

Advertisement, Media and Their Use



It is said jokingly, people first read advertisements later on the news. This states the importance of advertising in human life. Sixty-four arts in our traditional literature are defined. This new art is added to it. It is known as 65th art. An advertisement is done to let more people know about a commodity, a service or a thought. There are different media of advertising and we have to think about them.

We have mentioned about newspapers. It is an effective medium of advertising. But today the advertisers are seen on T.V. a powerful medium of advertising, radio, mobile, phone and internet, hoardings on roads, banners, posters on walls, boards on bus, rickshaw, taxi etc. Today many entertainment programmes are held in cities. They have sponsors. They advertise their products through advertisement. There is so much bombardment of advertisements on us and nobody can escape from it.

The selection of media of advertising is a key point. Medium like T.V. is present in our hall or bedroom. Mobiles directly in our hands, thus we cannot keep away from the

media and advertisers. It has become inseparable part of our life. The merchants and industrialists advertise their products – to increase the sale of their products, to increase the demand of the products and profit in turn. The advertising agencies creatively make the advertisement more attractive and effective. They make a study of, ‘how the advertisement will be catchier and more effective, how it will reach the maximum members of people, in least possible space and time.’ After such survey, the companies make advertisements and present them.

Promotions are of two types. One is essential for the people that are giving the messages of public welfare. These messages are very important. It is necessary to publicise them. No one has objections for such adds, ‘Don’t touch any unidentified object. If you notice such an object, do inform the nearest police station immediately’. etc. People should be safe from terrorist activities. For this people should also be alerted. One more example of ‘pulse-polio drive’ can be given. The World Health Organization has decided to eradicate the disease of polio completely. The oral dose of pulse polio vaccine is given to all the children below the age of five. It is necessary to make publicity of this so that maximum number of people should give this vaccine to their children. Such advertising is in public interest and welfare. There is no selfish motive in doing these advertisements for social peace, health, education and progress. These advertisements are for public welfare. People are educated through them. These advertisements are not effective and not up to the expectations, because they are done in less time with less money. They lack attention. These drawbacks should be removed and they should be made more effective.

Other type of promotion is commercial. It is done so that the commercial products should reach more people, to get maximum profit through the sale, to increase the wealth, prestige, and promoting their brand etc. Advertising should be done objectively; they should give right information. They should not make false claim. Such moral restriction should be followed. Advertisement like 'my complexion will become fair by applying so and so cream, my hair will become black by using a hair colour generates attraction towards the product. Everyone feels that one should look attractive, should always, remain young. Hence one gets attracted to such Advertisement. Actually, it is not a necessity for them. A common man running his family with his limited income minimizes his essential expenses and runs after the things, which are not essential. These advertisements compel him to run after such products. This thing should be assessed from the point of morality.

Mobile phone should be used when needed. No one will have objection to it. If it is used for chatting or for time-pass, it is a misuse. Having a mobile is perceived as a status symbol and not as a need. It is sold as a lifestyle, rather than a commodity. A person spends a good part of their income on the purchase of a mobile. One also spends time and money on enjoying its different facilities, even if it is not needed. It is forced on him, through the medium of advertisements. If we think of the productive hours wasted unnecessarily on the use of mobile, then we can guess about the extent of loss it causes.

Same is true for vehicles. Today, when we open any newspaper, there are advertisements of two and four wheelers. They are attractive. People get impressed by their colours, shape, facilities, mileage etc. and purchase

the vehicle. But while buying a vehicle a person doesn't think of the problems such as roads, parking facility, availability of petrol or diesel, money spent on buying, fuel, instalments of the loan etc. The person who sells, it also does not think. Advertisers never think of such problems. Nobody pays attention to the social problems created by it, such as the pollution caused by vehicles, sound pollution, accidents on the roads etc.

