

A Study on Effectiveness of Cultural Dimensions on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract - Culture has many dimensions and does not mean only the nation or a country. There can be many cultures within the same city, there will be many diversities. People with the same characteristics tend to have the same culture. Cultural thoughts and values change due to the trends of advertising. Investigating cultural differences connected with male/female gender may help both researchers and advertisers better comprehend cultural effects.

Advertisements are influencing the consumers behavior when it comes on choosing brands. This behavior is a result of many influences of a culture somebody has grown up with. The effect of advertising may have a positive or a negative effect depending upon what to adapt and how much to adapt. In India culture does influence our advertisers because the ads that are made are done keeping into mind the gender, age difference, society, effects of sudden changes in the trends etc. Trends in a society is not constant and keep on varying with competition and western impact. We try to adapt to the West but also want to be stringent with its applications as it may have a negative effect in the minds of the society. One of the most discussed issues on advertising is if it is doable to convince consumers in different markets with the same advertising message. When planning an advertising campaign it is significant to know if consumers will respond positively or if the advertising message should be adapted in order to represent the local culture. Moreover, advertising is frequently used as reflection of the cultural values. Therefore, they try to be appealing to the values that are supported by the target group. If it is not, then there is a risk that the consumer will not be able to relate to the product.

Index Terms - Culture; advertisers; Challenges and opportunities, Indian Initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural impacts ensures us to adapt only that which is appealing to the mass and society and has a strong moral sense. People or mass who try to work against

this cultural impact may not be accepted with a smile but rather have to face a severe consequence. Advertisements which come with a western touch and feel also have to keep a futuristic vision and the changing cultural trends so that the consumers may readily enjoy the new changes and also no negativity is portrayed. The pressure of culture is mainly significant in transferring advertising strategy across the borders, because communication patterns are directly associated with cultural norms in each market. The degree to which people like or dislike, approve or disapprove of, advertising in general also is related to their culture. For example, the Dutch and the Scandinavians have a critical position toward advertising, whereas the Americans, the British, and especially the Japanese have made it a part of their daily lives.

Today Asian markets are the most rapidly growing, aggressive and promising throughout the world This gives the opportunity to companies to expand and increase their profits. However, the Asian culture is totally different from the European and the American ones. Asia is really a series of localized markets with their own characteristics including different economic and cultural settings due to historical reasons. They have their own exclusive sides of history, culture and consumption patterns including variations in consumer tastes and requirements that could differentially affect advertising content. Therefore, companies should be aware of this difference of culture, to make the 'right' commercials in each place and be led to success.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cook, Guy; (2001) stated that Advertising is a buyer's guide for both consumers and industrial purchasers, providing the formal with news of new merchandise and special prices the later with information about new

materials, equipment and technology. Prothers , Lisa ; (1998) stated that advertising is itself a cultural product and companies should use ethics as it is increasingly affecting social attitudes, defines social roles, and influences cultural values. Influenced by these factors advertising evolved and developed a particular profile in western industrialised society in the 20th Century as a means of stimulating the consumption of products generated by new and expanding industries. P.K.Bhargav, (2011) sates that advertising creates confusion in the minds of the people. Advertisements may inculcate bad habits among the viewers which has a bad effect on our culture. Sometimes advertisement exploits the sentiment of 'status symbol'. This unnecessarily creates a desire for satisfaction with ego protracted of the individual. Status conscious people are often motivated by advertisements by their advertisers unethical practices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study deals with the concept that Cultural thoughts and values change due to the trends of advertising. The researcher has considered following objectives for this study. The detailed explanations of the objectives are given below.

