

CONSUMER PERSUASION IN DISGUISE: THE ROLE OF CELEBRITY INFLUENCE IN SURROGATE ADVERTISING

Dahiya, Jaspreet¹ and Himanshi²

Associate Professor¹, Research Scholar²

Department of Management and Commerce, Baba Mastnath University Rohtak Haryana

ABSTRACT

In this changing world, we came from the era where there is no TV, social media, digital, newspapers are not available. People sell their product on the basis of their quality, goodwill, or price. Now the era has been changed, we have stepped into generation alpha where everything is available on your mobile. We can search in just on click, if a company want to sell something they just have to do right advertising at right time. In today's world advertising play an important role for the companies as much as food in the life of human, advertising is basically done through newspapers, TV, radios, Pamphlets, social media, YouTube ads, celebrity influencing etc. There are many types of advertising done by the company to sell their products and make profit out of them. One of them is "Surrogate advertising " which refers to the ads which replace some specific product with a general product under the same Brand name, packaging. Hence, advertising for some products which are prohibited by GOI (which are Tobacco, alcohols, liquor) but the company is advertising that product by using the same name, taglines, packaging, that recalls the banned product again in the mind of customers. Consumer perception is in disguise because the advertising is done by masking products which are banned to advertise by GOI. Celebrity influence also plays an important role in advertising the prohibited product. Wherever, they promote water, soda, kesar pan masala, red & white etc. that indirectly hint towards a product which is restricted. And customers who see their favorite influencer consuming that product buy those products which they were hinting at in those ads because those ads are not clear about specific products.

Keywords: Celebrity Influencing, Surrogate advertising, Disguise, Consumer Persuasion, Prohibited.

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is part of our lifestyle and a necessity for companies which are producing their products and services to make profit. Advertising is a source by which a company can reach their consumers' mind, hence it helps them in promoting their product and services. Every company has their own target consumers from which they make products and services. By analyzing the customer needs/desire/wants, advertising messages had been built with the intent to inform about their product or services to the consumer who desired to buy/purchase those products. However, companies make separate budgets to advertise their products and services. "Advertisement refers to the paid way of communication which is personal or non-personal form helps companies to promote their products and services to the end users' ". The word 'advertises' originated from the Latin word 'advert ere' which means 'to turn attention toward a specific thing'. Hence, some digital media, slogans, high status, emotional, favorite Celeb etc. advertising is done by them which affect consumers' minds and influence them to buy specific things. Sometimes that's a necessity and sometimes it was a waste buying. There are many products which we don't need. Out of nowhere, we were continuously buying

those products and services because of status symbols, fan buying, emotional influences, desire generation etc. In this changing world we can reach consumers very easily because advertisement is of many types & it can be done by many ways and mediums. There are some points which highlight the mediums of advertising which companies are using in this new era of promotion management:

- Digital advertising – SEO (search engine optimization), SEM (search engine marketing), PPC (Pay-per-click), You Tube, Internet browser, social media etc.
- Door-to-door advertising - Distributing templates, On door advertising.
- Broadcasting advertising – TV, Radio Broadcasting
- Printing advertising - Newspaper, Magazine, Brochures
- Personal advertising – Emails, SMS, Calling
- Outdoor advertising- Hoardings, Flags, Banners, etc.
- Influencers' advertising - Blogs making, Celebrity endorsement

These are some mediums to communicate their message which persuade, inform, remind consumers about their products which help companies to increase sales, profits, brand

recognition, expand customer base, launching of new products.

