

Water Conservation in India: Importance of Advertising Campaign to Promote Awareness

Dr. Tanuja Basu Roy

*Associate Professor & Head, Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication,
South Calcutta Girls' College, Kolkata*

ABSTRACTS:

Social advertisement, also known as public service advertising, is a powerful communication tool used to promote social awareness about important issues, and drive positive behavioral change within society. Unlike commercial advertisements focusing primarily on increase of sales of commercial products or services, social advertisements aim to educate, inspire, and mobilize individuals toward addressing societal problems and fostering a better world. It is used to promote public health campaigns, environmental conservation, combating social injustice and encouraging responsible behaviors etc. This type of advertisement has immense persuasive power by using powerful messages that resonate with audiences emotionally and intellectually. By using various media platforms such as television, radio, print, online, and social media, social advertisements have the potential to reach and engage wide audiences, making them an integral part of public awareness campaigns, nonprofit initiatives, government programs, and corporate social responsibility efforts. India has never faced severe systemic water crises, due to the snow-capped Himalayas forming its northern boundary. But last few years the water problem of India has been increased due to different reasons like Global warming, Groundwater exploitation, Rapid urbanization, Misuse and contamination of water by different factories etc. In the age of information society where information flows from one corner of the globe to other corners within a fraction of a second there advertisement can play a major role to motivate the public mind towards pollution less world which enable the next generation to live freely.

KEYWORDS: *Importance of Social Awareness Advertising Campaign, Importance of Water Conservation in India, Indian Advertising Campaign on Water Conservation*

INTRODUCTION

Any form of mass communication has a social responsibility attached with it and thus advertisement is no exception. However, one question in this context that needs to be cleared is whether advertisements fulfill the 'so called responsibility' or not. Advertisements are meant for the masses and people relate themselves with this medium. Thus, for understanding its main responsibilities towards the public, its positive and the negative aspects needs to be understood. It is not only a powerful medium of mass communication but also is a vital component of the economic system, a means of financing mass media, an art form, a social institution, an instrument of business management, a profession and last but not the least a field of employment. In simple terms, advertising is an announcement regarding the launch of a product, service or idea through the usage

of basically the most popular mass media. Medium is chosen based on its popularity and the one which has maximum reach. It may vary from audio-visual medium, audio medium to print medium, etc. As advertising is a form of mass communication and thus just like other popular forms it too have some social responsibilities associated with it. Here at this stage, one big question arises whether advertising people do have a responsibility only towards their clients or does this sphere of social responsibility is much bigger than that? Like any other medium of mass communication, advertisements also have certain positive as well negative aspects. Several studies have been conducted on the effect of advertising on the price sensitivity of consumers. At first sight, the results of the conducted studies appear to be quite conflicting. Like for instance, some of the studies imply that an increase in advertising leads to an increase in the anticipated price sensitivity of the public. On the other hand, some studies have indicated that an increase in advertising leads to a decrease in the price sensitivity of the consumers. In this competitive market, with the advent of so many advertising agencies as well as with the arrival of billions of products, services and ideas, satisfying the needs of the clients have become the ultimate objective for the advertisers. In several cases, we find portrayal of misleading and false information in advertisements. People are often left with ample choices about the same kind of products which guarantee almost the same facilities but are not really the same. The advertisers rarely think about the benefit of the people, they are more inclined towards making profit. Further, advertising, apart from its plentiful direct effects, also affects the price sensitivity of the consumers as well as the prices of goods in the market directly. The advertisers including the ones involved in market research are mostly interested in assessing the sensitivities of the consumers to price. This assessment is treated as an input to take strategic and tactical decisions regarding market segmentation, marketing activities, price, as well as cutthroat marketing 2 strategies. The claims made by advertising need to ensure honesty and truthfulness. On a lighter note, advertising people are citizens of the community and thus being a part of the community they do have certain duties to develop towards the society rather than demolishing the values of the civil society (here it needs to be specified that values do not mean the ones that degrade human dignity). Social responsibility advertisements that help in creating awareness against the evil systems such as dowry system, bonded labour, child labour, caste system, discrimination, etc. Thus, the advertisers in the effort to promote only commercial profit and prosperity cannot simply turn their backs on improving the social, ethical and cultural development of the community. They cannot deny the fact that it is only because of this context of the social and cultural development, people mostly understand and accept the advertiser's messages. Messages in any advertisement when delivered in real circumstances grab maximum attention of the audiences. It is truthfully stated by experts that an exotic environment might grab attention and can probably retain their interest for a while but eventually fails to persuade and convince as effectively. The big question that remains yet unanswered is that whether advertising which is one of the most powerful tools of mass media is fulfilling its social responsibility towards the society or not. According to surveys, majority of the consumers felt that advertising holds quite a relevant and significant position in present day society. However, they also feel that the advertisements should be properly censored and checked for the claims being made in order to avoid any type of socially irresponsible advertisings.

