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An Empirical study on Re-enforcement advertisement in India

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Abstract

Heated discussion on offensive advertising was seen on a rise in India. International brands, such as Fast track, Axe effects, etc. attracted extensive yet negative media coverage simply for the advertisements. The Potential pitfalls for advertisers who try to make their marks in India to be endless. Conventional wisdom in advertising believes that a certain amount of irritation will enhance the effectiveness of an ad. In order to cut through the increasingly clustered advertising environment, some advertisers tend to design messages that violate common expectations and/or arouse controversies. However, it's hard to draw a clear line between Re-Enforcement and offensive, especially in a high-context culture such as India, where communication messages are often embedded with implicit meanings. Advertisers should always be cautious because what catches attention is usually what arouses aversion among consumers. Literature suggests that offensive advertising should be defined as any advertising message that violates the norms of consumers at large. The scope and objective of the current study discussed only advertising executions that violate Indian cultural values. Even if the Indian youth are not particularly Re-Enforcement, the other characteristics of young people everywhere apply. They don't suffer brands that talk down to them; and they are just as whimsical, although some marketers balk at using the term, 'fickle'. The Research framework attempts to measure associations between Indian consumers' value orientations concerning three social relationships like –Genders (Male & female), Family, Patriotism (person-state), and their perception and reaction toward potentially offensive advertisements.

Keywords: Re-Enforcement Advertisement, International Brands, Indian culture, violation.

Introduction

Meaning of Re-Enforcement advertisement

Socially dangerous or daring; intellectually provocative; tending to induce unease or stress in viewers. Especially used to describe artistic and intellectual work.

Advertisements are made to create a long lasting impression and brand recall in the consumers mind. Advertising agencies strive to hold on the attention of the audience, using different tools of communication. Over the years, sex and sensuality has emerged as a strong tool to capture the attention of audience. Even if the ad failed to do so, the controversies surrounding these ads get the job done. Hindustan Unilever, in their advertisement for Axe Dark Temptation deodorant showed a girl licking and biting the body of a boy who had spread the deodorant of chocolate fragrance on himself and as shown as a chocolate boy. An act of a girl biting the boy's backside was considered to be highly objectionable by the complainant. The advertiser claimed that a product like deodorant which is an aspirational product needed to be marketed in this manner. ASCI upheld the complaint stating that the visual of the girl licking the chocolate boy and girl biting the rear was indecent and likely to cause grave or widespread offence. Subsequently the advertisement was modified by the advertiser. On similar lines advertisement of a perfume which showed greater popularity with the opposite sex by using the said perfume was found to be vulgar and considered to give rise to widespread offence particularly amongst women. The complaint was upheld by ASCI and the Advertiser modified the advertisement.

Depiction of Women in Indian Media

Media is the buzz word of the era of globalization. In fact, the rapid expansion of term and the concept of present form of globalization has been made possible only through the information revolution throughout the world. It has been widely recognized that media can play a

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substantial role in promoting and disseminating information and are key players in the social and economic development of women. Therefore, media largely reflects the life styles, socialization patterns, participation levels, cultural boundaries, political maneuverings, religious manifestations, educational standards, social hierarchy, and of course, society images of any given society. The depiction of women in Indian media is simply shoddy and at times vulgar

Literature Review

An article titled “Indecency in Advertising” says that “In today’s media propelled, fast-moving age, and advertisements sell beyond products. They sell lifestyles, dreams, images, ideas, even principles and ethics (H. Thiel 2003). And a lot of advertisers play on our most basic, primitive instincts by associating their products with sex.

"In Indian advertising, women are used as models in sexist ads for diverse products from tyres to ceiling fans. Apart from this, a stereotyped notion of gender roles is explicit in the casting for ads. Primary roles for men as demonstrators, experts are used and their physical presence is made strongly felt as the authoritarian 'Voice of God' in commentaries. Women, by contrast, are cast either in auxiliary roles or as feather-headed clients who have to be convinced at length to purchase X product, in pseudo-scientific terminology. These images bear no relationship whatsoever to the reality of Indian women or their on-going struggles to achieve economic and political autonomy."

Statement of the Problem

In the year 2011, Brand - Fastrack roped in Cricketer Virat Kohli and actress Genelia D’souza for a series of commercials. One such commercial featured Kohli as a pilot and Genelia as an airhostess. Genelia tries seducing the pilot and eventually both land up making out in the cockpit while the plane is still in mid-air. This ad was condemned by several Aviation companies for showing them in bad light. They felt that the ad can ruin their reputation. However, the cases filed against this ad were not upheld by the court. Second brand like the chocolate boy axe effect ad seen on Indian television will be pulled out from 25th august, thanks to the information and broadcasting ministry who have found the ad to be indecent and vulgar. Surprisingly the AXE deo ad “as irresistible as chocolate” where in spraying the deodorant turns the man into a chocolate with women flocking to get a bite, have been on screen and print media for the past few weeks. It is now that the ministry wants the ads to go off air, while the ad has already been flashed a number of times. It seems the ministry took too long to term the axe ad as vulgar and indecent.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the targeting women in Negative Advertisement in Fast track & Axe Effect with Advertising Message.
- To find out sex based Re-enforcement Advertisement degrades Indian culture & Religious value.