But as we all have that knowledge that Merits and Demerits exist in everything, thereby advertising is also adversely affecting consumers choice, perception, their bank balance because a lot of products and services are unhealthy, unworthy, costly and several products are restricted by government of India (GOI). Consequently, there are scattered forms of advertising were there I.e., Differentiated advertising (Target several segments and design separate offers for various products and services), Undifferentiated advertising (No segments, common offers, focus on common need of consumer), Niche advertising (Focuses on the targeted section of consumer), Surrogate advertising (Restricted products were advertised by this form of advertising), etc. Nevertheless, this paper is generally talking about surrogate advertising and the role celebrity influence is affecting the persuasion of consumers in disguise.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.I. “Surrogate Advertisement and its impact” (2023) this article gave a glance about how surrogate ads impact on consumers and factors affecting their persuasion. The tools used here are simple pie charts and tabular

representation data was qualitative and quantitative both. Data was segregated in female 52% and male 48%. The first thing was awareness about surrogate ads drinkers and non-drinkers female and male was high. Hence, the impact of these ads was too high, these ads influence them to buy all these banned products. Majority of them think that these were gender slanders used in ads I.e., “Men will be men”. Celebrity influence was too high that had to be stopped by people. These ads had a huge Impact on the youth of India. Their parents stated that these ads may increase the consumption of youth. Secondary data stated that 67% of people say that these ads should be banned from India.

2.II. “India: Online Gaming Laws in India & Celebrity Sponsorship Liability” (2021) by Rajeev Rambhatla and Vartika Dixit after the suicide by ISRO employee in Tamil Nadu due the debt in online gaming\ gambling highlights the point whether celebrity endorsing for such apps was a lawful act. The conclusion found several loopholes in gaming and gambling laws. Steps were taken to fill these gaps of law, ASCI should have taken some strict action towards consumer safety under consumer protection act 2019, according to this article Madras high court sent a notice to

Virat Kohli for doing this kind of advertisement. Meanwhile, increase in base of online gaming gambling apps by the reason of covid –19 pandemic scenario. The Sports (Online Gaming and Prevention of Fraud) Bill, 2018, which had lapsed in the Parliament for the reintroduction.

2.III. “Impact of Surrogate Advertisement: An Unconventional and Revolutionary Tool of Marketers” (2021) Debasish Rout, Somabhusana Janakiballav Mishra, Ashamayee Mishra, Vineet Mehta it is the descriptive type of study conducted in Bhubaneswar. This study analyzes the buying behavior of consumers, and inward psychology about surrogate advertisement data was collected on questionnaire basis as a result 39% respondents were unaware about it 36% respondents’ behavior was changes for brands, 34% responder's buy those products after watching those ads celebs play a crucial role in this process and adding to it, these ads were generally for definite age group.

2.IV. “Surrogate Advertisements - Laws and Case- India”(2021) by Rupin Chopra, Apalka Bareja was conscious in their article about laws regarding surrogate advertisement. Rule 7 (1) of CTN RULES,1994 stated that “advertisement conducted by cable TV don't

offend morality, decency, religious substance, of viewers “and rule 7(2) “no advertisement is permitted to promote direct or indirect sale or consumption of banned products (tobacco, liquor, alcohol, any intoxicants, nicotine, cigarettes. ASCI (the advertising standards council of India) is a self-regulatory body which controls the code of conduct of advertisement, or fair advertisement council. In its “clause 6 it was written that advertisement has been restricted if it doesn't fulfill the criteria of direct advertisement or advertise other products which were not banned by the government there was a specific criterion within which advertisements would be implemented for the extended product of that brand”. FCTC (Framework convention on Tobacco control) India rectified that “to seek a protection for present and future generation from devastating health, social, economic, environment consequences from Tobacco and other intoxicants and provide a framework to control its consumption”.

2.V. “EFFECT OF SURROGATE ADVERTISEMENT ON CONSUMER RESPONSE IN INDIA” (2020) Abin P Jose and Reshma Roy this article concluded that consumer awareness related to it in different region of India was moderate, Legal provisions

related to these advertisements were built in 1995, after the biggest protest by Indian rural women's in 1970s. However, these ads positively impacted manufactures' sales graph for banned products increased by this technique which helped them in brand recognition, financial boost, consumer recognition and they found these commercials funny and entertaining. Primary and secondary data were used in this study.