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commercial products or services, social advertisements aim to educate, inspire, and mobilize individuals toward addressing societal problems and fostering a better world. It is used to promote public health campaigns, environmental conservation, combating social injustice and encouraging responsible behaviors etc. This type of advertisement has immense persuasive power by using powerful messages that resonate with audiences emotionally and intellectually. By using various media platforms such as television, radio, print, online, and social media, social advertisements have the potential to reach and engage wide audiences, making them an integral part of public awareness campaigns, nonprofit initiatives, government programs, and corporate social responsibility efforts. By combining creativity, storytelling, and a strong call to action, social advertisements can influence attitudes, shift perceptions, and ultimately inspire positive change that can contribute to a more compassionate, inclusive, and sustainable society. Such advertisements may range from being subtle to direct, and practical to ironic. Alyque Padamsee was the first Indian to enter the “CLIO Hall of Fame” for his public service film-India on Handicapped Children: The Story of Hope.

Water crisis in India

India has never faced severe systemic water crises, due to the snow-capped Himalayas forming its northern boundary. But last few years the water problem of India has been increased due to different reasons:

- Construction of dams, other hydroelectric projects, and water diversion for irrigation has led to systematically destroying large river ecosystems.
- Global warming has altered the rainfall pattern in India drastically. Previously, average monsoon rainfall spanned 45 days. This number has now decreased to 22 days,
- India uses more groundwater than any other country in the world and groundwater exploitation has causes accelerated drying of aquifers. The total groundwater used for irrigation has risen from 30% in the 1980s to nearly 60% today.
- Due to rapid urbanization groundwater usage has been increased.
- India does not have a comprehensive water policy. Despite being a populous country with a diverse geography and climate there are no proper guidelines available for usage of surface water and groundwater by different sectors and different states.
- Overall, mismanagement and lack of governance has led to the water crisis spreading from the southern regions of the peninsula to the northern, water-rich Himalayan regions.

To overcome this situation the government must take initiative to Increased awareness by citizens (particularly in urban areas) is crucial. Solving this crisis means that each citizen must be aware of the crisis and take part in proper conservation, stopping water misuse, development of a formal water policy and provide guidance to the administration and citizens for proper usage of surface water and groundwater.

Out of India’s population of 1.4 billion people, 35 million people lack access to safe water and 678 million people lack access to a safe toilet. Current challenges include extreme water stress, contaminated surface water and lack of access to piped water supply. The effects from climate

change like droughts and rising sea levels also affect access to safe water and sanitation for families in India. These factors, combined with the current initiative by the Government of India to provide tap water connections to every household by 2024, have created unprecedented urgency to implement effective solutions to increase access to safe water and sanitation.

National Water Conservation Campaigns & Schemes in India

- Jal Shakti Abhiyan

The Indian government launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan in 2019. The main aim was to accelerate water conservation efforts across the country. This water conservation scheme's key strategies include water conservation, rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional water bodies, and watershed development. Ministry of Jal Shakti is taking up the national campaign named 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' focusing on saving and conserving rainwater from March to end of November 2022 in the pre-monsoon and monsoon periods, covering both urban and rural areas. National Water Mission is the implementing agency for this program. To facilitate these activities, states have been requested to open 'Rain Centers' in each district, in municipalities or Gram Panchayats. Apart from this the government of India initiated "Mission Amrit Sarovar". The Mission aims at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district as part of 75 years of national independence. In total, it would lead to creation of 50,000 water bodies of a size of about 1 Acre or more. The Mission has been launched with a whole of government approach in which 6 ministries/departments Dept. of Rural Development, Dept. of Land Resources, Dept. of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Dept. of Water Resources, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, MOEFCC are participating. It encourages mobilisation of citizen and non-govt resources for supplementing these efforts.

