



MULTICULTURALISM IN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Ms. Bhavna Singh, Assistant Professor, BAMMC Program, In-charge, Nirmala Memorial Foundation College of Commerce and Science, Kandivali (E), Mumbai.

Ms. Neelam Patil, Assistant Professor, Department of Business Communication, Nirmala Memorial Foundation College of Commerce and Science, Kandivali (E), Mumbai.

ABSTRACT

From the outset, advertising and advertising campaigns have aimed to depict uniqueness of the society they represent, and simultaneously endorsed multiculturalism. The objective of giving serious weightage to multiculturalism in advertising is to be relevant globally and expand the scope of business. In other words, multiculturalism has been playing a significant role in advertising campaigns across societies and nations. Promotional campaigns have been in a state of flux across the world in their pursuit to appeal universally. It is evident in the layers that constitute the organic whole of advertising. Whether one observes the concept, plot, characterization or visuals of an advertisement, one is bound to find multiculturalism embedded in it. However, embracing multiculturalism is not the same for all nations. Advertising campaigns in different regions have to abide by the concept of multiculturalism in varying degrees. Local beliefs, traditions and religious practices are some factors that influence the extent of multiculturalism in advertising in different regions. It is important to study multiculturalism as a dynamic element in ad campaigns, and the factors that limit its presence locally. In today's age of globalisation, treatment of multiculturalism by a brand can make or break the prospects of its ad campaign. Examples of even renowned brands committing major blunders in advertising abound. It throws light on the significance of multiculturalism and intercultural sensitivity, which boost businesses of companies that endorse it in the right spirit.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Advertising campaigns, Multicultural marketing Cross-cultural advertising, Intercultural sensitivity

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The field of advertising has undergone a tremendous transformation in today's world. It is being redefined by new and emerging trends such as multiculturalism, which has been playing a perceptible role in reflecting the changes in the society. Multiculturalism 'is the way in which a society deals with cultural diversity, both at the national and at the community level.' It 'expresses the view that society is enriched by preserving, respecting, and even encouraging cultural diversity.' Multiculturalism is crucial for attaining 'a high degree of cultural diversity. Diversity occurs when people of different races, nationalities, religions, ethnicities, and philosophies come together to form a community. A truly diverse society is one that recognizes and values the cultural differences in its people.'

The very concept of multiculturalism indicates the existence of diversity in society. Multiculturalism, cross-cultural advertising and intercultural sensitivity are also vital elements of advertising and ad

campaigns. The role of culture in advertising is crucial; in fact, how communication and advertising function are culture-bound. In fact, advertising does not have one single objective or goal to achieve while promoting a product or service. It has to perform varied roles, which can be persuasion or earning trust of the different publics. In other words, what is acceptable in one culture may not be appropriate in the other. Further, having an understanding of the local culture is very important for advertising to be effective.

It is critical for international companies to build their marketing strategies in such a way that they are congenial to the culture and values of the targeted audience. In today's business milieu, advertising and marketing are continually evolving in the context of market size, quality and content. It is crucial for them to also adhere to technological developments to create advertising and marketing concepts that are relevant locally as well as internationally.

Multicultural marketing is undoubtedly an intricate and nuanced area. However, despite taking all possible precautions in planning and execution, there's always a chance that even the most renowned multicultural marketing campaigns can err and fail miserably. Some prominent international names have also fallen prey to it, and faced the consequences that have often been far-reaching. In this paper, instances of successful as well as failed advertising campaigns have been taken up to understand the significance of multiculturalism, variations in the way it is treated, consequences of neglecting it and what lies ahead.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to increasing multiculturalization, the practice of integrated marketing tactics that identify and strategically target potential customers by varied backgrounds has moved from the niche to the mainstream due to multiculturalization population growth. These different subcultures have distinctive, culturally entrenched demands and views of brands and goods; as a result, they are more receptive to marketing messages that are culturally relevant. Targeting customers based on their race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation has been a topic of discussion and debate among marketing professionals due to the rising multicultural population in the United States. This topic is covered in two essays.

"Leveraging Diversity as a Resource: Identifying an Organization's Antecedents, Strategic Approach, and Successful Multicultural Marketing" is the title of the first essay. Examining multicultural marketing tactics while utilizing the Resource Based View of the Firm in putting out a conceptual model and identifying organizational constructs that support the success of multicultural marketing. The conceptual model is created with the idea that an organization's dedication to diversity is a competitive advantage.

