

Effectiveness of Indian Advertisements in Breaking Stereotypes : A Comparative Analysis Using the Hierarchy of Effects Model

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Abstract

A recent trend in Indian advertisements is that marketers deliberately send messages through advertisements to question the century old Indian conventional practices and challenge the stereotypes. The present study attempted to do a comparative analysis between the effectiveness of advertisements with unconventional messages with that of normal advertisements. In this study, the hierarchy of effects model (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961) was used for measuring the effectiveness of the advertisements which added some unconventional flavours in the ads and delivered messages to break norms. An empirical study based on one-group pre-test post-test experiment was done in June - July 2018, where several unconventional advertisements were shown along with other conventional advertisements among a group of 115 viewers. A structured questionnaire having established scales was utilized to measure the effectiveness of unconventional advertisements in terms of three dimensions of hierarchy of effects model - cognitive component (awareness, knowledge) ; affective component (liking, preference) ; and conative component (conviction, purchase). Data were analyzed with the help of Excel and SPSS by using statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation, ranking, regression analysis, Z - test, and ANOVA. The results confirmed that there were significant differences observed in case of all three dimensions along with ad appeal, ad recall, ad references, message impact between the advertisements with unconventional messages and normal advertisements. In summary, the influence of unconventional messages added in the advertisements improved the perception of the brands, enhanced consumers' attitudes towards social issues, and particularly increased the effectiveness of the advertisements, and their scores were higher than that of normal advertisements.

Keywords : unconventional advertisements, hierarchy of effects model, effectiveness of advertisements, unconventional messages, brands

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Advertising is an art, a business, an institution, a promotion tool, and a cultural phenomenon. It has a role to inform, to persuade, or to remind customers about a product or service of a company. It has a large influence in the mass media market and plays a major role in shaping our lifestyles. Advertisements are developed keeping culture as a major consideration and always reflect the culture. They play a vital role in bringing

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social changes and make role models who can create social awareness. Some recent Indian advertisements deliberately sent messages to question the century old Indian conventional practices. They have added some unconventional flavours in the ads, made distinguished appeal, delivered messages to break norms, and challenged the stereotypes.

A very common phenomenon in advertising and marketing is to depict women in a sexiest role, restricting their role in upbringing children, looking after family, and doing all household chores. Women are presented in an inferior manner irrespective of their potentials and capabilities. Taking the name of century old Indian customs and traditions, some gender stereotypes are tagged to women. It has been noted that there is a cultural lag. Sexes since a long period have been depicted in advertising in more traditional roles.

Indian advertisements have evolved and have started projecting the changing role structure in the family. As women have started involving themselves in the labour force to a significant percentage, it has brought significant variation in both male and female roles in family and society as a whole, and now, it is reflected even in advertising. Role of men in family has changed and that has been drawing the greatest attention of the advertisers in the past few years. Men are depicted in advertising in 'softer' roles while helping the female member in household work or interacting with their children. Men are also shown in more egalitarian roles, who believe that all people are equal and deserve equal rights irrespective of their gender. As women learn to assert themselves, brands are realizing that they can no longer take the advantage of projecting women in inferior, identity less individuals. There is a paradigm shift in Indian culture where a dire need of asking for self-respect and self-identity is observed among women across social hierarchy.

Breaking Stereotypes : Recent Indian Advertisements Considered in this Study

The first advertisement, which comes to our mind in this category, is the recent campaign 'Mama's boy' by Star Plus TV channel. As a part of the "Nayi Soch" campaign, Star Plus launched an ad film where Dhoni, Kohli, and Rahane showed the names of their mothers at the back of their jerseys. The theme of the ad was to challenge the age-old convention, "Baap ka naam roshan karega".

Ariel has come up with a new ad campaign "Share the load" to promote its brand. It has defied the stereotype by promoting the idea "Why is laundry a mother's job?" After watching his daughter juggling both work and home without the help of her husband, her old father realized that he never shared the workload of his wife. He wrote a beautiful letter to his daughter saying sorry for that and after reaching home, started sharing the laundry work with his wife. 'Share the load,' the message given by Ariel was touchy, sensible, and as well as powerful to challenge the gender stereotypes.

The very recent "Da Da Ding" ad spotted by Nike has focused on the athletic spirit of women and has stood out within the clutter of advertisements by giving a strong message to people who don't give enough importance to women's sports. Though Deepika Padukone, the famous Bollywood actor was in the campaign with other female sportspersons, the ad did not sexualize women ; rather, it projected the solidarity among women and even gave a strong message on workouts.

"Call me Ms Arpita Sen Anderson," a message of not willing to follow the old age tradition of changing women's surname after marriage is delivered very nicely by the recent ad of P.C. Chandra Jewellers - the wedding collection. Time has changed to think in a different way. So, many recent advertisements have gone beyond the traditional practices and norms.

With globalization and modernization in Indian economy and with the dual role of women in managing both household and professional work, the importance of gender equality is rising. Brands are learning that they have no other choice but to acknowledge the public sentiment and project women in a progressive light.

Literature Review and Research Gap

Tokenism, feminism, or gimmickry - whatever the motivation of these brands, a large number of current Indian advertisements have included some breakthrough messages questioning century old Indian traditions. Not all of them are successful, but many of them have left an impact on common Indian viewers and consumers. Although these advertisements are successful in deliberately sending messages to question the norms and conventional practices, their effects on creating brand awareness, brand persuasion, and creating competitive advantage have not been much explored. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the usage of breaking stereotype messages in Indian advertising and then examine the effectiveness of these advertisements. Since the 1950s, advertising frequently used gender stereotypes to promote products or brands (Venkatesan & Losco, 1975). This can lead to negative consequences, especially for women, and strengthen stereotypical values in the society. The research of Eisend, Plagemann, and Sollwedel (2014) investigated the effectiveness of gender stereotyping in humorous and non-humorous advertisements, and their findings were aligned with previous research findings - which indicated that traditional male stereotypes were more prevalent in humorous ads, and traditional female stereotypes were more existent with non-humorous ads. Previous findings by Furnham and Paltzer (2010) indicated that advertisements use gender stereotypes in numerous ways to add humour.

