

**ISID**

Institute for Studies  
in Industrial Development

Indian Council of  
Social Science Research



# Two-Day National Conference on the State of Advertising Industry in India: A Critical Appraisal

February 16–17, 2018

Paper Abstracts



Venue: **ISID Campus**  
4, Institutional Area Phase II, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi - 110070

# Paper Abstracts

## P.V. Narayanamoorthy

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### **From a Line Function in Ad Agencies to Independent Media Buying Houses and Now Aiming at Full Service: A Critical Appraisal of the Growth of Media Agencies in India**

This paper traces the evolution of media specialists in India, their changing roles and imperatives. It goes on to trace the challenges faced by them, the catalysts of change and the response to emerging market conditions. Moorthy analyses the breakdown of the traditional commission system and implications upon media agencies. He finally emphasises the need for collaborative action and the need for an independent and authoritative body to regulate the basic norms and practices of the industry.

## Chintamani Rao

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### **Issues of Transparency in the Advertising Business: What Happens and Why, and The Way Forward**

Transparency in the ad industry is considered a serious issue but has never been discussed in India. The paper discusses the recent positive developments in USA. According to an MNC giant's Chief Brand Officer the media supply chain was "murky at best and fraudulent at worst". Rao addresses both intellectual and financial transparency or integrity and cites reports that ascribes the source of the malaise to advertisers for Pressure on pricing pressure and extended credit, Lacking competence to assess media plans and Not fully exercising their audit rights. Rao concludes quoting the MNC CBO, "We are returning to a modern version of the full-service agency based on trust, transparency, teamwork and long-term relationships".

## Sunil Gupta

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### **Marketing Client-Communication Agency Relationships: The Importance of Performance Metrics to get the Best ROI from Them**

Commercial relationships are ad-hoc and with measurable outcomes. The client's relationship with its ad agency is unique because it is long-term, organic, dynamic and governed by subjective parameters. Gupta spells out the technique of Time, Talk and Trust and adds, 'Why, When and How' as the parameters for monitoring this relationship. He indicates the metrics used by his organisation over 17 years across 85 countries and hundreds of cases, and concludes quoting Fred Allen (USA radio show host & comedian). "It is probably not love that makes the world go around, but rather those mutually supportive alliances through which partners recognise their dependence on each other for the achievement of shared and private goals" to support the case for scientifically assessing the client-ad agency relationship, non-existent in India.

## Nikhil Nehru

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### **Training and Development of Human Resource in the Indian Ad Sector in a Global Market Scenario**

Organisations takes pride in their training and development (T&D) programmes. Nehru's contention is that for the ad industry, India included, the effective running of T&D programmes is a far cry from reality. A recent AAAA global survey strongly supports the contention. The paper discusses the difference between T&D and the prevailing confusion and how it has adversely affected clients' perception of ad agencies. He reinforces the critical need for T&D. The Indian economy is one of the fastest growing and largest. In a world where



conversation is about Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, and predictability, advertising will continue to be an imperfect intersection of art and science. The world has and will continue to need these 'Mad Men'. The job at hand is to invest substantially to produce these 'Mad Men' and allow them to "hold their heads high" once again.

## Syeda Imam

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### **Discovering the Significances of Creativity In and Beyond Advertising**

This paper examines the context and atmosphere in which Creativity finds itself today. With the constant change, accelerated by technology, the shifts are multifarious and dramatic. This demands a prompter change in the planning, process and outcome to ensure that communication works and achieves brand objectives. Bearing this dynamic environment in mind and taking cognisance of campaigns that have weathered the years well, is a constant need for brand-builders, and learning for industry and product design. Imam discusses the challenges facing creativity, in every sphere of human activity and beyond advertising, and the learning how from advertising, and working in advertising, demonstrates that regularly.

## Dr Bhavneet Bhatti and Dr Gurmeet Singh

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### **Hinglish in Advertising: An analysis of Advertising slogans using Language Hybridization**

Over the years mass media have underwent a revolution in terms of message construction and dissemination. One of the by products has been hybridisation of the languages and an example is 'Hinglish'. Ubiquitously being used in the Indian Mediascape, it has found its place not only in movie titles and song lyrics but also in news headlines, television scripts, digital content and most visibly in advertising slogans and taglines. The use of 'Hinglish' in advertising slogans is witnessing a whole new dimension. While language pundits strongly opine that this is polluting both languages and strongly oppose it, the advertising gurus speculate that the use of Hinglish could be one of the success mantras to woo the fast expanding regional markets. This paper explores the various facets of this phenomenon, and examines the nature and scope of this usage, advantages and disadvantages of this trend, the challenges and threats that this entails. It analyses various advertising slogans which use language hybridisation and explores their recall and impact.