- 1 To understand the concept of Cultural dimensions.
- 2 To understand cross-national differences is often believed to be a key condition for successful international advertising.
- 3 To suggest some measures for the development strategies to increase consumer buying.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present empirical study has been done mainly from the secondary data and primary data for depth investigation. All the information data and opinion are collected which has a direct or indirect relevance to the information like official publications and research journals. The sample size taken was 120 respondents.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

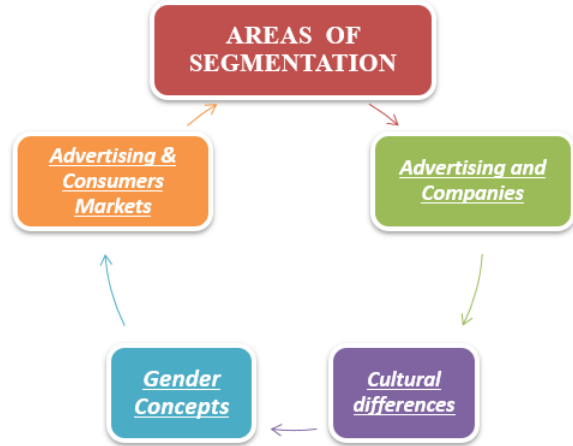
The sampling technique adopted was the random sampling technique.

SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

1. PRIMARY DATA : Structured Questionnaire (120 respondents) & Formal Interview
2. SECONDARY DATA : Books, Journals & Websites.

AREAS OF SEGMENTATION

Since the early 1960s proponents of globalization have understood that economic development would direct to converging needs and tastes of consumers and make possible standardization of marketing and advertising.



Companies & Advertisement

Nowadays, businesses from the larger to the smaller do consider that it is of great importance to advertise their products or services. Since the competition is growing and there is a great variety of products, companies need to make themselves appeal superior comparing to the concurrent. Not surprisingly, a successful advertisement can lead a company to great profits whereas an unfortunate commercial can drive a company to bankruptcy. For example, some global advertising campaigns that have been broadcasted in China were criticized as offensive. The reason could be that due to cultural insensitivity towards the advertising environment. Moreover, advertising has to be continuous and consistent and not a onetime action. Therefore, it is not irrelevant at all that companies provide high budgets to their marketing departments. Creating an advertisement is not as an easy task as somebody could think. The company, first of all, has to choose between an international and a local agency. The choice is depending on many factors such as cost, time, company's strategy etc. After choosing the 'right' agent the company has to give him/her right directions in order to follow the company's path. In

case of choosing a local agency, the cultural differences are reduced to a great extent.

Advertising & Consumers Markets

But the Asian market is not the only available one. There are still the Arabic, European, American markets and many others as well. Understanding cross-national differences is often believed to be a key condition for successful international advertising. This research will be based on cultural differences in order to contribute on giving some directions to companies so that they can improve their advertising campaigns. This study can be interesting for multinational companies which sell their products in many countries and for small firms which wish to expand abroad and involve some international strategies on their advertising campaigns.

Cultural differences :

Culture has many dimensions and does not mean only a nation or a country with territory borders. There can be many cultures within the same country, even within the same city, there will be met many diversities. People with same characteristics tend to have the same culture.

Moreover, cultural differences may influence other aspects as well. For instance, cultural masculinity and femininity can have an influence on the choice of media communication. Investigating cultural differences connected with masculinity/femininity may help both researchers and advertisers better comprehend cultural effects. As soon as a company understands these differences then it will be able to decide which strategy to follow in order to be successful.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Chi-Square Result of Value should be given for ethics while preparing ads

