



SRI POORNAPRAJNA EVENING COLLEGE, UDUPI

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National Seminar
on

BUSINESS ETHICS AND SOCIAL VALUES

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ETHICAL ISSUES IN ADVERTISING: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO MANGALORE REGION'S SELECTED CUSTOMER'S OPINION REGARDING ADVERTISEMENT ETHICS

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1.0 Introduction

Today the India's advertising industry is expanding its business at a rapid rate. Advertising business has gradually become one of the large scale industries from a small scale business. Advertisement acts as a communicating bridge between producer and consumer. The major motive of advertising is to inform a people of new products and remind them about existing products. But, today the major goal of advertisement is making money and making people buy products by hook or crook. At present customers are demanding transparencies as they take an increasing interest in the ethical practices of those they buy from. The major question here is are people aware that even advertising companies have to follow a set of ethical practices?

2.0 Literature Review

Kazmi and Sathish (2006) stressed on the different types of advertisement medias which attract the customers and this media is selected based on the type of products to be launched or already existing.

Raghibir Singh and Sandeep (2007) emphasized on peoples expectation regarding advertisement where majority are in favor of a judicial regulatory body to enforce ethics in advertising. They are in favor of legal restrictions on sexually suggestive advertisements and advertisements targeting children.

3.0 Objectives

1. To analyze the awareness of ethics in advertising
2. To do analysis of different unethical advertisement practices
3. To suggest measures for the effectiveness

4.0 Research Methodology

To realise the objectives of the study, a direct interview is conducted on selected customers in Mangalore Region. Both the primary and secondary sources are used for the collection of data. The study focuses on the few selected customers in Mangalore city limit. The study being a descriptive in nature, an attempt is made to understand the awareness of customer regarding business ethical practices.

5.1 Awareness of ethics in advertising

Every where we glance we can see advertisements of one form or the other may be televisions or social media or bill boards. Advertisements have become a part of our life so much so that we can even find advertisements in backside of the notebooks. But surprisingly majority of the viewers are not aware that advertisements are bound by ethics and they are not suppose to display everything. Here we are making a attempt to create an awareness among customers regarding ethics in advertising.

5.2 Different unethical advertisement practices

Companies are forgotten the objective of advertisements. Instead of spreading awareness and knowledge of the products all sort of unwanted things are showed in the advertisements. Advertisement might have a negative impact on viewers. Majority of the advertisements today are sexually over toned and quality of the products are exaggerated and are false and misleading.

6.0 Findings

1. Not surprisingly almost 90% of the respondents are aware of the different advertisements. Which means that advertisement is widely popular and there is more need for advertisement to be ethically correct because it affect a lot of people.
2. Majority (60%) of the respondents are aware of the advertisements through Television. And remaining (40%) is shared equally by print media and social media. From this data we can derive that Television is most commonly used media for advertisements.
3. When we asked about benefits derived from advertisements 80% respondents replied that advertisements are really beneficial. This makes the advertising media very crucial as many people depend on advertisements to buy a product.
4. Most of the respondents (70%) are aware of the concept called "Ethics" in general. They are also aware the advertisements are bound by certain ethics. Remaining (30%) of the respondents are not aware of the concept called " Ethics". Thus they have no idea about what is ethics in advertising.

5. When we enquired about whether advertisement follow unethical practices 60% of respondents felt that advertisement sometimes follow unethical practices. 40% respondents believe that all advertisement follow unethical practices.
6. Majority of the respondents (50%) feel that advertisement sometimes have a negative effect on people. There are 30% respondents who believe that all advertisements have negative effect and remaining 20% respondents feel that advertisement donot have negative impact.
7. All the respondents responded that there is a gap between the actual product and the product shown in the advertisement. When we see the product in advertisement we get attracted to the product because it is exaggerated and we feel disappointed when we see the actual product.

7.0 Suggestions

1. An active and independent committee should be established to monitor the advertisements regularly and this committee should not be only for namesake but should actively see that unethical practices are not followed.
2. Government should actively involve itself in keeping advertisements ethical. There should be a censor board to eliminate all the unethical advertisements.
3. Government along with educational institutions should take the initiative of educating people on the ethical practices followed by the companies.
4. Some ethical awareness programmes like street play, quiz, drama and plays should be conducted to general public.
5. Survey should be conducted by officials where they can go to the general public and enquire about the advertisements.

8.0 Conclusion

Some where with a motive of making money advertisements are actually making the companies to forget our culture and tradition. Advertisement today are following the western norms which are not at all suited to our country. Advertisement have a negative impact on viewers specially the children and youth. Some strict actions have to be implemented by the concerned authorities to stop the unethical practices followed by the companies. To conclude the remedy for this problem will be making people more and more aware of the limits to be followed by the companies. As they say knowledge is power only when people are knowledgable about the ethical practices regarding advertisements they can fight against the unethical practices followed by the companies.

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