There are different concepts available for measuring advertising effectiveness, which are essential constructs to guide consumer behaviour. Lutz (1985) defined these constructs as, “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner to advertising in general” (p. 53). Individual level measures of ad effectiveness include general attitude towards advertising, purchase intention, and behaviour. A company can influence consumers and make them loyal by the exposure of a series of advertisements campaigned by the company (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008).

One of the most common methods of measuring advertisements' effectiveness is by ad recall and recognition. Ad recall is used to test whether the information of the ad has been processed into long-term memory. Ad recall is of two types - aided and unaided recall (Bovee, Thill, Dovel, & Wood, 1995). Ad recall was one of the most influential findings of Advertising Research Foundation (1956) on the study of printed advertising rating methods (PARM). Some merits and demerits were associated with ad recall, but further study was carried out by Wells (2000) and he concluded that recall scored more objective for measuring ad effectiveness.

Yeh and Lin (2010) measured the effectiveness of the advertisements which were sent via mobile phones. Three dimensions of advertisement strategy were considered to see their influences on consumers. They were : appeal, endorser, and involvement (AEI) and their influence was measured in terms of advertising attitude, brand attitude, and purchase intention. The results of the study showed that emotional appeal of the ads worked well on low involvement products, and rational appeal by foreign endorsers significantly influenced advertisement attitude, brand attitude, and purchase intention.

A conceptual model developed by Lutz (1985) discussed the antecedents and consequences of individual attitudes towards ads. Lutz's model claimed that advertiser's credibility and advertisement's claim together affected ad credibility. Researchers indicated that advertisements' effectiveness should be measured not only by purchase of a product, but also, it has an extended impact on psychological and cognitive component of attitudes. Advertisements play a vital role in creating awareness and purchase intention in a longer time frame (Bendixen 1993 ; Siegel & Ziff - Levine, 1990). In case of tourism marketing, Messmer and Johnson (1993) and Siegel and Ziff - Levine (1990) argued that advertisements' effectiveness should even include the underlying behavioural process of information search, decision making, and changes in psychological states. Bendixen (1993) pointed out that though the hierarchy of effects model proposed that consumers, when they purchase a product, actually move through a sequential hierarchy from awareness, through knowledge, preference, conviction, and then purchase, the quantification of the relationship between advertisements and sales is difficult. He also observed that effectiveness of advertisements measured by the hierarchy of effects model focused more on long-term consumer behaviour and

was not much applicable to short-term advertisement campaigns. Walsh, Shiu, and Hassan (2014) conducted a similar study to examine the moderating effects of country level indicators representing three institutional pillars (regulative, normative/moral, and cultural cognitive) on the mediated associations between three advertising persuasion measures (message comprehension, attitude towards the campaign, and message elaboration).

In advertising effectiveness research, considerable amount of attention should be given on media channel choice along with measuring effectiveness (Aaker, Myers, & Batra, 1995). Effectiveness of any advertisement in terms of brand recall, brand awareness, and brand appeal would be increased by celebrity endorsement. Marketers commonly practice endorsing advertisement by celebrities to attract the fans of the celebrity and to increase penetration of the brand. A study done by Singh (2017) measured the impact of celebrity endorsements on the stock prices of the brands by examining 36 popular Indian brand endorsement announcements. It was found that celebrity endorsements did not generate substantial positive returns for the firms. Ang, Lee, and Leong (2007) found out that using novelty in terms of creativity in any advertisement brought favourable effects on brand recall and brand attitude.

A large number of previous literatures included extensive research on the occurrence of stereotypes, creativity, media, or celebrity endorsements on advertisements. However, a lack of research is prevalent in India relating to the effectiveness of unconventional advertisements, which question the traditional values. A gap is observed in the area where an extensive research is required to measure the effectiveness of unconventional advertisements.

Objectives of the Study

- (i) To get an insight into some of the recent advertisements that have added some unconventional flavors in their messages. In this context, advertisements from four categories of products were selected - detergent, athletic shoes, television channels, and jewelry.
- (ii) The measure of the effectiveness of these advertisements was done by using the hierarchy of effects model by Lavidge and Steiner (1961). An attempt is made to measure the effectiveness of these advertisements on the following parameters : (a) awareness, (b) knowledge, (c) liking, (d) preference, (e) conviction, and (f) purchase.
- (iii) To compare the effectiveness and appeal of unconventional advertisements with normal advertisements.

Hierarchy of Effects Model

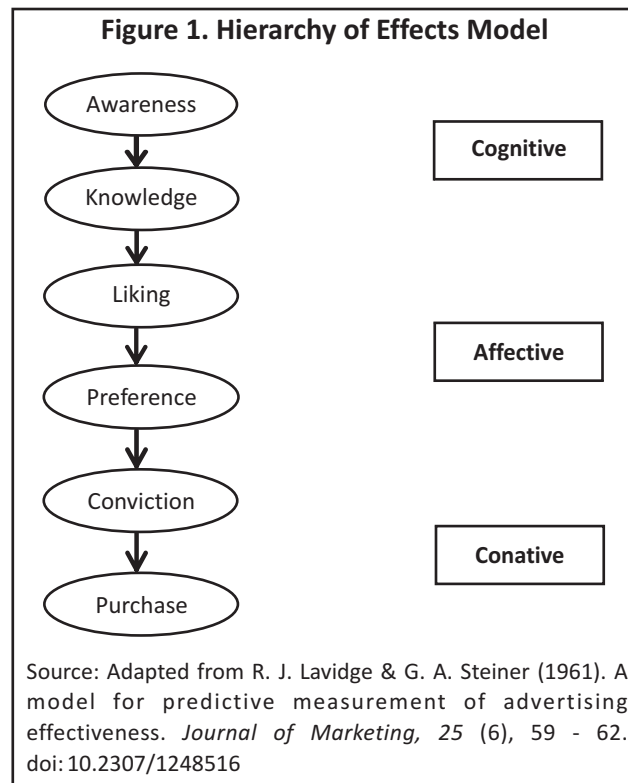
Advertisements are marketing communication used to persuade an audience to buy or use the products/services. Any ad is created with the common purpose of :

- ↳ Promoting a new product/brand,
- ↳ Convincing viewers to use the advertised brand as their preferred brand,
- ↳ Informing about products, features, and prices,
- ↳ Reminding customers for repeat purchase/use.

