
CASE 2 MASS MEDIA AND SOCIAL ADVERTISING*

Objectives

This case presents to you three illustrations of social advertising, to enable you to:

- appreciate the utility of mass media for socially relevant objectives,
- evaluate the media strategy used in case,
- analyse present use of media and suggest alternative media mix, looking at the rural audience.

This case is followed by a brief media note on rural advertising to help you appreciate some of the media choice criteria applied in the case.

Introduction

There is large scope for social advertising in the rural India. The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on behalf of various ministries and departments is in charge of releasing campaigns on a vast array of social issues that include immunization, girl child, women empowerment, health and family welfare, conservation of energy and national integration *et al.*

The DAVP has on its panel more than 24000 newspapers and journals. In the year 2001, the DAVP released 1,60,000 press advertisements in various newspapers in Hindi, English and various other regional languages. It also put up 400 exhibitions in different parts of the country on themes like national integration, communal harmony, family welfare and other developmental issues. Nearly 700 publications with a print run of around 20 million copies was also achieved. It also put up nearly 350 billboards, 2,500 kiosks and equal number of wall writings, over 9000 bus panels and five series of cinema slides each comprising 9000 slides in 13 regional languages. During the year under reference, DAVP produced nearly 4,500 audio and 150 video programs in Hindi, English and regional languages. Its mass mailing wing has an address bank of over 16 lath addresses comprising nearly 560 categories of audience. During the year 2001, about 16 million people were reached through the direct mail medium.

Social Campaigns for Rural India: Some Case Studies

- **Multi-media Campaign on Women Empowerment- 2001-2002**

The Department of Women and Child Welfare launched an intensive publicity campaign in the year 2001-2002 through the Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity (DAVP). The objective of the campaign was to "*create a general awareness of women's rights to build an environment which can impact positively on women's lives to empower them*".

The media included press, outdoor, audio-visual/electronic, and print (posters, pamphlets, flyers etc.) The campaign was aimed at the entire population, especially the women covering the length and breadth of the country.

* The case studies and the media notes provided along with the case are developed by Professor Jaishri Jethwaney, Professor of Advertising and Communication, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

¹ India 2002, Ibid.



The media strategy in this kind of campaign was to inform, educate and communicate with the target audience about the various schemes for beneficiaries, their rights, government policies and programs etc. It has been seen that such campaigns are spread over a period of time- from a few months to a year or more. The publicity is intensive in the beginning, than on special occasions and later at the end of the program, generally to enlist achievements, especially when the government spearheads the campaign.

Press ads on special occasions like Women's Empowerment Year, International Women's Year, National Nutritional Week, Breast Feeding Week, Children's day, Swadeshi Mela, Perfect Health Mela, were released. These were supplemented by ads for nomination for Stree Shakti Puruskar, Kishori Shakti Yojana, Constitutional Guarantee for women including some ads on women's education, rights, health, nutrition and maternity benefits.

The campaign also had ads against domestic violence, exploitation of girl child etc. A special logo was designed to provide a distinct identity to the campaign. The advertisements were released in all major languages in various newspapers. Some of the themes in the press ads are reflected below to provide glimpses.

One of the press advertisement had a graphic of the entire family eating together (the ad had a visual of a family comprising husband, wife and two children eating their meal together. The ad had minimal copy which said: *khushhaali ka yehi aadhar; milkar khay sara parivar*: prosperity comes when the entire family eats together. This presumably was to break the custom in rural area wherein the men and boys eat first, to be followed by women).

Another ad was on domestic violence (the ad had the visual of a group of women talking with a policeman, who also had a woman police official sitting by his side. The copy read: *lab na ham chupchap sahenge; gharelu hinsa par baat karenge*: Now we shall not keep quiet. We shall speak on domestic violence.

These ads were basically aimed at rural women. As the campaign was all-India, there were many ads that were aimed at urban women also. In commemorative ads, one generally found pictures of the Prime Minister and concerned ministers.