2.VI. “Effectiveness of Surrogate Advertisements among viewers” (2019) by D. Ganesan, Umayya Salma Shajahan, R. Kiruthika the purpose of conducting this study was factors impacting the effectiveness of ethical and viewer's perspective about surrogate advertisement in Indian context. This study was conducted in Tamil Nadu, India. Statistical tools used in this descriptive study. As a result, it states that youth were affected and driven by the original product in these ads. The majority of respondents were students of the age 26-30 and they found these ads informative and entertaining. Tobacco, alcohol, liquor, cigarette companies use repetitively telecasting techniques to get in consumers' minds which come out as successful tactics. Kingfisher ranked highest in telecast rated commercials. Hence, these ads were affecting our youth and

for this view these ads should have been stopped by the government.

2.VII. Arshan F Bhathena (2018) "A Study on Perception Towards Surrogate Advertising in Surat City” study analyzed surrogate advertisement's history and development, influence on consumer buying behavior by their recall value, awareness about surrogate advertisement in Surat city. A descriptive study was conducted in which convenient sampling for 150 respondents via. Structure questionnaires were analyzed. Conclusion for this study was that the majority (71%) of respondents are aware of this process. The majority of respondents stated that these ads should be banned hence, disguise advertising was highly criticized by Surat people. Surat people had a negative impact regarding buying these surrogate products, when it was asked by them to watch these ads recall the core product 66% respondents said ‘yes’. Hence, these ads create brand recall for banned products.

2.VIII. Rizwan Raheem Ahmed, Sumeet Kumar Seedani, Manoj Kumar Ahuja, Sagar Kumar Paryani (2015) “Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Buying Behavior” it was the study which examined the impact of celebrity endorsement

on consumer behavior of Pakistani university which is qualitative and descriptive in nature. SPSS questionnaires and statistical tools were used. This study emphasizes that some factors affecting consumers are cultural, social, psychological, and family influence. There was a huge impact of celebrity endorsements because they were more attractive than non celeb endorsements. People like to watch their Favorite celebrity if they endorse something new, they definitely want to try that. Therefore, that was helpful for companies to increase the sales of their products. Hence, it was proven in this article celebrity endorsement had a significant role in consumer buying behavior.

2.XI. Yugank Goyal (2006) “Surrogate Advertising in India” this journal stated the era when surrogate advertisement was not in pace secondly it shows the consumption pattern when advertisement related to alcohol, liquor, tobacco was aired. Economic factors like purchase increase, price cut down of these products. Thirdly, it instances towards loophole in law related to surrogate advertisements that said on February 25, 2008, amending the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 to the effect that no advertisement shall be permitted which promotes directly or indirectly, sale or consumption of cigarettes, tobacco products,

wine, alcohol or liquor. Industrial debate related to this topic stated that the government needs to ‘refine’ the society they had to stop the product they were paying huge taxes for. How can the government ban their product to advertise? Lastly, a few changes were suggested for the law I.e., transparent law, ASCI strict action needed on misleading advertisements, creating awareness in people. This paper stated that protest against liquor ads occurs by UK housewives regarding these surrogate advertisements.

2.1 RESEARCH GAP

There was a substantial quantity of research related to this topic. That gives a glance knowledge about the title in academic research. There were a small number of articles which focused on consumer persuasion by celebrity endorsers for surrogate advertisement. All the literature review done in the past is on consumer perspectives effect of surrogate advertising and their impact on sale of manufactures. According to it there is no study related to the role of disguised celebrity promotion in surrogate advertising and its impact on consumer persuasion in buying banned products.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 OBJECTIVES

A. To identify the products and services having celebrity influence in surrogate advertisement which is able to indulge consumer persuasion in disguise.

B. To identify the role of celebrity influence in consumer persuasion by surrogate advertisements.

SURROGATE ADVERTISING

Surrogate means 'substitute' even though it was used so often as 'surrogate mother' or 'surrogacy' now you can recall this word.