According to the hierarchy of effects model created in 1961 by Lavidge and Steiner (1961), there are six steps starting from viewing an advertisement to making a purchase. Advertisers aim to encourage customers to go through the six steps and purchase the advertised products.

Lavidge and Steiner suggested that the six steps of advertisement/marketing communication can be spilt into three stages of consumer behaviour (refer to Figure 1) :

- ↳ **Cognitive** : Consumer becomes aware of the product/service and gains knowledge,



↪ **Affective** : Consumer prefers the product/service,

↪ **Conative** : Consumer purchases/uses the product/service.

Research Methodology

(1) Respondents' Profile : The study population consisted of students from UG and PG levels studying in various colleges of Bangalore. The sample was selected in such a way that students originally from urban, semi urban, and rural areas of different states of India were included in the study. Due to the time constraints, judgmental - sampling method was used.

(2) Data Collection : Data were collected during June - July 2018 in two steps using a one-group pre - test post - test experiment.

(i) First Step : A set of 16 advertisements including four advertisements with unconventional messages were shown to the viewers without intimating the viewers about the purpose of the study. Four categories of products from which the advertisements were selected are : athletic shoes, detergents, television channels, and jewellery. After watching the advertisements, the respondents were asked to write down the names of all the advertisements they remembered. The purpose was to collect data to check the unaided recall of the advertisements.

(ii) Second Step : Once the data were collected, the purpose of the study was discussed with the viewers and they were asked to fill the questionnaire. Structured questionnaire with established scale was built following the hierarchy of effects model.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.711	23

(3) Sample Size : Respondents were encouraged to give their honest answers with simple self-explanatory questions. The sample size was 115 respondents.

(4) Method of Analyzing Data : SPSS 20 software was used for analyzing the data. Different statistical techniques like rank order, mean, standard deviations, *t* - test, ANOVA, and multiple linear regression were used.

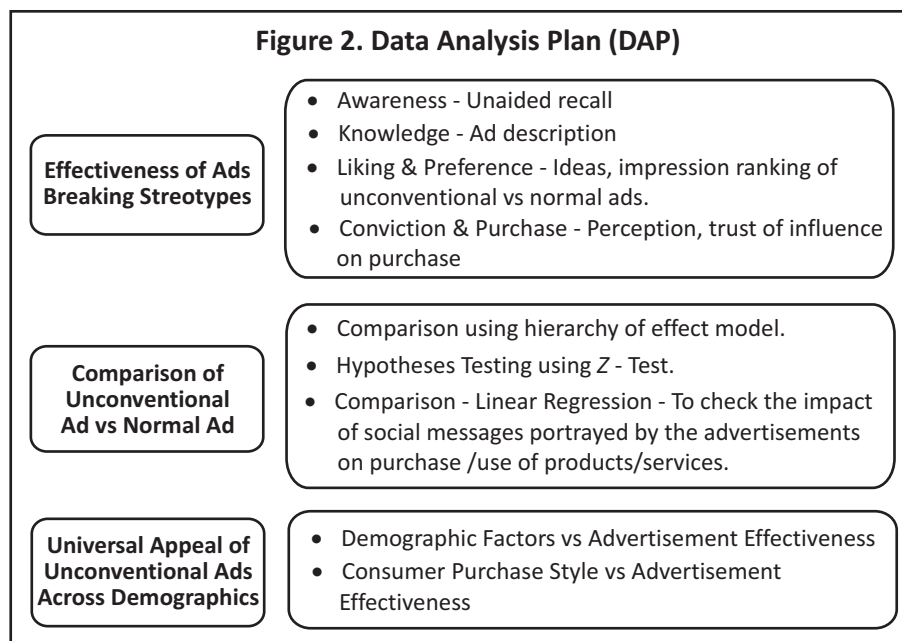
(5) Reliability & Validity of the Research Instrument : A pilot study was done with a sample size of 25 and with item number 23 to check the reliability of the research instrument (questionnaire) and the Cronbach's Alpha value was found as 0.711 (Table 1), which was in the acceptable range for social science research. Once the questionnaire was prepared, it was discussed with subject experts and the suggestions provided by the subject experts were incorporated to enhance the content and construct validity of the questionnaire.