Thirty-six radio jingles, four spots and 14 episodes of a Tele-serial were also produced. A radio program titled; '*Aakash Hamara hai*' especially made for the North-East region was also launched during the year. A number of exhibitions on the theme of women empowerment were organized in different parts of the country.²

■ Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan Campaign- 2001-2002

An extensive publicity campaign on 'Sarv shiksha abhiyan was launched by the DAVP on behalf of the Department of Elementary Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development. The objective of the campaign EDUCATION FOR ALL was to inform and educate the target audience about the government's plan to make education accessible to all children under a time bound program.

The punch line of the campaign was: *Let us join hands to ensure that each and every child is in school.*

² Although, exact expenditure details could not be accessed, but on a rough estimation, appreciating the various media mix, over Rs. Ten crores must have been spent on this campaign.



He campaign enlisted the goals of the program through various press ads that included the following:

- 2002: All districts in the country to be covered by the program.
- 2003: Bring all children to schools, Education guarantee centers, alternative schools or back to back camps.
- 2007: All children complete five years of education.
- 2010: All children complete eight years of quality elementary education and achieve universal retention.

The bus panels carried the message: *har bachhe ko shiksha our gyan dega sarv shiksha abhiyan* (Every child will receive education and knowledge through the 'Education for all' program)

In total, 3870 broadcast of various spots were made through the national network of AIR and 30 CBS centers and FM channels. 700 buses in Jharkand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi carried the bus panels. Over 45 insertions of five advertisements projecting various facilities were released in various newspapers all over the country in English, Hindi and other regional languages. The media list comprised various editions of mainstream newspapers brought out from various parts of the country, small and medium newspapers in regional languages.

■ Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan Campaign for the Year 2003-2004

The Ministry of Human Resource Development plans to re-launch media campaign during the year 2003-2004 also. Some of the focus areas for the ensuing campaign will be launched in districts with poor child literacy in the Hindi belt, Orissa, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. This time the girl child will be the focus area of publicity. An overall 2198 select gender backward blocks in the above mentioned states would be covered to give special focus to scheduled castes, tribal and urban deprived children, working children and minorities.

A budget of 20.24 crore rupees has been recommended by the DAVP to the Ministry for one year. The DAVP proposes to avail of special bonus schemes of Doordarshan and All India Radio to get 'maximum value for money' spent. The DAVP has also suggested to the Ministry to include some private television channels to enhance the over all reach of the campaign.

The proposed media mix includes, electronic media, interpersonal media (shows, programs by the department of field publicity and song & Drama Division), outdoor, press, and print media. The DAVP maintains a mass mailing list for sending publicity literature and posters. The list includes broadly, opinion makers, Panchayat offices, Members of State assemblies, municipalities' etc. The sponsoring ministries of various campaigns also handle distribution on their own.

Media sensitization is also part of the proposed campaign. The Ministry of HRD may also consider printing the campaign logo on the postal stationery and bring out commemorative coins and stamps during the campaign period.

■ Multi-Media Campaign on Social Justice & Empowerment

The Ministry of Welfare constituted on 1985 was renamed as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 1998. The 'areas of concern to the Ministry are all those where a major role is played by the states.³ The Central government is responsible for formulating the related policies and programs besides coordinating and promoting implementation of services by various states. The programs aim at covering scheduled castes and other disadvantaged people, weaker sections, people with disabilities, helpless children etc. The campaign launched by the Ministry through DAVP and other media units of the I&B in 2002-2003 aimed at informing and educating the

³ India, 2002, Ministry of I&BI 1



target audience about various schemes, especially relating to various scholarships available to students of the weaker sections, coaching assistance for examinations, assistance for purchase of appliances, announcement of child helpline etc. Six states, viz., Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh were covered.

The media mix included, press, electronic media, print (pamphlets, posters etc), exhibitions, outdoor publicity, bus panels, interpersonal communication, song & drama programs, film shows, book exhibitions etc.

In order to gauge the impact of the campaign, the Indian Institute of Mass Communication was commissioned to conduct a research study immediately after major the exposure of the campaign to the target audience. A purposive sample of 2000 respondents was drawn from all the six states. Some of findings throw interesting insights about various media. Despite the claim of increasing media penetration in the rural areas, more than 55 per cent knew about the social justice and empowerment schemes through friends and relatives. Twenty six per cent knew them from the concerned offices and institutions. Opinion leaders accounted for being eight percent resource of information. Television, newspapers and outdoor media accounted for only three to four percent resources each.