The second piece, "Moderating the Effectiveness of Racially and Ethnically Congruent and Diverse Marketing Communications," examines the general public's perception of diversity in advertising and how consumers react to multicultural advertising across four studies. Multicultural advertising's likeability is favorably mediated by the marketing communications' felt cultural specificity. Levels of acculturation and ethnic identification also play a moderating role in this effect. All customers' perspectives on diversity in advertising are investigated as well. The results show that there is a "post-racial" population segment that values variety in advertising. This work contributes to our understanding of self-identity theory and distinctiveness. (Jean-Paul James, October 2017)

After various studies shown that the standardization of advertising across cultures is invalid, marketing practitioners and academics stopped considering standardized approaches to marketing and advertising tactics in the context of globalization. Cross-cultural advertising so considers local culture while delivering messages through adverts. In order to create successful localized advertising that would represent the cultural values and norms of the intended audience, cross-cultural awareness is crucial. The difficulty of interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds is a challenge in cross-cultural advertising. In domains like language, communication style, visuals, and cultural values, cross-cultural solutions are used. Cross-cultural advertising is just a matter of utilizing common sense to understand how culture affects the various components of a marketing campaign

and then adjusting those components to effectively reach the target demographic. Other difficulties include choosing between standardization and cultural value adaptation in advertising when dealing with individuals from various cultural backgrounds. The difficulty lies in equipping pupils academically to create advertisements that effectively reach out to many cultural groups. (Retnowati, 2016)

Many advertising have become global standards. Which values are applied when a single advertisement targets a diverse global audience? What meaningful and appealing values exist globally in the eyes of advertisers? The values used in eastern and western advertising, as well as customer preferences for local versus foreign marketing, are examined through a literature review. Through a content analysis of standardized advertisements used in western and Asian nations between 2000 and 2003, values in global advertising are explored. With a focus on Europe versus Asia, the empirical research reveals the values in the sample's international marketing. The findings reveal a predominance of white faces and western ideals (hedonism, modernism, individualism) in contrast to traditional Asian values (tradition, family, collectivism, and submission to authority), albeit this may not necessarily be true of the Asian advertising scene as a whole. The study demonstrates that international commercials just reflect what is happening in the West and do not represent international culture or universal principles. The results highlight how intricate the local/global connection is, which has been a topic of discussion in the globalisation debate. (Gram, 2007)

By the year 2042, the population of the United States is predicted to grow by an estimated 42%, with racial and ethnic minorities becoming the majority. Marketing executives need to comprehend the context in which customers from various cultures behave in marketing enticements. This multi-case study's objective was to investigate the methods employed by senior marketing executives in the execution of fruitful multicultural marketing initiatives. Senior marketing executives from three prominent organisations in the state of Michigan who have experience implementing fruitful multicultural marketing initiatives made up the target population. The crucial multicultural marketing theory served as the intellectual underpinning. Semi-structured interviews and organisational records were used to gather the data. The five steps of analysis outlined by Yin were used to analyse the data: collection and organisation, fragmentation, grouping, interpretation, and conclusion. Triangulation of methods and using member checking, the veracity of data interpretations was examined. The research revealed three key themes: marketing strategies that promote diversity and inclusion; segmentation, target marketing, and positioning; and cultural competence techniques. Marketing managers who are interested in marketing to multicultural consumers, both present and future, will find the data obtained in this study to be useful. The implications for effective social change include developing and maintaining an inclusive environment that actively and purposefully involves underrepresented consumer communities. (McCrorry, 2018)

For marketers, Australia's multicultural society offers both benefits and challenges. The multicultural market in Australia, worldwide markets, and the multicultural resources that are available in Australia are the three types of components that make up the framework for analysis presented in this article. The diversity of Australia's cultures, as well as those of other multicultural nations, is, according to the authors, a key asset for identifying and seizing opportunities in global marketplaces. The manner in which opportunities in the domestic and international marketplace might emerge and be reacted to as a result of the multicultural characteristics of a society are demonstrated through a number of case studies. The cases come from the Australian Multicultural Marketing Awards' annual winning entries. The concepts are applicable to all communities with diverse cultures, even though they were created with reference to Australian society. (Cheng, 1999)

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

To study the impact of multiculturalism through advertising campaigns across the globe

To study the limitations posed by traditions and culture in certain nations in incorporating multiculturalism in ad campaigns

To analyse ad campaigns of specific brands to understand the diverse aspects of multiculturalism

Hypothesis

H₀ – Multiculturalism may not be a dynamic factor impacting ad campaigns in different continents.

H₁ – Multiculturalism may be a dynamic factor impacting ad campaigns in different continents.