Mobile, vehicles are at least useful things. Some people need them. But there is a barrage of unwanted things on the people. Unwanted Advertising of food products are "use so and so to increase the nutritive values of milk or using so and so to wash the vegetables on which pesticides are sprayed," creating question, 'then why pesticides were used while growing fruits and vegetables, how much water was used for that, how much manpower and what amount of money was spent on all this?' When we visit an exhibition, many things are on display. Many things are unwanted. But we purchase them because they look attractive. When we know they are of no use, we repent on buying such goods or articles.

Today basic things are also advertised. We see the advertisements of hospitals, or an educational institution. Useful things are also being advertised and then a question arises, 'is there no sensitivity in the society?' The basic requirements like education, health service is being commercialized. Such publicity is the example of this. This shows the insensitivity of the society. Have we become so rigid and numb? We should think over it.

The expenses on the publicity are borne by the consumer. It is seen many times that, a service or a commodity is cheap but it is sold costly, as the cost on

publicity is more. Why should the customers bear the expenses on Advertising? Moral values are lost in the products that spoil the social health. Commercialization of goods drifts the society from values.

Sometimes there is no relation between the advertisement and the commodity being advertised, as 'Use of young females with fewer clothes in the advertisement of shaving cream or soap.' Such Advertising lures people and the products get sold. They try to attract people by attractive personality. In an advertisement, a wife uses only a particular edible oil, to keep her husband away from heart attack and she appeals other women to take care of the health of their husbands. Washing hands before meals is a good habit. Children should always wash hands before eating. But publicity is done through the advertisement that hands should be washed, only with a particular hand-wash or soap. Thus, they appeal the emotion of the people and try to increase the sale of their products. An expense of the advertising, the impact, affects the society. When we see all this, it is necessary to think twice of the medium of advertising.

Advertisement tells us only about the good side of a commodity or a service; Advertisement should tell about the other side also. The consequences of using the products, their drawback should also be explained clearly, for using the media of publicity properly. Keeping a commercial attitude, if the society is misled through advertising, it is totally wrong. Through it, wrong decisions are taken and people are misled.

Publicity has entered man's life from all direction. Wide publicity is done, when there is a birthday of a corporator, M.P., M.L.A. or a worker of a political party

with big posters. Many people and political parties do this to increase their political appeal. Such hoardings also tarnish the image of the squares/ roads. Advertising may be commercial or public, their truthfulness should be checked. For this, an impartial and transparent body is needed to check the statements of Advertising regarding the products, the immediate and long-term effects of the products on the society. The three powers of the society namely physical, financial and the power of intelligence should be used properly.

Good work of a person or an institution should be promoted in the society. For this the media should come ahead. Sometimes it is seen that some people do very little work, but do a lot of publicity of it. Their main aim is to become famous. As against this, some people vow to spend all their life for the betterment of the society or some other cause, but they keep away from publicity. For them, the work they do is more important than publicity. The media should take notice of such people and people should respect them. Advertising of addictions; like liquor, cigarettes are not allowed directly. Hence the producers of liquor, cigarette, gutkha have found out a loophole. Under the brand name of other product, they make publicity of other products like liquor. They show that consuming liquor is, 'Ways of Man.' Then a youth gets attracted towards it. This is taking the society on a wrong path. First encouraging the people to follow the wrong path and then try to save them from bad effects is double trouble. An advertisement for soap, 'spoiling clothes is good.' It means first you will spoil the clothes and then wash them with the washing powder. This publicity to misconduct should be stopped. We don't give any pointed object in children's hands because it can hurt.

