

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

Significance of Political Advertisements in Indian Society: A Critical Analysis on 'Swachh Bharat Mission'

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Abstract— The aim of the study is to investigate the role of political advertisement in Indian society. The study intends to shed light on emergence of Indian advertising as a catalyst supreme power in targeting the social issues raised for public welfare. This objective laid a strong motive in bringing improvement in society by changing the outlook of every Indian citizen. For the said purpose, an inductive measure was used to identify whether an Indian citizen associates himself/herself with the cause shown through the advertisement campaigns. A qualitative research approach was adopted. To be more specific, a case study on 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan' was taken into consideration as the assessment platform for public opinion. Also, a survey was conducted and opinion of people regarding political advertisement was gathered and analyzed. The findings of the current study highlights that political advertisement lays a significant impact on the society directly through a strong persuasion mechanism and indirectly by receptive viewing interest through effective advertisement communication. Inception of Swachh Bharat Mission is a vision to public awareness towards sanitation, open defecation and waste management. This study provides an insight of understanding on the level of perception and change in human behaviour and mind set towards the social reform of Indian society.

Index Terms— Political Campaign, Digital Platform, Swachh Bharat Mission, Transforming Society, Social Empowered.



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Introduction

Indian advertisements are touching new heights in the present-day scenario. All the media are undergoing an experimental approach to bring in freshness in campaigns in order to accelerate the audience viewer-ship. Political advertising has become a global phenomenon. Political marketing is not restricted to the outdated advertising but it has also patented its presence on digital media (Safullah et al., 2017; Solihah et al., 2018). New media has emerged as one of the powerful tools of political communication in India. Srivastava (2016) explains that the youth is more into social media using Internet and is advance in political sites. Use of social media in politics has significantly increased over the years. Indian Politicians are realizing its utility, hence more and more political strategists now meticulously include social media and mobile communications in their media planning. Bennett (1998) mentions that support with internet but to use it as a support for political promotion is very important. As the number of people hooked-up to online media through smart phones is increasing every second, political communication is also taking new shape in the world. Internet is a sphere that involves virtually all levels of the political communications. Social media has caused to strengthen their visibility. For example we use Facebook data for understanding the consequence of governmentality apparatuses on the project community Ninan et al. (2019), politicians or the political parties develop an informal identity and a relationship with the citizens. In India where blogs and microblogs

like Twitter and Facebook are observed as an important instrument for political and social changes are considered as the idea and effective way to approach public and the country (Munch, 2012). In general elections of 2004, a trend was seen by Indian political parties in which electronic messages were sent on internet and mobile phones were used to create a buzz, thereby creating hi-tech campaigns for political and social issues.

Today common man participation in politics has increased. Politics has certainly entered social networking sites, which has opened new avenues for conducting politics. Communication between parties and voters still exist but the ways have been modified since 2014 assembly elections. Current Indian Prime minister Shri Narendra Modi has been portrayed as a forward-looking politician. His tactics to deal with public and youth by doing various public welfare campaigns like Beti bachao, Beti padhao for Girl Education in India, a herculean campaign of Digital India that switched India to Digital platforms almost instantly, and one of the most tedious yet remarkable strategy of Swachh Bharat Mission that have gained attention of every single Indian. Political Campaigns in India are not new. In fact, it started long back at the time Industrial Revolution when the society was in immense need of it. Ever since then eminent political leaders of India like Raj Thackeray, Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal to name a few have used Political advertising to reach to mass audience. Their campaigns have witnessed everything right from their social messages for personal campaigning to the promises being made for the upliftment of society as a whole (Robinson et al., 2016). In India (2009) general election around 150

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million supporters/voters were on social media who were also named the 'connected' generation. The new style of political communication garnered huge support for their respective campaigns. If we compare with earlier in 80s & 90s and now the style of political advertising is totally changed from hand-painted posters and holdings to Twitter and Facebook. The medium used by the candidate to promote his party was more of mouth publicity, society promotions and personal meetings but this method is replaced by online promotions and television ads etc. All political parties are now having their presence on social media and are now maintaining their party website detailing the activities and programs of the candidates. According to [Castells \(2007\)](#) the new media is definitely affecting the new social space with a positive approach.

In year 2004 and 2009, Congress party came up with the common man issue during national election campaigns, in competition to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) by Delhi chief minister Mr Arvind Kejriwal. Congress party similarly started its election campaign in January 2014. It gave extra attention to the new middle class of India which was above the poverty line. Mr Rahul Gandhi was leading the campaign for people below poverty line to make Indian communities equal and remove the difference in rich and poor. More initiatives were taken by giving employment to the ones who need and are willing to grow, by opening new opportunities for the youth in various ways like education for girls also providing laptops and electronic facilities etc.

