imperative and strikingly obvious reasons as to why the ad must be or ought to be aired back on all platforms, it is not, and that is because of a certain group of people. My point being advertisements have a power to influence the mass audience

however, sometimes the mass audience impacts advertising.

Conclusion

Advertising holds great power. It is a form of art, and art is powerful, thus influential. The Indian audience and consumer base is highly emotional and value centric, and thus comparatively easy to mold. Advertising has diverse effects on the society and its values both negative and positive.

Advertising is a tool that is key to every business enterprise to succeed and establish themselves in the modern world. Modern advertising seems to be encouraging the concepts of spending more, saving less, borrowing more, and consuming larger or greater quantities of material goods.

The advertising industry has a large scope and are aware of their potential and nature of the market. Advertising campaigns like Jaago grahak Jaago, and Do boond zindagi ke naam - the polio campaign have created lasting impacts for bringing about change and spreading awareness about matters of great magnitude and importance. To conclude, I would like to state and acknowledge that my research has led me to conclude that advertising has a heavy influence of the mass audience in ways more than one. Advertising influences and leaves impacts larger than just promoting a product to satisfy the needs of the consumer.

Content shown plays a tricky role, since it is a form of art, it is largely subjective, more often than not you'll find groups of people feel certain discomfort from a particular advertisement while the mass population feels comfortable and in fact, might even enjoy that particular campaign or set of advertisements. Advertisement is a need that has been a part and parcel of social life ever since the beginning of time and thus, it is a given that advertising influences and has a significant impact on the mass audience, some create an impact larger than the other, some for the better and some otherwise. Advertising is an industry with humongous and incomparable potential, like any and every form of media, advertising done right can do wonders.