Information through the song and drama was considered most effective. As many as 42 per cent vouched for it, followed by 18 per cent respondents who were exposed through the outdoor media like hoardings, wall writings and bus panels. Doordarshan was considered effective by six per cent and radio by only 0.5 per cent. More than 29 per cent respondents across six states felt the campaign was largely effective; while about 35 per cent felt it was only 'somewhat effective'.

The government most of the time is under scrutiny for its tilt towards urban and English newspapers at the cost of the regional newspapers. The readers of such newspapers may not be the real target audience for that particular social product. The argument in favour could be that in order to bring about social change, it is important to involve various sections of the society and educate them about the rights of the their less privileged countrymen and also to elicit their support in bringing about change. (The campaign: *Each One Teach One* involved a lot of people from the urban area, so much so that the agency in charge of providing kits to the volunteers could not cope up with the tremendous response).

Discussion Questions

1. Critically evaluate whether the media used in each of the cases above was suitable to the objectives of the social campaign.
2. In your view, and from a study of the illustrations above, how different is social advertising in the rural context to social advertising in the urban context. Take any one illustration of urban social advertising (safe driving, safe drinking water, AIDS prevention, anti smoking campaign, etc) and compare it with the illustration above to identify differences between the two.
3. What alternative media or advertising approaches would you suggest in each of the illustration above? Justify your choice.



A Media Note for Rural Advertising

Dynamics of Rural Advertising

India, the largest democracy in the world is also the second largest populated country. It provides an interesting kaleidoscope for communicators.

The country abounds in myriad languages and dialects, which are so different from each other that it is almost a Herculean task to speak to the whole country with one voice and style that can be deciphered by a great majority of people.

India is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious country posing a great challenge to communicators in understanding the currents and the undercurrents that continuously happen in a developing society.

Despite the media revolution that came about in the early Nineties, it is a long way to go as far as reaching out to a huge population is concerned. Media reach often does not get translated into media accessibility. The satellite television channels are slowly but surely making headway in reaching out to the hinterland. The latest *India readership Survey 2001* bears this out,

Media reach

| | Press | TV | Radio | Internet | Cinema |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Urban+ rural | 33.3 | 50.6 | 15.1 | 0.8 | 8.7 |
| Urban | 56.7 | 78.7 | 11.4 | 2.6 | 14.1 |
| Rural | 24.3 | 39.8 | 15.4 | 0.1 | 6.9 |

(Figures in %)

There are a certain myths about the rural market vis-a-vis the use of mass media, which an advertiser needs to understand.

One of the myths is that 'upmarket' means urban India. The reality, however, is that if monthly Household Income (MHI) is taken, as a parameter to segment 'upmarket' audience and MHI of Rs. 5000+ as the benchmark, then it is a fact that 40 per cent of this audience comes from the rural India.

There is another myth that the rural audience can't be reached through the mass media, which may also not be true. As per the media resource book, we can reach more than 50 per cent of rural population through the mass media (TV/ press/ radio/cinema) and 59 per cent of the 'upmarket' through the television.

DK Bose an expert social marketer with Thomson Social, and later with Ogilvy Rural also feels that brand recall is just not existent in the rural India. People may ask for 'lal sabun' to denote Lifebouy but don't understand if some other brand is given to them. Conversion, in rural areas in his view needs product demos. Levers 'went the wise way; it created familiarity with the brands first; then sources', in his view.⁴

Rajkumar Jha, Head of Rural O&M is of the view that in the rural market the benchmarking about success is not yet sales, but creating awareness, brand salience, trial generation and participation⁵

Rural Marketing and Advertising Strategies

In the context of rural advertising, one has to understand that because of very peculiar nature and challenges as reflected in the above paragraphs, the marketers generally go

⁴Brand Equity, *Economic Times*, 6-12 October 1999.