Indian society is now more aware and sensitive towards the environmental issues, hygiene, sanitation etc. but this was not the picture 20 years back when due to lack of education and health campaigns they were more prone to diseases. Indian Government and the ruling political parties noticed these situations and in 2009 initiated certain programs in this direction but it lacked lot of things. Thereafter in 2014 election the now Indian PM Mr Narendra Modi got hold of this weakness which was like a termite of Indian society and started making his political strategies around it. He very well knew that the apt way to communicate to the youth is through social media. From facebook to twitter, he also used live chat on google plus. Hashtags like #AcheDinAaneWaleHain and #AbKiBaarModiSarkaar brought in a revolutionary social media trend from morning to evening. There was a virtual Modi wave that trapped the mind of the voters. Radio FM while traveling, the hoardings and posters on roads, social sites flooded with promotion, television conversations like 'Chai Par Charcha' and much more clearly showcased the plans of Mr Modi in transforming India. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan by Shri Narendra Modi is the most momentous cleanliness campaign run by the Government of India till date. The SBM campaign was launched in 2014 with clear objectives to create awareness about sanitation, to bring behavioral changes amongst the people, to improve and educate people about the issues of open defecation of and to aware them about health and environmental consequences ([Abhiyan, n.d.](#)).

Swachh Bharat Mission initiative has become a wonderful example in provoking and reforming clean healthy habits of the Indian society. To fulfill Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a clean and hygienic India and keeping in view his saying that "Sanitation is more essential than Independence" Narendra Modi laid this campaign as a tribute to him on his 150th birth anniversary to be celebrated in the year 2019. He truly believed that cleanliness drive is the best start of abolishing social issues from the society as well as promoting the growth of country with its citizen's individual growth ([Vishwakarma, 2016](#)). Cleanliness is the only successful campaign

which may bring a huge positive change in India.

People are coming forward from different sectors of the society to link this mass movement of cleanliness. This movement on its major stage roped in some of the Bollywood actors to the sportspersons, industrialists to divine leaders for this honorable work. The SBM anthem was written by the renowned lyricist Mr. Praseon Joshi as "Swachh Bharat Ka Irada Kar Liya Humne" and it was sung by Mr. Kailash Kher has proved an actual way to reach common people. The main objective behind SBM campaign is to make India a Garbage free country by educating public how to decompose the garbage in a natural way. This campaign also desires to bring a behavioral change among people by educating them about issues such as open defecation, proper use and sanitation of toilets, controlling scavenging and connecting people with various sanitation programmers and habits to aware them about health and environmental consequences. The campaign covers 4041 statutory towns across country also targets to declare India Open Defecation Free (ODF) by 2019 on the occasion of World Environment Day ([Liz Mathew, 2014](#)). SBM is a modified version of Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan initiated by erstwhile UPA government. It is the major cleanliness drive by far in India as associated to previous initiatives taken by government. It gained attractiveness as it was launched nationwide and had strong advertising concepts propagated by famous personalities to evoke knowledge & educate Indian citizens for environment & ultimately for their own benefits. Development of India is spreading in a rising sense such as socially, technically and economically, the overall waste generated by humans through any means is enormous. This openly littered and unorganized waste give birth to numerous kinds of diseases and makes recycling an arduous process as recycling is now the demand of nature. Thus a strong system has to be generated for proper waste disposal, and separate the garbage which was introduced under SBM segregating the waste at individual level such as at homes, offices, schools, hospitals and such public places in biodegradable & non-biodegradable format.

Now blue and green colored dustbin has been familiar to public to segregate waste systematically, such as green for wet waste & blue for dry waste (Figure 1). Taking the broom to sweep the streets, cleaning up the garbage, focusing on sanitation and maintaining a hygienic environment have become a daily exercise after the launch of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.



Fig. 1. SBM Campaign regarding awareness of Blue-Green dustbin

Another campaign done on "Asli Tarakki" (Figure 2) featured youth of the country to spread the message of sanitation and using toilets. The ad series sarcastically shows a rural figure who achieved a status in the society by getting job or purchasing high standard commodity but is unaware of the environmental issue and defecate openly.