But unfortunately this Jal Shakti Abhiyan has failed to incorporate scientific water management principles and planning. Surface water and ground water cannot be seen in a compartmentalized manner. However, it has failed to set up autonomous and knowledge intensive River-basin organizations which can provide integrated information about the surface and ground water within a hydrological unit. It predominantly focuses on rural areas and neglects urban areas. Per-capita water allocation in rural areas is hardly around 55 liters in comparison to per capita water allocation of 135-150 liters in urban areas. This shows that there is an ample scope to undertake water conservation measures even in the urban areas. However, JSA fails to incorporate water management strategies in the urban areas which may include sewage treatment, checking pollution of water bodies, rainwater harvesting in large residential buildings etc. Presently, there is no parameter to measure outcome of this mission-mode campaign. Thus, government must develop a comprehensive parameter which can compare and monitor the long-term water level data prior to and post the implementation of JSA. Such a parameter would enable us to monitor the effectiveness of the JSA on a continuous basis and undertake course correction, if needed. As the agriculture sector consumes around 80% of the water, efforts must be stepped up to dissuade the farmers from cultivating water-intensive crops such as Paddy, sugarcane etc.

Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain" (JSA:CTR) – 2022 campaign, the third in the series of JSAs, has been launched on 29.3.2022 to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country.

The focused interventions of the campaign include (1) water conservation and rainwater harvesting (2) enumerating, geo-tagging & making inventory of all water bodies; preparation of scientific

plans for water conservation based on it (3) Setting up of Jal Shakti Kendras in all districts (4) intensive afforestation and (5) awareness generation.

- **Atal Bhujal Yojana**

The Atal Bhujal Yojana, an initiative by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, emphasizes sustainable groundwater management. The scheme is centered on participatory groundwater management, involving Panchayat Raj Institutions and local stakeholders.

- **National Water Mission**

The National Water Mission, under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, targets comprehensive water management focusing on surface and groundwater resources, demand management, and governance structure. The average annual water availability of any region or country is largely dependent upon hydro-meteorological and geological factors. However, water availability per person is dependent on population of a country. The per capita water availability in the country is reducing due to increase in population. Due to high temporal and spatial variation of precipitation, the water availability in many regions of the country is below the national average and maybe facing water stress / scarce conditions. In India there are various legal provisions related to water. Water being a State subject, steps for augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources are primarily undertaken by the respective State Governments. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Central Government provides technical and financial assistance to them through various schemes and programmes.

- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**

Government of India, in partnership with State, is implementing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to make provision of tap water supply to every rural household of the country by 2024.

- **AMRUT 2.0 Scheme**

Government of India has launched AMRUT 2.0 on 1st October, 2021, covering all the statutory towns of the country to ensure universal coverage of water supply & make cities 'water secure'.

- **PM Krishi Sinchayee Yojna (PMKSY)**

To ensure optimum utilization of water, Government of India has been implementing Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojna (PMKSY) from 2015-16 onwards. Under PMKSY-Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), 99 ongoing major/medium irrigation projects were prioritized during 2016-17, in consultation with States out of which AIBP works of 50 prioritized projects have been reported to be completed. The extension of PMKSY for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 has been approved by Government of India, with an overall outlay of Rs. 93,068.56 crore. Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM) Programme: it has been brought under PMKSY – Har Khet Ko Pani from 2015-16 onwards. The main objective of taking up CAD works is to enhance utilisation of irrigation potential created, and improve agriculture production on a sustainable basis through Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM).

- **Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE)**

The Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE) has been set up for promotion, regulation and control of efficient use of water in irrigation, industrial and domestic sector. The Bureau will be a facilitator

for promotion of improving water use efficiency across various sectors namely irrigation, drinking water supply, power generation, industries, etc., in the country.

- **“Sahi Fasal” campaign**

“Sahi Fasal” campaign was launched to nudge farmers in the water stressed areas to grow crops which are not water intensive, but use water very efficiently; and are economically remunerative; are healthy and nutritious; suited to the agro-climatic-hydro characteristics of the area; and are environmentally friendly.

- **Mission Amrit Sarovar**

The Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched on National Panchayati Raj Day on 24th April, 2022 as a part of celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav with an objective to conserve water for future. The Mission is aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country.