## Kunal Sinha

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### **Use of Semiotics in Indian Advertisements: A Critical Appraisal**

We are in the business of eliciting a desired response from consumers, through the stimulus of advertisements. In most advertising research with the consumer, we study the consumer's response, and qualitative research tries to get psychological things out of their minds. This paper discusses the role of semiotics, an analysis that is a step toward a deeper understanding of the stimulus. Any piece of communication is layered. It is only by unpeeling it can we understand the hidden meanings. These meanings arise out of the cultural context of the signs that make up the ad. Semiotics is a science that studies the life of signs in a society. It asks how signs mean and helps us understand issues of culture and communication. Sinha goes on to conclude that for the advertising industry, Indian culture offers a gold mine of mythologies for inspiration. For the consumer, in whom the culture and its symbols are deeply ingrained, the reference to and re-creation of these myths creates a deeper, subconscious connection. At a time when brands seek competitive advantage through story making, semiotics may well be the magic wand that tells us which ingredients will make the content relatable, memorable and effective.



## Avijit Dutt

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### **Ethics & Advertising Awards: A Look Below the Belt**

The ad awards is a huge mercantile activity. Dutt discusses the factors governing this. The paper touches upon possible reasons: Pressures of being recognized, Being in the clients' short-list, The driving ego of the Creative force to stand out. He questions if "scam ads being produced for awards" and places the idea that winning awards is the only way to creative effectiveness, trading off at times, integrity. Perhaps the "circus" of awards & shows are guilty of spawning this passion. Accusations of unfair Juries is often heard. He concludes citing truly rewarding advertising that contributed to the real world and made a difference.

## Prof. Veena Sikri

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### **Portrayal of Women in Advertising — Gender Insensitivity and Inequity: A Critical Appraisal and Future Directions**

Such is the intertwining of the advertising and media industries that they have both grown in tandem with each other. This paper critically looks at the stereotyping of women and gender insensitivity in advertising across various brand categories and media formats. This approach has a negative impact on women and society as a whole. The paper discusses the efforts put in by UNESCO and SWAN (South Asia Women's Network), in collaboration with IIMC and ISID in analyzing these issues in a unique project "Women for Change: Building a Gendered Media in South Asia" through empirical research in nine south Asian countries on the Status of Women in all aspects of the media industry, including advertising. Advocacy strategies for Governments, prepared in close collaboration with editors and ad-agency owners, are among the key objectives of this project.

## Shruti Jain

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### **State of the Work Force in the Indian Ad Sector: A Socio Economic and Psychographic Analysis**

The strength of any service industry is the quality and calibre of the talent it attracts and retains. This paper examines in detail, through extensive primary research, the context, atmosphere and state of the talent within the Indian advertising sector. Through the years, the absence of a focussed approach to talent acquisition and retention, the shrinking margins and spiralling costs, reduced investments in training and development, the unbundling of services, the advent of specialists/consultants, increasing competition, and intense work pressure have reduced the stature of the industry per se. Jain contends that with rising expectations of the youth, burgeoning career options in the country and attractive remuneration packages offered across industries, advertising is losing its sheen and that the need of the hour is to regroup as an industry to reassess its priorities vis-à-vis talent.

## Dr Anubhuti Yadav

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### **Advertising and Pester Power: Issues & Concerns**

There may not be age appropriate content for kids on television or kids centric cinema but the advertisement airtime is abound with advertisements leveraging kids to sell different products. Catching them young, pester power, nagging power are buzz words in marketing and advertising. Advertisers are continuously searching for new ways to persuade children. The paper explores how advertisers over the years have socially leveraged children to advertise products and services. Dr Yadav further aims to develop a theoretically grounded framework for investigating how pester power works and whether advertising is responsible for growing pester power in India.



## Prof. Seema Goyal

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### Children and Advertising: Creating and Reinforcing Stereotypes in Promotional Material

Children are not only conspicuous consumers but also a sizeable segment of the market, advertisers wish to capture for a variety of products. Peer pressure and increasing media access leading to awareness of the choices available, is a potent mix and leads to increased persistent demands and pressure by children on their elders. Advertisers, being aware of this fact are increasingly targeting and using children in their marketing strategies. Seema's paper discusses the ongoing debate on how media content created for children has been (and continues to be ) a major factor responsible for creating stereotypes in the young minds from a very tender age. This paper is an attempt to look at how advertisements use this important factor to their advantage, creating and reinforcing stereotypes further. Essentially looking at TV commercials and ads on social media, the paper also looks at stereotypes used in other promotional material used to market certain key products specifically targeting children.