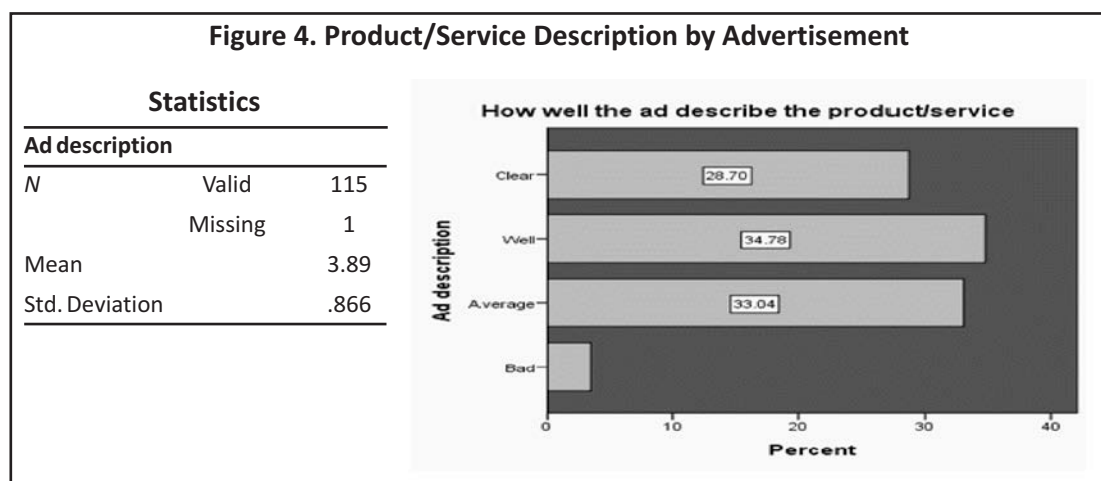
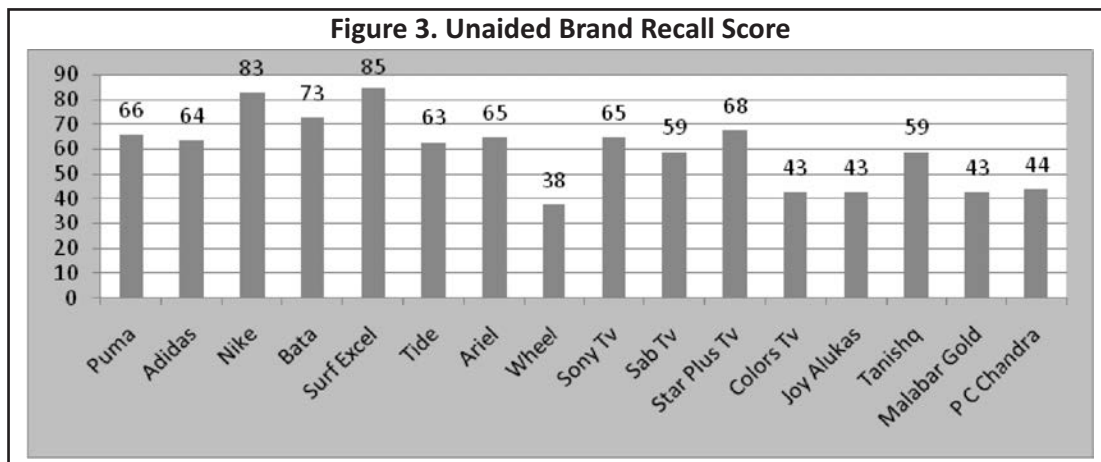
Data Analysis and Results

Data analysis is done as per the DAP depicted in the Figure 2. It contains three parts - measuring the effectiveness of ads with unconventional messages followed by a comparison of normal ads vs unconventional ads. Then the appeal of these types of unconventional ads is measured across demographics.

(1) Comparison of Cognitive Component - Awareness and Knowledge : Advertisements primarily serve the purpose of creating awareness among consumers. Brand recall is used to test whether the information of the ad has been processed in long - term memory (Bovee et al., 1995).

(i) Unaided Recall : Once all the advertisements were shown to the viewers without disclosing the purpose of the





study, they were asked to recall the advertisements and write on a plain paper. The results show that Nike, Surf Excel, Ariel, Star Plus TV channel are few brands that received the highest recall frequency. Among jewellery, P.C. Chandra Jewellers received the second highest recall after Tanishq.

It is observed from the Figure 3 that Nike received the highest recall value in the athletics shoes category, Ariel got the second highest recall in detergent category, Star Plus received the highest recall in TV channel category, P.C. Chandra received the second highest recall in jewellery category. These are the advertisements with unconventional messages. Hence, it is clear that adding unconventional messages in advertisements increases the brand recall value.

(ii) Role of Breakthrough Advertisements in Describing Products/Services and Dispensing Knowledge About Them : From the Figure 4, it is observed that advertisements with unconventional messages are able to describe products/services very well, and the message delivered is well understood by them. The mean value is 3.89, and more than 62% of the respondents stated that these types of advertisements described the products and services in a clear and easy way.

(2) Comparison of Affective Component - Liking and Preferences : Figure 5 and Table 2 clearly depict that advertisements with unconventional messages have better rating compared to the normal advertisements as the mean values for each category are nearly 4 or more out of 5. Only exception is P.C. Chandra Jewellers. One reason for this is that this brand is not very familiar in South India.

Figure 5. Liking of the Advertisements with Unconventional Messages Compared to Other Advertisements in the Same Category