However, this word is also used for advertising which is known as surrogate advertisement.

Surrogate advertising stated that it is an unethical way of advertising by which promotion of prohibited products in the market can be possible. In surrogacy, a baby is nurtured by a 'woman' who is just a substitute of his 'biological mother' because she is not capable of giving birth to the baby. "Surrogate advertisement" also works like this: it refers to that ethical issue performed by the companies who were selling restricted products by indirectly advertising another product like water, soda, games, kesar mouth Fershner, music, CD_s, etc. which are giving reference to the substitute products or services. Those products are very fresh in consumers' minds (I.e., alcohol, liquors, cigarette, tobacco,

gambling, etc.) by these ads anyone can recall that product because of their tactics like same name, branding, slogans, packaging give promotion to that product which is illegal or banned by GOI. In advertising name, benefits, durability, price, manufacturing, caution, useability were determined but, in surrogate advertising duplicate product is advertised by the companies owing to the fact the actual product is banned to advertise in the market by GOI.

When a parent company launches various products, they launch them under differentiated colors, packaging, taglines, benefits, brand names, logos. For example, Hindustan Unilever Ltd. is the same company which produces cornetto ice cream, Horlicks and Boost powder. Even Horlicks and Boost are the same types of products which belong to the same company, but the brand names are totally different even advertisement, logos, packaging, for the same type of products are done separately. But the companies which are endorsing banned products use the same packaging, taglines, brand name, and very similar sachets are used to sell these products. The agenda of surrogate advertisement is to promote their non banned products which would create a brand recall in consumers' mind which affects the consumers

persuasion in disguise. Since these brands are promoting prohibited products in disguise as non-prohibited ones. People would be confused which product they were referring to and would connect it with that one which is not shown by them. That is surrogate advertising.

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT FOR SURROGATE PRODUCTS

Advertising is a massive industry hence a lot of money is invested there. It is beneficial for both companies and the people who are paid for the advertisement. Quite often, big mega stars, Sportsman's appear in the ads who are paid well for it. That is called celebrity endorsement. By using this technique, companies try to reach consumers through generating interest in their mind with the effect that efficient sales were generated by them for the product which is not allowed to advertise. According to the AIDA model, in this marketing strategy four steps were designed by the company which signifies A- Attention, I- Interest, D-Desire, A- Action. However, advertisements in themselves are very appealing and create attention or we can say awareness in consumers mind, after it by celebrity endorsement interest in that product develops, which creates desire to have that product and services, and lastly, they buy that

product or services which is their action part. Surrogate advertising uses this model as their strategy to sell their products which is a big ethical issue. Therefore, celebrity endorsement is used as a strategy to promote a product which is under prohibition by the government of India. Disguised celebrity promotion is adversely affecting the consumers' persuasion for those products which are unhealthy or unworthy for them.

Celebrity influence is very strong on consumer persuasion because they create a brand association, emotional build toward fan base, strong credibility or trust, and role models consuming those products and services. This type of advertisement creates an outrageous effect on people consequently, celebrities face backlash from people and as a result Amitabh Bachan from Kamla Pasand and Akshay Kumar from Vimal quit these advertisements, but still these Ads are going on as it is. It is clear that they get a lot of money from these ads, in the view of the fact that this industry is million dollars in India. Consumption of Tobacco, Cigarette, Alcohol, Gambling is very high, but it is affecting country youth their mental and physical health, domestic abuse, etc. were spreading all around the world.