Fig. 2. 'Asli Tarakki' Campaign by Congress

'Shilpa Shetty' a Bollywood celebrity has also acted in SBM advertisements where she gives phone call to people and make them realize their mistakes of littering in open and instructs them to dump waste in blue and green dustbins. The promotional efforts are not only done with TVCs and print ads but also to Swachhta Mobile app was launched by MoHuA for pushing this campaign. Thus it is quite noticeable that there had been continuous efforts propagated through SBM advertisements to increase the awareness among people. Participation of iconic personalities made it more impactful over minds of people. Especially the Swachh Bharat Song made a striking inspiration pushing people to start segregating waste from essential level i.e. from their house only.

"Darwaja Band" ad campaign (Figure 3) series features Mr. Amitabh Bacchan and a child giving the message of using toilets instead of expelling openly which is the root cause of hundreds of infections and diseases. It is showing that even a child is aware about the issue and its solution too. There can be several types of waste like industrial waste, human waste, domestic waste organic waste, hazardous waste, packaging waste and many more under waste category.



Fig. 3. 'Darwaja Bandh' Ad Campaign regarding awareness of using toilets

This campaign is focused on making Indian Environment healthy and Open Defecation Free by investigative the changes occurred based on the data collection through questionnaires. According to SBM strategies, a total of 15% amount of the modest has been allocated for Information, Education and Communication (IEC) & Public alertness so that people should get knowledge about sanitation and the target of carrying behavior change can be achieved. Of this, 12% is allocated to States for large scale awareness campaigns on hygiene & sanitation and for establishing its link to public health & environment through different means such as radio, social media, workshops, documentaries, and social media.

Literature Review

Several researches have laid their contributions on Significance of Political Advertisements in Indian Society. A researcher named Norris (2010) has stated that "political communication is an interactive process which spreads information among the politicians, media and society as a whole. According to her 'political advertisement & communication' is an interactive process concerning the broadcast of the information among politicians, media and the society". With the help of social media and advertisement things are changing very fast and in a global way. Mass communication through the social media is the latest platform to reach all.

According to Karandikar (2012) Mahatma Gandhi gave the best political message to India. He communicated the impression of non- violence, Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience actions to his supporters and fellow freedom fighters.

Prasad (2003) explains that in the Ancient times in India "Mahabharata and Ramayana", the two great classics of India stated the code of conduct that governed the relationships between sovereign states. This code was documented and followed by the kings and in situation of violation of the code the council of ministers conflicting him. During the Mughal rule, written information was used instead of oral tradition. Kautilya or Arya Chanakya, Chief Minister during the region of Chandragupta Maurya wrote extensively on administration of state and on politics in his Arthashastra.

Bhaduri (2010) says -political communication in India has been propagated through several forms of media and non- media tools for the publicity of the candidates and the political parties. The mouth to mouth publicity was one of the earliest forms of political communication in an advertisement manner. The new media revolution provides the political parties a new outlook to interact with the electorates and gain their faith and finally their voters. Social media have an inborn agenda of promoting technical-aided in human communication.

Arulchelvan (2010) writes about political parties are altering and updating the communication tools in accord to availability, grasp and efficiency, to keep up with the changing and emerging technology. Also concentrating on how the political parties and election candidates are spreading their policies, interactive with the people and election campaigning. Explaining that whatever the big advertising companies and agencies do to promote the election campaigning but the campaign subject is the essential message that will be linked in the promotional activities and these are usually industrialized with the intention of being used for a substantial period.

Bennett (1998) tells that support with internet but to use it as a support for political promotion is very important. The relevance of outmoded media and traditional forms of communication is in pact with the new media and newer methods of political communication, mainly because of separation and disintegration of the society. Government and national politics would have to re-invent and the technique of political statement would also have to be re-invented to ensemble the 'lifestyle politics' to tolerate the attention of the inaccessible, portion and generally disenchanted society which gradually depend on the new media for political communication.

According to Kaid (2009) on-screen political advertisements are not refrain to satisfied restrictions other than support identification. Explaining that candidate uphold control of a advertisement's formant and contented, political commercial residues the cleanest form of a candidate's video style, on behalf of how the candidate desires to present himself or herself to voters.

Srivastava (2016) noted that in India 75% of people are using internet and mostly below 35 years of age are the most of the internet consumers that means youth which is connected will become more powerful in the coming years ,technology is the tool social media is the power and internet is the strength. Social media sites will convert more commanding among the people.

According to Bell et al. (2004) indian internet users are more possible to deliberate politics than consumers in several other country. A pew research report in December 2012 recognized that nearly 45% of Indian web users connect on social media to argue politics.