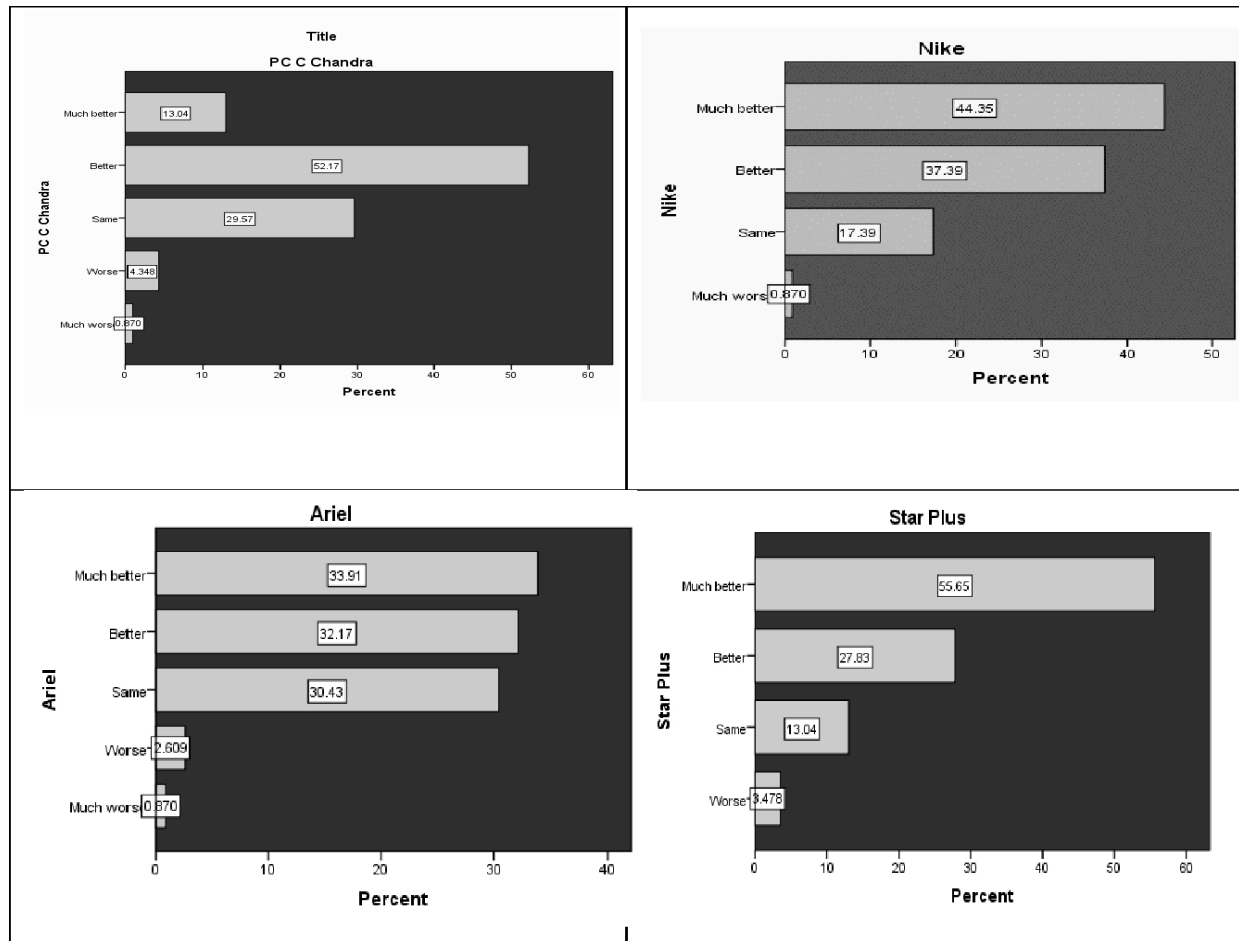


Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Brand Likings

		P.C. Chandra	Nike	Ariel	Star Plus
N	Valid	115	115	115	115
	Missing	1	1	1	1
Mean		3.72	4.24	3.96	4.36
Std. Deviation		.779	.801	.912	.840

(3) Ranking of Advertisements with Unconventional Messages in Each Product/Service Category Compared to Other Normal Advertisements in that Category According to Respondents' Preferences : It can be inferred from the Table 3 that Nike advertisement was the most preferred advertisement.

Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5 clearly show that with the exception of jewellery ads, in all other categories, the brands with unconventional messages in advertisements secured the most preferred ranks. In the jewellery category, P.C. Chandra Jewellers scored the least preferred (Table 6) advertisement rank probably because the brand is not a very familiar brand in South India from where the data were collected.

Table 3. Most Preferred Advertisement in Athletic Shoe Category : Nike

Brands	Rank			
	1	2	3	4
Puma	22	32	38	19
Adidas	21	33	36	21
Nike	45	30	15	20
Bata	23	16	20	52
Brand	Calculation	Score	Rank (1= <i>most preferred</i> , 4= <i>least preferred</i>)	
Puma	$1*22+2*32+3*38+4*19$	276	2	
Adidas	$1*21+2*33+3*36+4*21$	279	3	
Nike	$1*45+2*30+3*15+4*20$	230	1	
Bata	$1*23+2*16+3*20+4*52$	323	4	

Table 4. Most Preferred Advertisement in Detergent Category : Surf Excel

Brand	Calculation	Score	Rank (1= <i>most preferred</i> , 4= <i>least preferred</i>)	
Surf excel	$1*58+2*34+3*12+4*7$	190	1	
Tide	$1*13+2*37+3*46+4*15$	285	3	
Ariel	$1*34+2*28+3*26+4*23$	260	2	
Wheel	$1*6+2*12+3*27+4*66$	375	4	

Table 5. Most Preferred Advertisement in Television Channel Category : Star Plus

Brand	Calculation	Score	Rank (1= <i>most preferred</i> , 4= <i>least preferred</i>)	
Sony	$1*26+2*33+3*35+4*29$	293	2	
Sab TV	$1*15+2*17+3*37+4*42$	328	4	
Star Plus	$1*16+2*31+3*15+4*13$	212	1	
Colors TV	$1*16+2*31+3*38+4*26$	296	3	

Table 6. Most Preferred Advertisement in Jewellery Category : Tanishq

Brand	Calculation	Score	Rank (1= <i>most preferred</i> , 4= <i>least preferred</i>)	
Joy Alukkas	$1*34+2*21+3*28+4*27$	268	2	
Tanishq	$1*51+2*33+3*18+4*8$	203	1	
Malabar Gold	$1*12+2*33+3*44+4*21$	294	3	
P.C. Chandra	$1*12+2*24+3*20+4*54$	336	4	

(4) Comparison of Conative Component : Brand Perception, Brand Trust, and Influence on Purchase

(i) Role of Advertisements with Unconventional Messages in Creating Different Perceptions of Brands Among Viewers : Around 63% respondents stated that adding unconventional messages with the ads helps to create more positive type of perception about the brands, as observed in the Figure 6.

(ii) Role of Advertisements with Unconventional Messages in Creating Trust About Brands Among Viewers : Advertisements with unconventional messages are able to deliver credible messages. Claims made by the

Figure 6. Perception Created by Unconventional Advertisements

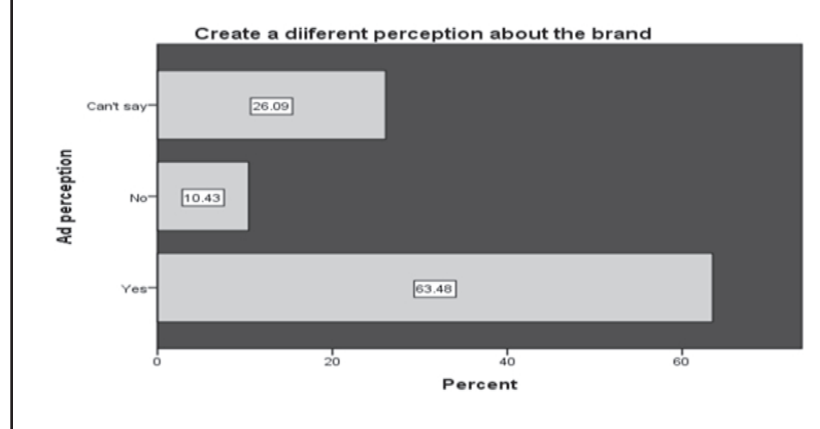


Figure 7. Credibility of the Affirmation Made by Advertisements with Unconventional Messages About Products/Services