LIST OF CORE\DUPLICATE PRODUCTS TRADE IN DISGUISE BY CELEBRITY

Company	Core Product	Duplicate Product	Celebrity	Slogan given by surrogate companies
Seagram (Canadian MNCs)	Imperial blue	Music CDs	Disha Patani	Men will be men
King Fisher (India)	Whisky, vodka, beer	Mineral water, soda, airline	Varun Dhavan, Radhika	Spread the cheer,
Pernod Ricard	Royal stag	Processed drinking water	Ranveer Singh, Shahrukh khan	Large Bantay Hai, make it large. Small milate Jao large banty Jao
Bagpiper	alcohol	Soda, water, music, cassettes CDs	Ajay Devgan, Akshay Kumar	Khoob jamega rang jab mil baithe gye teen yar, app mein aur bagpiper
Royals Challenge	alcohol	Golf tournament, IPL Team	Virat Kohli	Royal challenge sports drink, make a big move
Rajanigandha	Tobacco	Pan masala, pan Bahar,	Ajay Devgan,	Yuh hi

		Mouth Freshener	Priyanka Chopra, Amitabh Bachan, Shahrukh khan, Mahesh babu, Pierce Brosnan	Nahi mein rajnig- andha ban Jata hu, pan Bahar Pehchan kamyabi ki
Vimal	Tobacco	Kesar masala, Elaichi masala, Mouth fresheners	Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgan, Shahrukh khan	Bolo Juban Kesari
Manik Chand	Tobacco	Filmfare awards, pan Ma-sala	Sponsorship ads with Filmfare where celebrity endorse it	Unchay logo ka Paheli pasand Manik Chand
Gold flakes	Cigarette, nicotine	Tennis tournament	—	Gold flacks uncut Diamond
Wills lifestyle	Cigarette	Textile India fashion wee-k, clothing	Cricketer (Imran khan)	—
Kamla pasand	Tobacco	Silver	Ranveer Singh,	Chote-Chote

		coted Elaichi, pan masala	Amitabh bachan Kapil dev, Chris ghyll, Virender Shwag and Sunil Gavaskar etc.	Lamho main Anokha Safar Kaml-a pasan-d, Har gener-ation ka alag hai andaz
--	--	-------------------------------------	---	--

Khel raja	Gambling \Betting app	Faire play	Esha Gupta, Ranbir Kapoor, Kiara Advani, Sunil Narine, Mithali Raj, Saina Nehwal, Mary Kom and Eoin Morgan.	The game never stops
Dream 11, Teen Patti, Rummy	Betting \gambling app	Real cash	Cricketers, Actors endorsing this gambling culture	

In this table different companies were mentioned, and their core products which are sold in bulk are banned by GOI. The reason behind their bulk sale was those celebrity endorsed commercials which are made in disguise affecting the persuasion of consumers. This table also shows slogans used by them in

these commercials which were indirectly hinting towards something else. For instance, in the commercial of royal stag endorsed by Ranveer Singh “Large Bantay Hai, make it Large, royal stage processed water”. Hence, this slogan recalls royal stag liquors memories in consumers mind which is done in a disguised

way to influence the sale of that product. Celebrities had their own viewership, trust, emotional connection with people. However, they are very curious about their lifestyle which is luxury for them, some of them are blind-hearted fans, they follow all those things which they do hence, if they show they drink, or smoke, or some personal touch with brand influences them to try all those things. It doesn't matter if it's good or bad for them. Consequently, this form of marketing is highly effective for companies in influencing consumers' persuasion.

LAWS RELATED TO SURROGATE ADVERTISEMENTS

ASCI (The Advertising standard council of India) rules & regulation works for complaints against advertisement and defends consumer's interest. For surrogate advertisement new laws were made related to this I.e., product extension should be genuine, meanwhile it says that they have to advertise those product which exist in the market whose net sale turnover should be Rs 20 lakh per month at the time of launch or company can show that they have asset investment proof exclusive for this product whose value should be at least Rs10 crore next rule stated that this product extension would be registered under government authorities I.E.

GST, FSSAI, FDA and audited by independent institutions any of the banned products would not hint towards these extended products of that brand. According to this table, surrogate advertisements are running at a good pace and celebrity is one of the crucial reasons.