⁵ Response based on a questionnaire emailed to the expert.



in for integrated marketing and communication strategies, that would encompass Product innovation, Pricing, promotion (of which advertising is only one part), distribution etc. Hence, in the following paragraphs emphasis has been made to provide a holistic picture and not just advertising, which is mediated communication through the mass media alone

The dynamics of rural marketing and communication requires acquiring deep insights and innovative strategies, some of which may include the following.

- Keep low-priced and small unit packages. The shampoo sachets are a great success story in the rural markets. Brook Bond tea sells its low-end package at 25 paise a unit. When people sustain their lives on a day to day basis, especially the manual labourers, selling products in packages that are for one time use make a better sense.
- Build imagery around products. It has been seen that the rural audience has its way of recognizing and referring the products. Double Haathi brand of rice with a graphic of two elephants, Panghat Vanaspati, with a graphic of lady with a water pitcher on the head are referred by the picture when purchased.
- Pack products in dispensers that can be used by the rural buyers to store small necessity items. Such things help in reminder value.
- Rural India has a great potential for second hand goods. Many wholesalers are cashing in on it. When a television manufactures gives a promotional scheme to exchange an old TV with a new one at an excellent discount in a Metro, one wonders what happens to the old one. After a bit of repairs here and there, the set straight away lands up into the rural market.
- For the service sector, especially the banks and insurance, it would be in the interest of the companies to reach out to the people, if they don't. One has witnessed tremendous spurt in small savings over a period of time. Many banks have reached out to petty shopkeepers and other workers at the time of the closure of shops or end of a workday to collect money for their saving schemes.
- Personal insurance and insurance of crops is also catching up. Some state governments have also come forward in lending a helping hand in it.

As for ad insights, the AP Lintas's field survey in 1999 throws some interesting postulates:

Larger than life and entertainment values work better than slice of life or real life situation. Celebrities must be used with caution. Familiar yet aspiration role models work well ` Govinda leads the pack across rural markets since his hits and idiom are more non-metro. Shahrukh Khan comes a distant second in the cow belt

TV viewing is still largely community viewing and hence rural audience are not comfortable with sensuality or sexuality (*aka Lux spot with Urmilla Matondkar*)⁶

Media utilized for reaching out to the rural consumers

The ad spend on rural markets according to industry sources is less to Rs. 100 Crores; which is an abysmal percentage of more than Rs. 10, 000 Crore ad pie per annum. However, if we take in to account various social campaigns launched by the central and various state governments, we can safely add another Rs. 50-75 Crores ad spend on advertising aimed at the rural audience.

Marketers use both above and below the line media to woo the rural audience for sale of commercial ware. Some of the frequently used media comprise the following:

⁶Ibid.



Television and Press

Advertisers have been making use of mass media also to reach out to a disparate rural audience for promoting products that have a rural potential.

The ads for fertilizers, motorcycles and mo-peds, tea, soaps, *bidis* etc. are packaged in such a manner so as to attract the rural folks. *The Chal meri Luna'* (let's go my Luna) mission statement almost became a national line when Luna mo-ped was very popular in the rural areas in the eighties. Similarly, Brook Bond tea's *karak chhap chai* (strong taste tea) message found instant favour with the audience.

Outdoor Media.

The outdoor media generally encompass large billboards, kiosks, *bus* panels, bus stands, wall writing and tinplates etc. It is not uncommon to see larger than life messages painted on these media as you enter an average village. Multinational companies like the Pepsi and the Coca-Cola seem to be everywhere. They even go to the extent of painting the entire roadside eateries known as *dabhas* especially on the highways with their colour schemes and product display. This is also true of the places that lead to tourist destinations, which often meander through villages. One wonders looking at them whether the entire rural population is hooked on to the colas.

This however may not be true. The message is more often for the tourists, who pass by these areas. It is not out of place here to mention that both the Cola giants viz., Pepsi and Coca-Cola got into the eye of the storm for painting the age old rocks with their slogans at the world famous Rohtang pass in 2002. The matter came under Public Interest Litigation (PIL). The Supreme Court ordered huge fines on both the erring parties for playing with the eco system.