Statistics		
Ad credibility		
N	Valid	114
	Missing	2
Mean		3.89
Std. Deviation		.683

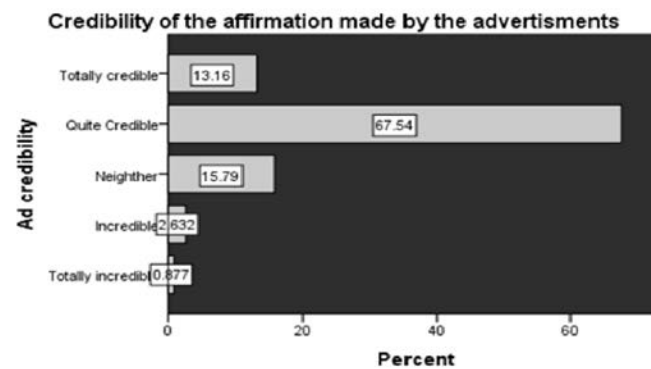
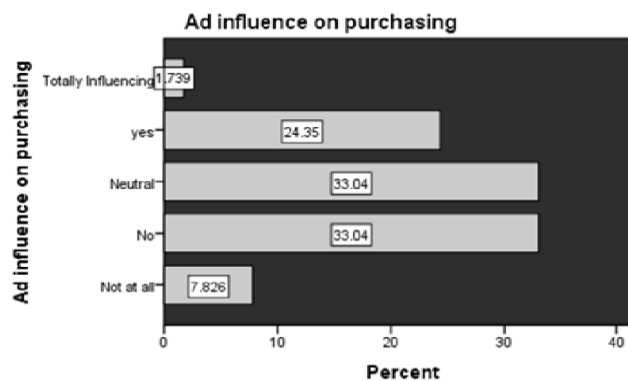


Figure 8. Influence of Advertisements in Breaking Stereotypes on Purchase of Products/Services

Statistics		
Ad Influence on Purchasing		
N	Valid	115
	Missing	1
Mean		2.79
Std. Deviation		.960

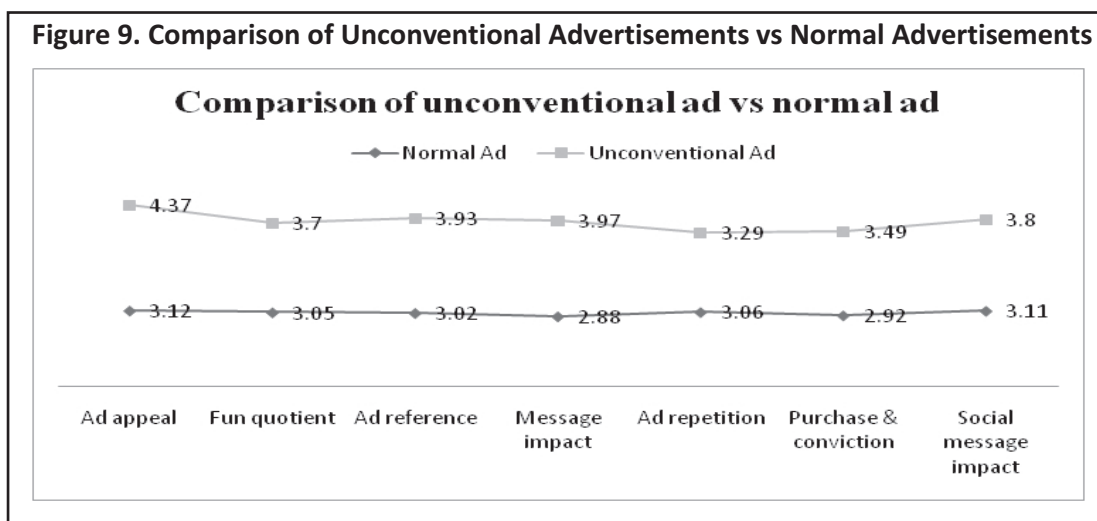


marketers about the products and services were found to be trustworthy by the viewers (Figure 7). Since these types of advertisements create social awareness and deliver messages to break norms, they are able to gain respect of the consumers and consequently, credibility of the affirmation about any products/services claimed by those

advertisements increases. Alex and Thomas (2014) studied the impact of moderating role of brand involvement influencing brand credibility and purchase decision on two categories of products - convenience and shopping products. They found out that brand credibility and purchase intention were closely related for shopping products; whereas, the scores were low for convenience products. Where the brand involvement was high, brand credibility and purchase intention scored high. According to our study, since brand credibility increases by using unconventional messages in advertisements, consequently the impact of advertisements on purchase intention gets enhanced.

(iii) Role of Advertisements with Unconventional Messages in Influencing Purchase Decision : From the Figure 8, it is observed that advertisements with unconventional messages have a moderate impact on purchase decision. Since the mean value is 2.79, this means that the value is in between neutral to yes. Hence, advertisements are not the only parameter which influences any buying decision.

(5) Comparison of Advertisements with Unconventional Messages with Normal Advertisements (on Various Parameters like Ad Appeal, Fun Quotient, Ad Reference, Message Impact, Ad Repetition, Purchase & Conviction, and Social Message Impact) : From the Figure 9, it is observed that values of all parameters measuring advertisements' effectiveness are higher for ads with unconventional messages than the normal ads.



Research Proposal and Hypotheses

Advertisements with unconventional messages are more effective than normal advertisements in terms of appeal, message impact, ad repetition, ad reference, purchase, and conviction.

- ↪ **H₀1 :** There is no difference in the mean scores of advertisement appeal between unconventional and normal ads.
- ↪ **H_a1 :** The mean score of advertisement appeal of unconventional ads is more than the mean score of normal ads.
- ↪ **H₀2 :** There is no difference in the mean scores of fun quotient of advertisements between unconventional and normal ads.
- ↪ **H_a2 :** The mean score of fun quotient of advertisements of unconventional ads is more than the mean score of normal ads.