Today, in different programmes of the T.V. channels, too many of advertisements are shown in between the break. Previous T.V. serials like Ramayana and Mahabharata were shown on Doordarshan. At that time advertisements were shown before or after the serials. There was no break like today. So, the people could enjoy watching the serial continuously. (now on HD channels there are no advertisements/ Recently the TV media has introduced HD channels wherein the advertisements are not there but for which one has to pay slightly more.) Now in the T.V. serials, break is taken after every 10 minutes and advertisements are shown. They try to fill people's brains with the messages of advertisement. Entertainment is important for a person. T.V. is no more a medium of entertainment but a medium of Advertising. In the childhood we have read the stories of witches and wizards; doing some magic and making man work like a machine at their wish. Likewise, media like T.V. with their magic have made man a machine. Today because of the TV entertainment the children and even grownups have become TV addict and they do not go to the ground and exercise. In the cities where apartment societies are there, there are no children of similar age and the children get the excuse. Everyone cannot afford to send their children to the playgrounds which charge exorbitant charges.

Entertainment is necessary. But a person should not fall prey to it. Why should a particular serial be watched at a particular time or why to adjust the time? Actually, a person should have control over it. But today the magic of media has made people slaves of the media. They become living machines. The adverse effects of it on the society are seen today. Before, movies were shown only on Sundays. Now innumerable movies are shown on many channels. A person is addicted to change the channels of T.V. with the

remote. People become restless, if they don't have remote in their hands. There are quarrels in the family for remote. A person controlling T.V. does not have control on his behaviour. We should get happiness through entertainment. We should get joy through what we see and listen. We should get knowledge, peace of mind. What is added by the meaningless talks of a radio jockey to our knowledge? Today everything is becoming cheap and meaningless. No one thinks practically and logically. Where all this will lead us?

The philosophy of marketing is that everything can be sold. Hence everything should be sold and profit should be acquired. Hence importance of marketing has increased. On the strength of money, the media of advertising decide thing to be lifted up, and things to be buried down. The common man is engaged in the trap, losing the peace of mind. A peg of liquor is given in a person's hand by telling him, that 'consuming it is bad.' A packet of cigarette is given to the purchaser on it is written 'Cigarette smoking is injurious to health.' Isn't this immoral?

The media of advertising show a wrong thing and pollute the culture. But they should show good things to the society. In the timetable of T.V., at least one slot should be such, where the lessons of morality are given. Gandhi taught us the principle of non-violence (Ahinsa), respect for all religions. Saints preached us that all human beings are alike and there should not be discrimination of caste, creed and religion. If such things are told to people, in suitable form then, classism, religious and provincial disputes can be reduced. For this, there should be a body controlling the media of advertising. Not only that, also it should work transparently and effectively. As said above, the media should be compelled to keep time slot, for showing good

things and spread morality. Otherwise if these media make fool of people and if the society also becomes a fool, then we are answerable and responsible.

An advertisement is an effective medium of giving messages, a medium of promoting concepts. It should be used thoughtfully with conscience. Anything should not be telecasted, unless it is checked properly. The work of keeping the check should be done by knowledgeable and ethical people. An advertisement is like a driver; it has the steering of vehicle in his hand, leading people to a good place or throwing them in a ditch. We should be aware of it.

Here I would like to make it amply clear that I am not averse of digital technology. It does have several plus points as well. However, there has to be some mechanism to educate the children right from their childhood of the bright side of each of the electronic gadget including TV as well as Mobile. On TV also there are several educational channels and the parents should consciously see these channels to inculcate this habit amongst the children. E.g. Discovery channel, National Geographic, sports channels etc. Now if we educate the children right from the beginning about the use of mobile phone, we can avoid even suicides of the younger generation from playing harmful games like Blue Whale, Tick Tock etc. For this what is needed is that the parents should themselves use the mobile only when it is needed and avoid time pass on it. Remember younger generation copies their role models who are usually their parents. Remember it is difficult but not impossible.



Quotes

“The greatest thing to be achieved in advertising, in my opinion, is believability and nothing is more believable than the product itself”

– **Leo Burnett**

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“Give them quality. That is the best kind of advertising.”

–**Milton Hershey, entrepreneur**

“Advertising brings in customers, but word-of-mouth brings in the best customers.”

– **Jonah Berger**