4. CONCLUSION

The core products company is selling duplicate products and services that are surrogate advertisements. These advertisements are a big ethical issue for society because they are affecting our youth. After analyzing newspapers, magazines, articles regarding surrogate advertisements it came out that law's regarding it were made by GOI in 1995. But some loopholes in law were still running across the country. Recently in 2022, ASCI bans surrogate advertisements of 12 liquor companies which is a great move by ASCI. As companies failed to explain to the Consumer Complaint Council (CCC) that it was a genuine brand extension, these ads were banned but they would be published after suitable changes. Hence, consumers liked these ads and were somehow aware about it in Urban areas but in rural areas people are not that aware about this strategy. This news should be highlighted so that everyone would know about it. On the other hand, celebrities being public persona

should avoid making all these ads after considering some factors I.e., public health, ethical issues, etc. For doing all these ads they got various factors of motivation (financial incentives, brand recognition) but don't they feel these ads were affecting their reputation and goodwill in public.

5. REFERENCE

1. ASCI bans surrogate advertising of 12 liquor companies. (2021). https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/liquor/asci-bans-surrogate-advertising-of-12-liquor-companies/articleshow/80328835.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst.
2. (January 2023). Surrogate Advertisement and its impact. *Global Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 1(2), 19–28. <https://doi.org/10.58260/j.mas.2202.0109> [ISSN 2583, 4460].
3. Surat city Arshan F Bhathena. (2018). <https://www.ijcert.org/papers/IJCRTDRBC002.pdf>
4. India: Online gaming laws in India and celebrity sponsorship liability. (2021). *celebrity-sponsorship-liability*. <https://www.mondaq.com/india/gaming/1035192/online-gaming-laws-in-india-->
5. Ganesan, D D, Shajahan, M U S, & Kiruthika, R. Effectiveness of surrogate advertisements among viewers. (2019). *International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering*, 9(2), 4739–4746. <https://doi.org/10.35940/ijitee.B6874.129219>
6. Rout, D., Mishra, S. J., Mishra, A., & Mehta, V. (2021). Impact of surrogate advertisement: An unconventional and revolutionary tool of marketers. *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, 9(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.34293/management.v9i1.4098>
7. Chopra, Rupin. (2021). Surrogate advertisements – Laws and case- India. *Apalka Bareja*. <https://ssrana.in/articles/surrogate-advertising-india-law/>
8. Surrogate ads face stricter rules. (2021). *John Sarkar. The Times of India*.

- <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/surrogate-ads-face-stricter-rules/articleshow/84461613.cms>
9. Effect of surrogate advertisement on consumer response in India. (2020) *Abin P Jose and Reshma Roy* <https://doi.org/10.34218/IJM.11.3.2020.044>.
10. Ahmed, D R R, Seedani, S. K., Ahuja, M. K., & Paryani, S. K. (2015). Impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behavior. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <http://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2666148>
11. Goyal, Y. (2006). Surrogate advertising in India. https://cutsccier.org/pdf/Surrogate_Advertising_in_India
12. Dalal, R. C., & Abhishek, A. (2024). Consumer purchase behavior towards ayurvedic cosmetic products in Bahadurgarh. *Shodh Sari-An International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 03(1), 430–439. <https://doi.org/10.59231/SARI7681>
13. S, S. (2023). Impact of social media on Youth: Comprehensive Analysis. *Shodh Sari-An International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 02(4), 286–301. <https://doi.org/10.59231/SARI7640>
14. Singh, M. (2023). Emerging trends of e-commerce in India. *Shodh Sari-An International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 02(4), 382–391. <https://doi.org/10.59231/SARI7646>

Received on Jan 28, 2024

Accepted on March 11, 2024

Published on April 01, 2024

[CONSUMER PERSUASION IN DISGUISES: THE ROLE OF CELEBRITY INFLUENCE IN SURROGATE ADVERTISING](#) © 2024 by [Shodh Sari-An International Multidisciplinary Journal](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](#)