Table 7. Hypotheses Testing to Compare Unconventional Advertisements vs Normal Advertisements

Descriptive		Mean	Std. Deviation	Z - value	Sig.
Ad appeal	Breakthrough Ad	4.37	0.87	7.059	**
	Normal Ad	3.11	1.36		
Fun Quotient of Ad	Breakthrough Ad	3.68	1.26	3.711	**
	Normal Ad	3.05	1.29		
Referring the Ad to Others	Breakthrough Ad	3.94	1.24	4.467	**
	Normal Ad	2.99	1.37		
Message Impact	Breakthrough Ad	4.01	1.21	5.653	**
	Normal Ad	2.88	1.36		
Ad Repetition	Breakthrough Ad	3.29	1.49	0.857	Not Sig
	Normal Ad	3.10	1.33		
Ad Influence on Purchase	Breakthrough Ad	3.53	1.19	3.599	**
	Normal Ad	2.88	1.23		
Social Message Impact	Breakthrough Ad	3.83	1.26	3.55	**
	Normal Ad	3.11	1.34		

Note. ** Significant at 1% level

↪ **H₀3** : There is no difference in the mean scores of advertisements' reference quotient between unconventional and normal ads.

↪ **H_a3** : The mean score of advertisement - reference quotient of unconventional ads is more than the mean score of normal ads.

↪ **H₀4** : There is no difference in the mean scores of message impact of advertisements between unconventional and normal ads.

↪ **H_a4** : The mean score of message impact of unconventional ads is more than the mean score of normal ads.

↪ **H₀5** : There is no difference in the mean scores of advertisements' repetition quotient between unconventional and normal ads.

↪ **H_a5** : The mean score of advertisement repetition quotient of unconventional ads is more than the mean score of normal ads.

↪ **H₀6** : There is no difference in the mean score of advertisements' influence on purchase between unconventional and normal ads.

↪ **H_a6** : The mean score of unconventional advertisements' influence on purchase is more than the mean score of normal ads.

↪ **H₀7** : There is no difference in the mean score of advertisements' social message impact between unconventional and normal ads.

↪ **H_a7** : The mean score of unconventional advertisements' social message impact is more than the mean score of normal ads.

From the Table 7, it is observed that all the null hypotheses H₀1, H₀2, H₀3, H₀4, H₀6, H₀7 are rejected except H₀5. Therefore, advertisements which include unconventional messages are more effective than normal ads. Viewers

Table 8. Impact of Social Messages Portrayed by Unconventional Advertisements vs Normal Advertisements on Purchase/Use of Products/Services

Null Hypothesis (H₀8) : Social messages portrayed by the advertisements with unconventional ads have no impact on the purchase/use of goods/services portrayed by the ads.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.362 ^a	.131	.122	1.088

a. Predictors : (Constant), Impact of social message portrayed by the breakthrough ad

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.208	.339		6.514 .000
	Impact of social message portrayed by the unconventional ad	.334	.085	.362	3.939 .000

a. Dependent Variable : Like to purchase/use products/services after watching unconventional ads.

Null Hypothesis (H₀9) : Social messages portrayed by normal advertisements have no impact on the purchase/use of goods/services portrayed by the ads.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.292 ^a	.085	.074	1.225

a. Predictors : (Constant), Impact of social message portrayed by the conventional ad

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.063	.336		6.137 .000
	Impact of social message portrayed by the conventional ad	.275	.099	.292	2.765 .007

a. Dependent Variable : Like to purchase/use products/services after watching conventional ads.

felt that these type of advertisements are more appealing, and they would like to discuss about these types of ads with their friends and peers. Even the social messages questioning the tradition and norms had a strong impact on the viewers. All these types of ads have more impact on purchase intention than the normal advertisements. Since the null hypothesis H₀5 is not rejected, it is found that the mean scores of advertisement repetition quotient are same among unconventional and normal advertisements. It implies that even if normal or unconventional advertisements are interesting or appealing to the viewers, still they do not like to watch the same advertisements again and again. In both the cases of Table 8, since the sig value is < 0.05, therefore, null hypotheses H₀8 and H₀9 are rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that social message portrayed by an advertisement has an impact on the purchase/use of the product/service portrayed by the advertisement. However, for advertisements with unconventional messages, the value of adjusted R square is 0.122, which means that the social message has 12.2% impact on the buying decision ; whereas, the same value is 0.074 in case of normal advertisements, which shows that the message has 7.4% influence on the purchase/use of products/services portrayed by normal ads.

Again, from the second part of the table, it is found that :

- For advertisements with unconventional message : Purchase/ use of a product = 2.208 + 0.334 * ad message
- For normal advertisements : Purchase/ use of a product = 2.063 + 0.275 * ad message

It is clearly observed that unconventional messages are being used to question the century - old practices and to break the norms, and this has substantially increased the influence of purchase/use decision of the product/service among the consumers. Content of the advertisements plays an instrumental role in bringing out the effectiveness of

any advertisement. User generated content such as customer reviews and feedback portrayed in online media impact consumers more than traditional media of advertising, especially in the case of tourism, automobile, and consumer electronics. A study on fashion products among women done by Venkataraman and Raman (2016) showed that products that received a positive feedback and gratification were more likely to influence purchase intentions.

Advertisements in any form have a direct influence on purchasing decisions. According to Kaur and Sharma (2018), people's intention to purchase could be changed by using advertisements, even if they are not willing to purchase at the beginning. Perception about the perceived quality of products and awareness were changed once the viewers were exposed to viral advertisements through different social media. This was concluded once researchers did a study on viral advertising using Amway products and viral advertising. Inclusion of unconventional messages would raise the curiosity among the viewers, and they would be more thought provoking, as most of the times, they have some social messages. Ultimately, brand awareness and purchase intention will be increased.

Impact of Unconventional Advertisements and Demographics

Hypothesis : Unconventional advertisements have an equal impact across genders, residential areas, and shopping styles.