Methodology

After formulating the research problem, the research design was framed. A Research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is to be conducted –It deals with the collection, measures, and analysis of data.

Sampling Plan

Sampling Method: Random sampling

Statistical Tools: chi-square, Standard Deviation. **Sampling**

Type: Target audience would be comprised of those who are of the age group of 20years and above. Educated at least know about what advertising is/have seen in Branded products messages (Critique Add) in television’s

Sample size: 100; **Area:** North kanchipuram, **Study Period:** 1month

Research Design:

Exploratory Research is conducted by me included Door-to-Door Surveys in the various colleges, Research scholars, M.Com students for the filling up the questionnaires.

Questionnaires Type: 5-point likert scale type.

Hence, a higher score indicates greater agreement with a statement than a lower score. Following discussion elaborate the pre-disposition of the respondents towards these specific aspects relating to an empirical study on Re-Enforcement & offensive advertisement in India.

Analysis and findings

Test.1 Chi-square

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no association between Gender and level of agree on targeting women in Re-Enforcement & offensive advertisements especially fast track and axe effects.

H₁: There is association between Gender and level of agree on targeting women in Re-Enforcement & offensive advertisements especially fast track and axe effects.

Gender	Level of Agree			Total	$\chi^2 - value$	p-value
	Low	Moderate	High			
Male	22 (48.9%) [66.7%]	4 (8.9%) [30.8%]	19 (42.2) [35.2]	45	9.425	0.009**
Female	11 (20.0%) [33.3%]	9 (16.4%) [69.2%]	35 (63.6%) [64.8%]	55		
Total	33	13	54	100		

Note: 1. The value within () refers to Row %, 2. The value within [] refers to Column % 3. ** denotes significance at 1% level

Inference

Since the p-value is less than 0.01 the Null Hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence, we conclude that

there is association between Gender and level of agree on targeting women in Re-Enforcement & offensive advertisements especially fast track and axe effects.

Test-2

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no Significance difference in average level of agree of targeting women and degrades our culture with fast track and axe effects advertisements.

H₁: There is Significance difference in average level of agree of targeting women and degrades our culture with fast track and axe effects advertisements.

		Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value
Level of agree	Targeting women	7.96	1.33	4.192	<0.001**
	Degrades our culture	7.40	1.71		

Note: ** denote Significance at 1% level.

Inference

Since the p-value is less than 0.01 the Null Hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence, we conclude that There is Significance difference in average level of agree of targeting women and degrades our culture with fast track and axe effects advertisement. Now based on average level of agrees of targeting women and degrades our culture, the level of agree is little low to degrades our culture.

Findings

- The sex sells as a major attraction when trying to sell a product.
- Some of these ads actually Dis-Tasteful and offensive to viewers, and this negatively impacts the sale of the products.
- This negative effect is more evident in print ads than in commercial that people view and hear.
- Sex is an easy way to get the attention of male and make a product seem desirable.
- It is also believed that there is a relationship between sex appeal in an ad and brand evaluation among individuals.

Suggestions for future Research

There are cultural implications involved in the use of sexuality in advertising. Different cultures respond to this use of sex in different ways. There is relatively little research available in this area. More research is needed to determine whether the use of sexuality in advertising actually makes a difference in the purchasing habits of consumers today, in the India and abroad. It is also important to conduct research with samples of specific age groups to determine whether the age of the consumer is a significant determining factor in ethical tolerance and purchasing habits of those exposed to sexuality in advertising.

Conclusion

Many commercial ads featuring deodorants, inner wears have been banned in India as those couldn't comply with the ASCI codes. India has much been exposed to the westernized world after liberalizing trade after the crisis of 1991. Hence forth many western products have been brought to the Indian markets & the ads featuring these products started flourishing in the Indian markets. But all sections of the society wasn't ready & is not yet ready to accept the westernized outlook. Most of the brands which are western have been banned from featuring their products in the commercial ads, referring them

as obscene, but these products had a very high demand in the world market & their outlook towards marketing their products in the world market especially in the western world is quite different from that of a conservative country like India. The kind of feature films, short documentaries or small clippings of ads that are been banned or referred to as obscene in India is a clear revelation that India is yet to go a long way to reach an universal standard of obscenity observed in the world at large especially the western world.. But anyways, India needs to come out of its conservative shell & have a much broader outlook towards judging any content as obscene.

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