- **Awareness Generation Campaign**

An awareness generation campaign in collaboration with Nehru Yuva Kendra Sanghathan (NYKS) was launched on 21st December, 2020 jointly by Minister of Jal Shakti and Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports. NYKS has been implementing the awareness generation campaign in the country since then. It has engaged over 3.82 crore people in 36.60 lakh activities in the campaign through their many activities like rallies, Jal Choupals, quizzes, debates, slogan writing competitions, wall writings etc.

Public Interaction Programs (PIP) are being organised at grassroots level for disseminating the outputs of National Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) Studies for the benefit of the stakeholders. So far, 1300 such programs have been conducted in different parts of the country in which nearly one lakh people have participated. Rajiv Gandhi National Ground Water Training & Research Institute (RGNGWTRI), Raipur, Chhattisgarh, is the training wing of the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.

The organisation is conducting three different types of training (Tier-I, Tier-II, and Tier-III) for officers of Central Government/ State Government/ PSU/ NGO/ Academic Institutes. Department of Water Resources, RD& GR has instituted National Water Awards and Water Heroes – “Share your Stories contest” to incentivize good practices in water conservation and ground water recharge.

Popular Advertising Campaign on water conservation

Water crisis is a reality. From water scarcity to drinking water contaminated with feces, water crisis has many faces. Several organizations have shared their voices regarding the rising concern through powerful campaigns.

Here’s the list of 4 powerful water conservation campaigns that will make you rethink how you use water –

- **Colgate – #EveryDropCounts**

The 30 seconds video clip shows that almost 4 gallons of water get wasted when people keep the faucet running while brushing. Colgate advises that we can save 3,000 gallons of water each year

by turning off the faucet while brushing. This ad campaign went viral and has garnered a whopping 10 million+ views on YouTube.

- **WaterAid – Sakshi: taking the Clean India Mission into her own hands**

This is the story of Sakshi, a 12-year-old school girl, in Mahoba district, Uttar Pradesh. Sakshi's school had just 1 toilet for 341 girls & boys. Sakshi along with other students had to wait in front of the toilet for hours as the queues were long. As a result, Sakshi would regularly miss out on her classes. But her situation has changed now. To know how, watch the video

- **Hindustan Unilever – Start A Little Good**

A thought-provoking and powerful film on water conservation that makes one question he/she is using or misusing water. The film opens with an urban shower booth installed in the middle of a rural village. This advertisement shows that when villagers step inside the shower they drink water instead of taking shower and through this advertisement it makes aware us that the water consumed by an urban people for bathing can fulfill the thirst of half of an Indian villagers

- **'Jal hai toh kal hai' by Dainik Bhaskar**

Dainik Bhaskar has extended its drive for water conservation by roping in Akshay Kumar for a film to spread awareness. The film has been conceptualised by Orcomm Advertising. In the film, Kumar attempts to bring out the ignorance of the viewer when it comes to water consumption. While people pity others who are facing this issue, their actions make it seem otherwise as they waste water, he contends. The film ends with the newspaper brand's 'Jal hai toh kal hai' (Without water there's no tomorrow) message. The film went live on Dainik Bhaskar's Facebook page on 4 June 2016. The campaign also consists of a print ad.

CONCLUSION

Orienting the media to project pro-environmental issues is an important aspect. Several advertising campaigns frequently have messages that are negative to environmental preservation. The increasing awareness of environmental issues has generated great activity in recent years. It has also brought to the knowledge of common citizens of India that for sustaining agriculture and maintaining the quality of environment at least one-third of the country's land should be under forest. This public awareness has helped government as well as voluntary organizations to take up the issue of environmental protection. People and activists agitation in connection with Chipko Movement, Appiko Movement, Silent Valley (Kerala) and Sardar Sarovar Project on Narmada are some illustrations to show how to clean and pollution free. To overcome this situation the government must take initiative to Increased awareness by citizens (particularly in urban areas) is crucial. Solving this crisis means that each citizen must be aware of the crisis and take part in proper conservation, stopping water misuse, development of a formal water policy and provide guidance to the administration and citizens for proper usage of surface water and groundwater. Last few years the water problem of India has been increased due to different reasons like Global warming, Groundwater exploitation, Rapid urbanization, Misuse and contamination of water by different factories etc. In the age of information society where information flows from one corner of the globe to other corners within a fraction of a second there advertisement can play a major role to motivate the public mind towards pollution less world which enable the next generation to live

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