Wall writing was also very common both in rural and urban India during the election times leaving the entire country defaced. It took an election commissioner like T.N. Seshan in the early nineties to make it a cognizable offence, if messages were painted on government property. This has since ended. However, many companies continue to paint the corner houses, especially villages on the highways after taking permission from the owners. Many studies suggest very high exposure and recall of ad messages on walls.

Special Campaigns

As more and more companies see marketing potential in Rural India, they in order to woo the dealers and consumers launch special promotion schemes. It is not uncommon to see dealer meets and dealer promotion schemes, which dole out attractive prizes that, may even include holidays in some exotic overseas destination.

Brook Bond tea often organizes road shows, which include painted vehicles, painted elephants carrying the brand messages amidst music and dancing.

Fairs, *Haats* and *Melas* are ideal spots to promote a variety of products. The Maha Kumbh congregation held at Allahabad in January-February 2001 which attracted more than 70 million people witnessed great promotional schemes at site. Air balloons carrying messages of companies like Dabur and Colgate herbal could be seen filling the skyline. These companies alongwith many more distributed free product samples at site. In the exhibition grounds, companies like the Hindustan Lever, Dabur, Nestle, HMT, Eicher and Mahindra & Mahindra among others made their presence felt. As per media reports, the UP government gave exclusive rights to Pepsi to sell its products at the Kumbh mela. According to the study conducted by the present author, the State government's Web site listed rates for various kinds of outdoor publicity media including banners, balloons,, billboards and tree guards. The site exhorted thus:



"This will be a rare occasion for the purpose of making your products and organizations popular among the rural as well as urban masses of India"

Allahabad, although is a bustling city, but the expectation of the rural *audience* made companies address their messages to them also.

The emergence of a new medium for rural India

Video vans known as *Video Rathis (Chariot)* and later as Video on Wheels (VOW) came about in the late Eighties around the election time. Devi Lal presumably was the first one to make use of the medium during his run for chief ministership in Haryana. Looking at its roaring success, there has been no looking' back in the use of this medium by *various* political parties, especially the BJP, which made an immense use of this revolutionary medium. Dr. Jain of the Jain satellite TV is supposed to be the father of the VOW concept. The marketers soon saw a great potential in reaching out to the rural area with their brands. As the vans were lying idle after the elections, Dr. Jain's company started renting them out to the companies.

Over a period of time there have been innovations in the VOW making it the 'magic' medium as some analysts put it. It has been characterized as the rural cable or satellite TV with a capacity to receive Jain satellite television in rural settings and projecting programs on a giant 100 to 300 inches screen with state-of-art audio systems.⁸

A VOW make its journey from village to village with a program that is announced a day in advance. Because of its novelty, it often becomes a media issue, hence vigorously covered by local newspapers, giving it a multiplier impact.

Advertisers, though late in catching its potential, now seem to be using it whole hog. Many companies like the Hindustan Lever, Brooke Bond, ITC, Proctor and Gamble, Larson and Tubro, Godrej and Pepsi have successfully made use of this medium in promoting their products. VOW offers advertisers a complete communication solution that includes *demonstration of the product, promotion, market research, retailer motivation, instant reaction and opportunity to sale.*

Godfrey Philip supposedly has made good use of the medium when it ventured to change the bidi-smoking people to cigarette smoking.

According to industry sources, a twenty-six day itinerary of one an with two stops each day could cover fifty-two villages. Assuming an average of 3000 viewers per show, it amounts to 1.5 lakh viewers a month.⁹

Looking at the success of the medium, many rivals have ventured into the VOW field.

⁷Jethwaney J et al, *Media influence on MahaKumbh Visitors- an HMG' Research Study*, IIMC2001.

⁸Bhatia Tej K Advertising in Rural India, Institute for the study of languages and cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University, 2000.

⁹Rawala Bharti, Marketing goes rural, The economic times, O^h March 1996 as quoted by Bhatia Tej ibd.

The present author however feels the figures are a bit too optimistic. 3000 is a large number. Many villages may not have as many inhabitants.