Chi-Square test:	
	Value
Chi-Square	429.726
d.f.	3
p-value	.000

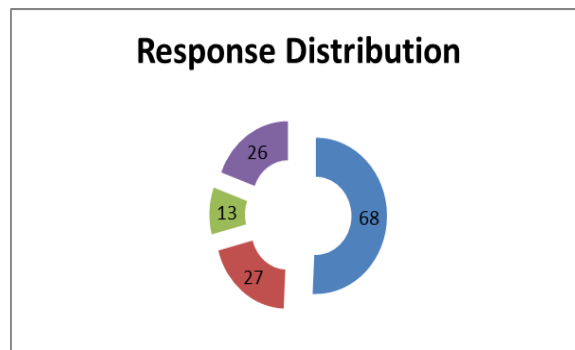


Fig.1 Value should be given for ethics while preparing ads

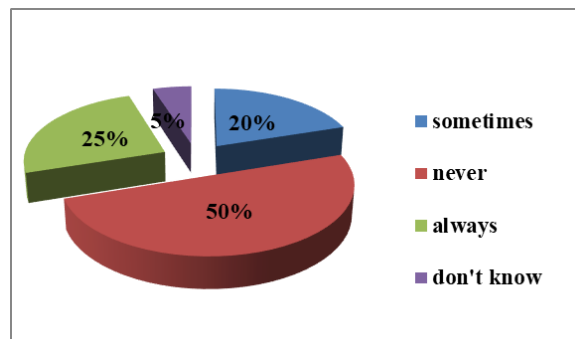


FIG.2 Are all brands ethical in their advertisements

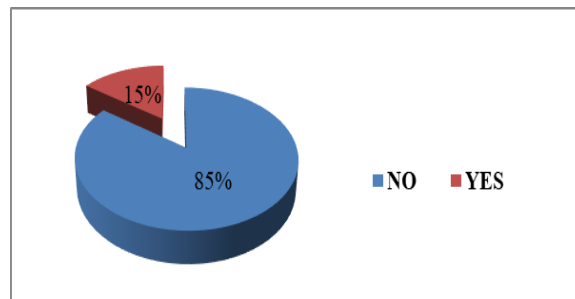


FIG.3 Are Surrogate advertisements ethical

ADVERTISING : THE REAL INFLUENCER

The advertiser in spite of all the issues he/she has to face, he/she also has to consider the different cultures that the advertisement is going to be exposed to. When it is about making advertising decisions, a careful, fact-based scrutiny of the dynamic information of how consumers are feeling, thinking, processing, and behaving is vital in taking successful advertising solutions. Especially for companies that may want to follow the same strategy in every country they sell their products or services, they have to think if the same action that is considered to be right in one culture, is also appropriate in another one. According to Geert Hofstede, if we go into another country and

make choices based on how we work in our own home country there are chances that we will make some very bad decisions.

When creating an advertisement, multinational companies have to choose between standardizing their marketing operations or to adjust them to the local conditions. Advertising standardization means to make use of the same optical and verbal communication with only exception the language. It has been discussed several times if standardization of advertisements or making different ones for each country is the best option. The key point here is that making many advertisements is much more costly than just translating the main one to other languages.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The research study has limitation of time.
- It is indicative and generalized.
- It is confined to a certain area and the data is limited

FINDINGS & SUGESSTIONS

- Advertising has rendered our cognitive style of information processing much more visual based on visual images and, thus, more compact and holistic.
- Majority of the consumers believe that culture is one of the significant aspects that can determine the reaction of the Viewer hence advertising truly has an impact on culture.
- Repeating an advertisement helps reinforce the message and locks it into the mind. As psychologists argue, people need to hear something three times before it crosses the threshold of perception and enters into memory.
- Majority of the consumers believe that culture should be considered while preparing advertisements. Therefore, the advertisements should always speak the truth of the product. The should not mislead the consumers.
- Consumers strongly agree that culture creates an impact at the way consumer look at advertisements or influence their buying habits. Therefore, they buy the products according to their cultural tastes and ideas.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that to a greater extent than non-sufferers, anorexics were influenced, and their self-image diminished, by advertising images. Advertising that grabs attention is intriguing, novel, unusual or surprising. The biggest perceptual problem for advertising is inattention. A number of other studies have also established a significant and positive relationship between consumerism and advertising. Majority of the consumers agreed that due to advertising they understand the product and its usage in a better way .Knowledge towards products affects due to advertisements . Consumers strongly believe that Ads nowadays are successful in building seller and customer relationship .

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