Rahul (2016) explains the fact that the new/social media has indistinct the earlier arrangements of communication method, it has transported the global and confined at the same platform. According to Prof. Anand Kumar, the virtue of social media has continuously persist in innovation and that is so long as the nature is actuality evergreen. Irrefutably, social media has improved public judgment with better information base among the masses. Social media sites such as Twitter have invigorated people to express and politically include themselves through the use of media tools be it laptop or mobile phone.

Objective

Since India is on the track on becoming an economically and technologically empowered nation, the launch of SBM mission and many more powerful political campaigns has revamped picture of India as a socially empowered nation. The purpose of this study is to find the effectiveness of Political advertisements and SBM campaign run by BJP government through advertising concepts changing mindset of the Indian society. The study aims at the qualitative evidence to prove or nullify the hypothesis the role of Political Advertisement in Indian Society. The study will also put light on emergence of Indian advertising as a catalyst supreme power in targeting the social issues raised for public welfare. Inception of Swachh Bharat Mission is a vision to public awareness towards sanitation, open defecation and waste management. The objective laid a strong motive in bringing improvement in society by changing the outlook of every Indian citizen.

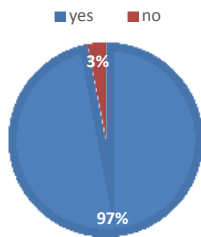
Methodology

This study provides an insight of understanding on the level of perception & change in human behavior & mind set towards the social reform of Indian society. For the said purpose, an inductive measure was used to identify whether an Indian citizen associates himself/herself with the cause shown through the advertisement campaigns. To be more specific, a case study on 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan' was taken into consideration as the assessment platform for public opinion. A Qualitative Research approach was adopted. In a country like India with cultural complexity and striking inequalities in terms of approach, literacy, linguistic and spatial differences, it would be important to study the various aspects involved to derive the significance of political campaigning. To study the impact of Political Advertisements on Indian society & to analyze the transformation with the launch of SBM campaign in support of my core study area, a Survey was conducted through questionnaire amongst 100 people of different demographics. The survey clearly demonstrated perception and heightened response of the groups towards importance of Political advertising in shaping mass attitude and behavior.

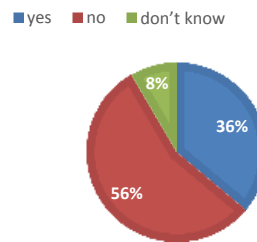
Analysis and Interpretation

Political advertising campaigns has cast its magical effects on Indian society. The first hypotheses outlined to make different predictions regarding the relationship between political advertising done now and earlier days, the regulations and the quality of advertising used for political campaign is also considered to be very important. According to second hypothesis, the digital world shifted towards advertising promotions and away from media like newspaper magazine headed for social media with the help of internet. In third hypothesis the effect of advertisement in public, the way people are following and adopting social campaigns done for public welfare is a big achievement is examined. Although we do not have systematic data on political advertising quantities, for our purposes, but it is sufficient to examine the effect of technology on social campaigns done in India. The awareness is spreading with the power of technology. It is believed that Indian public tends to be more receptive towards campaigns on such social causes like Swachh Barat Mission etc. The following analysis & interpretation was derived through the survey conducted.

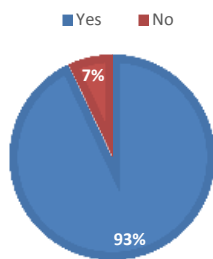
1. Have you ever seen the Political Advertisement?



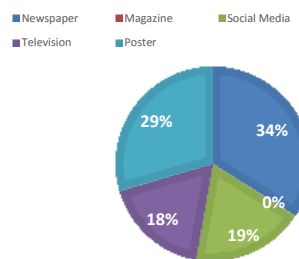
2. Does political advertisements seems promising to you?



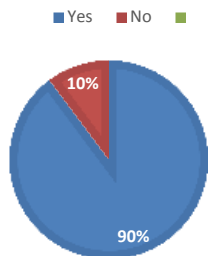
3. Does Political Advertisements appeal you?



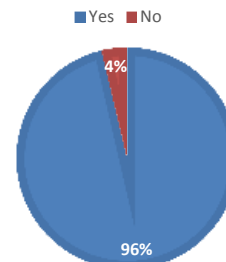
4. Where do you find the Political Advertisement the most?



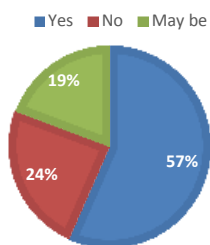
5. Do you support Social Campaign done in welfare of public and society?