Methodology

Descriptive Research Design is used in this research work where the usage of books, journal articles, newspapers, blogs etc. are done. Qualitative method has been used so that the hypothesis can be tested to obtain results. Case study method has also been used.

Secondary data has been used in this research paper. The secondary data is used where the information is collected from various articles, journals, books, websites, etc., and proper references are also provided for the same.

Limitations of the Study

Limited number of advertising campaigns have been taken up for this study. Since the field of advertising is vast and essentially dynamic, conclusions drawn by this study may not be equally applicable to advertising campaigns of all regions at all times.

Case Study

The case studies depicting a few advertising campaigns have been included in this paper. The objective is to demonstrate the difference in outcomes of ad campaigns that dealt with multiculturalism and intercultural sensitivity to highlight how multiculturalism has been invoked, and the lack of diversity that it aims to address.

Case Study 1

“America the Beautiful”

This much acclaimed and successful multicultural advertising campaign of 2014 from Coca Cola serves as a powerful instance of diversity marketing. The campaign features an ethnically and culturally diverse group of people rendering multi-language version of “America the Beautiful” to symbolize the changing identity of America.

The ad depicts diverse areas in America — the Pacific Ocean, the plateaus of Utah, Chinatown in New York City that evoke feelings of oneness and pride in diverse communities from all over the country. In the background, “America the Beautiful” is sung in different languages.

The impact of the ad was so strong that it became the top trending topic on Facebook after the Superbowl. It has also been hailed as an ideal example of successful cross-cultural advertising. The act of bringing together voices from different communities and putting them under the spotlight speaks volumes about the need for multicultural factors. It also points out that multiculturalism is an element that has to be addressed, and efforts are needed to be made for drawing attention towards it.

Case Study 2

Adidas – “Here to Create”

A galaxy of renowned achievers like Lionel Messi, Pharrell Williams, Von Miller and several other hailing from diverse industries appear in this powerful Adidas ad campaign. The celebrities brilliantly express the beauty of interchange between creativity and diversity

in this campaign. The mere presence of achievers from diverse cultures, industries, age, sexual orientation and belief firmly establishes the beauty and need for multiculturalism to be a part of the society. They assert their role of being creators, brought together by a mindset to go beyond boundaries, race, gender, et al.

Case Study 3

Dove Real Beauty – Real Blunder

Dove launched an ad campaign titled ‘Real Beauty’. It was envisioned as a magnificent multicultural marketing campaign, and also a movement. The campaign wanted to convey that women are beautiful, irrespective of their looks and physical attributes.

The advertisement showed a black woman taking off her top and transforming into a white woman, who removes her top and then turns into an Asian woman. The Asian woman then takes off her top, and finally the black woman who is shown in the beginning appears again.

While the conceptualisation of the ad and the intent behind it were to convey intercultural sensitivity, the treatment of the ad film missed the mark. In simple words, it was a disaster and backfired completely. The prevailing sentiment was that the ad campaign reinforced white supremacy and attempted to discard ethnicity.

Protests were staged, and calls for boycott of the ad were made vehemently.

Case Study 4

Pepsi’s Kendall Jenner ad

Beverages giant Pepsi is another big name that waded into multicultural marketing failure. Pepsi came up with a Kendall Jenner ad, which turned controversial led to massive protests soon after its release. The ad showed celebrity Kendall Jenner walking over to a police officer and giving him a can of Pepsi during a protest. The ad was disparaged for dismiss grave issues like racism and police cruelty. This ad failed in its attempt to give out a thoughtful message and instead highlighted a burning issue and its maltreatment.

Case Study 5

Pop icon Rihanna’s brand, Fenty has been hailed as an ideal example of authentic inclusive marketing. It stresses on the point that every woman is beautiful and should feel accepted., A few years back, Fenty Beauty launched a mind-boggling 40 shades of foundation. The idea was to make women of colour feel that they have the options and deserve to be spoilt for choice. The campaign created a big impact on the minds of the people as it reflected the virtues of multiculturalism fittingly.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This paper has endeavoured to prove that multiculturalism is a dynamic factor that has impacted advertising campaigns across the globe. In today’s era of globalisation, businesses have to reach out to diverse audiences. Going global and having a business that appeals internationally has become a necessity.

To stand out from the competition, brands must learn how to market to a more progressive and diverse population and adapt their marketing strategies to suit different cultures. One cannot afford to be close minded and refuse to adapt to the changing world by clinging to the past. Companies that refused to understand that value of multiculturalism or treated it dismissively by not showing value to local culture have suffered massively in business. The need of the hour for businesses is to show genuine respect for the culture of a place and create advertising campaigns accordingly.

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