↳ **H₀1 :** There is no difference in the mean scores of impact of social messages across genders.

↳ **H_a1 :** There is a difference in the mean scores of impact of social messages across genders.

↳ **H₀2 :** There is no difference in the mean scores of impact of social messages across different residential areas.

↳ **H_a2 :** There is a difference in the mean scores of impact of social messages across residential areas.

↳ **H₀3 :** There is no difference in the mean scores of impact of social messages among viewers of different shopping styles.

↳ **H_a3 :** There is a difference in the mean scores of impact of social messages among viewers of different shopping styles.

From the Table 9, the following observations can be made :

Table 9. Impact of Social Message vs Demographics

Descriptive	Gender/Res Area/Shopping Style	N	Mean	t - test /ANOVA	Sig.
Impact of Social Message	Male	77	3.61	$t = -2.505$	0.014*
	Female	34	4.21		
Impact of Social Message	Rural	8	3.75	$F = 0.038$	0.963 Not Sig
	Semi Urban	22	3.86		
	Urban	75	3.79		
Impact of Social Message	Window shopper	11	3.91	$F = 1.053$	0.391 Not Sig
	Impulse buyer	7	4.57		
	Online shopper	16	3.50		
	Conservative shopper	9	3.78		
	Rely on own judgment	53	3.66		
	Price sensitive shopper	6	4.33		

- ↳ Since the p - values in the case of gender are less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis H_01 is rejected, and we can conclude that mean scores on impact of social messages portrayed by the unconventional advertisements are different among male and female viewers.
- ↳ Since the p - values in the case of residential area are more than 0.05, so null hypothesis H_02 is not rejected, and it can be inferred that mean scores on impact of social messages portrayed by the unconventional advertisements are equal among viewers from different residential areas.
- ↳ Since the p - values in the case of shopping style are more than 0.05, so null hypothesis H_03 is not rejected, and it can be inferred that mean scores on impact of social messages portrayed by the unconventional advertisements are equal among viewers of different shopping styles.

Discussion and Managerial Implications

The role of advertisements has always been debatable among sociologists and advertisers; especially when it comes to stereotypes. Recently, Indian advertisements have included unconventional messages in their advertisement messages and have challenged the conventional practices for various reasons - tokenism, feminism, or gimmickry. The effects of these advertisements on creating brand awareness, brand persuasion, and creating competitive advantage are measured following the hierarchy of effects model. According to the analysis of this study, brand recall scores of the unconventional advertisements are higher in the clutter of normal advertisements. These ads are able to achieve the first objective an ad should achieve - processing the information about the brand or products into long-term memory. Ad recall is considered as one of the oldest literature of marketing communication (Strong & Edward, 1912). It also appears that these advertisements with unconventional messages are able to describe the products/ services very well, and they are rated much higher than the normal advertisements. The study also reveals that these ads play a good role in changing the brand perception and increase ad credibility. Ad credibility and the perception of the ad influence individual's attitudes towards the ad and the brand being advertised. A previous study done by Goldberg and Hartwick (1990) claimed that an interaction of the advertiser's reputation and claim extremity had a positive relation with claim extremity and product evaluation. Advertisements adding unconventional messages distinguish themselves in the clutter of advertisements by adding extremity, and consequently, enhance brand reputation.

The intent to add unconventional messages in any advertisement is to add creativity and differentiate the brand being advertised. There are significant differences observed in case of ad appeal, ad references, message impact, and impact of the social message delivered by the unconventional advertisements, and their scores are higher than normal advertisements. These results are aligned with the previous findings of Smith, Chen, and Yang (2008), who examined how advertising creativity affected consumer processing and response. They added new developments in the hierarchy of effects model and identified that creativity in advertisements affected five stages - brand awareness, brand learning, accepting/rejecting ad claims, brand liking, and brand intentions. A very recent study by Grau and Zotos (2016) claimed that advertisers should focus more on the gender portrayal in online platforms, as so far, changing gender roles have been portrayed in print or television ads. Recent advertisements focused more on "empowered women" for portraying them in advertisements, known as femvertising.

Social, unconventional messages added in advertisements are well accepted by viewers, and they are equally impactful to viewers from rural or urban areas and for shoppers of any shopping style. Male and female viewers have different psychological orientations, and it is found that impact of social messages portrayed by advertisements has a different level of impact on male and female viewers.

This study did yield that ad message, ad appeal, and the social message delivered by the unconventional advertisements affected the purchase/use of the products or services of those brands. Again, the influence of message delivered by unconventional advertisements on purchase/use decision is more than that of normal

advertisements. In summary, the influence of unconventional messages added in the advertisements improves the perception of the brands, helps consumers' attitudes towards social issues, and particularly increases the effectiveness of the advertisements. The current study would aid advertisers to gain an understanding about how advertisements across products or brands should create advertisements that are more engaging and enhance influences on brand recall, brand persuasion, and purchase decision.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The strength of the present study lies in novelty of the unexplored research topic, in sound theory base, and usage of a robust model - the hierarchy of effects model for measuring the effectiveness of unconventional advertisements. The study has compared the effectiveness of unconventional advertisements with normal advertisements using various dimensions like ad appeal, fun quotient of ad, message impact, and influence of ad on purchase decision. It is observed in this study that word of mouth referral worked better for these types of unconventional advertisements as most of these ads were having social messages, which were more impactful and thought provoking. One limitation of the study is the sampling method, which is non-probability sampling. Since for any non-probability sampling, generalization of the results could be an issue, it is recommended that future researchers make use of some probability sampling.

The study demonstrates how marketers can improve viewers' engagement with ads by questioning old age traditional practices, and hence, it has a scope for future research by taking advertisements on any one product category and conducting in-depth analysis. Again, a large number of unconventional advertisements across brands would bring more holistic understanding about their influences and more generalized results. While conducting the experiment, we were unable to control other appeals of the advertisements like musical influence, brand endorsers, media impact, and therefore, there is a scope to conduct experiments with two groups - experimental group and control group. After controlling the extraneous variables, more generalized conclusions could be drawn on the impact of advertisements breaking stereotypes and questioning norms.

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