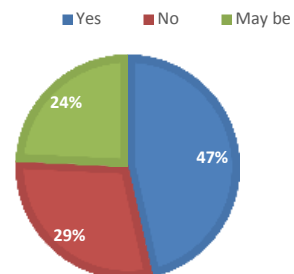
6. Are you familiar with Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) By PM Narendra Modi?



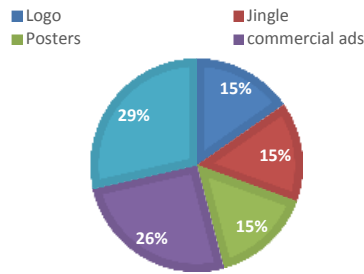
7. Do you feel a change in yourself & Society through Swachh Bharat Mission?



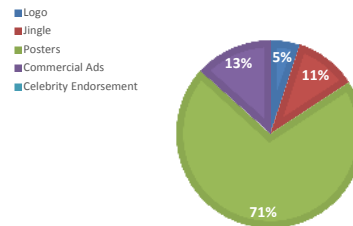
8. Do you think SBM is a successful strategy of the current government?



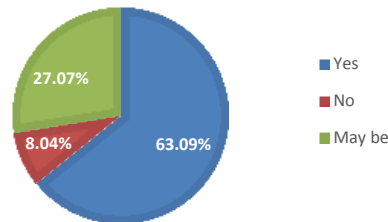
9. What do you like the most about SBM?



10. What do you dislike about SBM?



11. Do you feel Social Media can be the best platform for SBM?



Findings

The current study highlights that the political advertising lays a significant impact on the society directly through a strong persuasion mechanism and indirectly by receptive viewing interest through effective advertisement communication. The data collection shows the percentage of people and public, awareness of political campaigning and social issues raised in welfare of the public. The qualitative evidence also suggest that local firms or state and authorities used technology as the most powerful tool for politics and for the advertisement done for campaigns including the social issues done for the public, society and the country. The political change in the country has transformed the way the people think, comprise and answer, technology has created a communicating and interlinking space in the online world. Thus, the more Political Campaigns, the more positive changes could be seen in society as a whole.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The current study aimed at highlighting the significance of political advertisement and to attain its objective Swachh Bharat Mission was critically analyzed and evaluated. However, there are many other similar campaigns being carried out in India which may or may not affect the public perceptions or behaviors. This area is open for further exploration. It is believed that political advertisement is a relatively new concept in Asia thus its significance and effectiveness must be studied in different Asian countries.

Conclusion

political advertising is not new to India. It had its root right from the time of World War, Industrial Revolution and later to Indian Independence.

In today's challenging world, advertising has proved itself vital in all aspects. Political advertising is indeed one of the key tools of our democratic system and is widely experienced during election time. In nation like India the attempt to make the people informed and knowledgeable, and to have their favorable action, an intense use of political advertising is done. It is a new communication pattern that has emerged and helped in increasing social participation through the use of various Medias.

In current research initially, it is found that public was not aware of cleanliness, people were not using public toilets due to unavailability or no easy access to toilets but sooner or later now the government has realized that such issues need to be taken care of. The biggest example of this is launch of Swachh Bharat Mission. It is the first step to make people understand the importance of sanitation and how to protect their families and relatives from diseases and infections. Public awareness was the only way to make SBM successful, because if public is aware and is educated enough then the public will completely understand what is good and what is bad for them and what is required to protect their families in terms of sanitation and cleanliness. But during the study it is also found that SBM has not yet reached many rural areas completely because of lack of education, unavailability of proper resources, financial status, and orthodox stereotype mind set etc. So as a suggestion, it would be emphasised that this section of society should be taken care of. After keeping in view all the elements of a communication process in context to Indian Political system, one can easily comment that the emergence of new media has certainly brought a change to the existing patterns of the political campaigns.

Today many political campaigns like Swachh Bharat mission and others are not only accepted but also adopted by the society. political campaign is a digital platform for swachh bharat mission which is transforming the society and socially empowered nation. In a country like india where political structure is not stable for long, there is a need for all political parties to understand how to develop and maintain this mission so that sbm is not

restricted to one political party but encompasses the good of the whole country irrespective of the governing political parties. The current study has derived this conclusion by actual survey of a cross section of people from different strata of society, through a questionnaire. The present and upcoming political campaigns will certainly direct towards much more meaningful politics in future with increasing participation of the society as a whole.

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