## Dr Abhilasha Kumari

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### Surrogate Advertising: Legal and Ethical Dimensions

The paper raises key issues concerning surrogate advertising starting with the definition and implications to the public. It examines surrogate advertising specifically for alcohol and tobacco products, and the impact on demand/consumption. It discusses the issue of banning advertising for alcohol and tobacco, and the impact on consumers. Dr Kumari discusses alternative strategies to stem the consumption of tobacco and alcohol consumption. It concludes with legislative measures for surrogate advertising in India and touches upon COTPA Act, 2003, CTNA Act, 1995, ASCI Code, FCTC 2004 (ratified by India).

## Alka Malhotra

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### Social Sector Communication in India: A Critical Review

This paper maps the social communication landscape in India over a 10 year time frame, presents a critical review of the different ways in which social issues have been tackled using mass media, mid media and at community level through interpersonal communication. Alka Malhotra also discusses some lessons learnt from UNICEF's work in the sector – *Kyunki jeena isi ka naam hai*, Meena Radio, polio communication, and mediated interpersonal communication sessions.

## Anurag Batra

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### Connecting with Academia and Industry for Empirical Research Data and Insights

The paper looks at the nearly absent industry - academia interface in our country, resulting in both working as islands of isolation. One rarely comes across empirical research studies on Indian advertising in reputed advertising journals. The responsibility of putting together a body of work in the field, the paper argues, rests with both, the top advertising & media agencies and advertising and mass communication faculty from reputed universities and institutes. The effort will not only help young scholars in honing their skills and enthuse them in undertaking further research, but at the same time bring to focus and share with the world at large, some extraordinary work from the ad industry.

## Prof. Jaishri Jethwaney

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### Evolution of Political Advertising in India: Issues, Concerns and Challenges

The last three decades have changed the way of Indian election campaigning. The entry of spin-doctors, strategists, advertising agencies and big money have made analysts wonder about the increasing American



influence. Many wonder if a poor country can afford to spend such amounts, when the funding sources are largely dormant. The paper critically examines: Evolution of political advertising over the last 16 parliamentary elections, Influence of American campaigning styles, Entry of big money, Corporate-politics nexus, Governments being on a constant campaign mode and sums up with Issues for Policy considerations. She concludes by discussing issues for policy consideration and intervention for upholding the standards of Indian democracy and the electoral process viz. The phenomenon of paid news and Deteriorating standard of campaign narrative.

## **P.N. Vasanti**

### **Role and Relevance of Professional Bodies in Advertising: Imperatives**

This paper is an overview of the media regulatory scene in India with focus on professional bodies like ASCI (the Advertising Standards Council in India) in this complex media ecosystem. As an independent researcher, scholar, and policy advisor on media and communications issues, the author draws from her experience in her regular media industry interface, government policy initiatives on media content regulation and as a member of the ASCI CCC (Consumer Complaints Council).

## **Dr Kulveen Trehan**

### **New Research Approaches in Measuring Advertising Impact and Effectiveness: A Case of Online Advocacy Campaign 'Happy To Bleed' for Resetting Agenda on Gender**

The paper is a critical exploration of digital advertising/advocacy campaigns to underline the use of triangulation or mixed methods in response to changes in campaign creation, execution and effectiveness. Use of critical discourse analysis w.r.t social media advocacy campaign 'Happy To Bleed' through new media data collection tools and analytical approaches fixes the spotlight on intersections of source of content, theoretical leanings and methodological adaptations in advertising research. Using the Dragonfly Effect Model of advocacy campaign analysis, it was established how new media strategies and tactics can lead to formation of potent communities to advocate change in society as well as policy w.r.t gender equity.

## **Ambika Shrivastav**

### **Maximising the Impact of Media, Opportunities and Challenges for Measurement in the Brave New World**

Today, more so than before, there is an intense debate on how the Media Industry can develop and refresh sensible media metrics all stakeholders - media owners, marketers, planners and buyers. The paper traces the progress made by Industry Bodies such as BARC and MRUC. However a lot more needs to be done as fundamental questions remain unanswered. A frequently asked question relates to what impact Digital Media has made on the media consumption behaviours of consumers. Clearly the Industry needs to collaborate and commit to investing time and fund to make sense of what, and how is it best possible to capture the new and continuously changing media consumption habits and behaviour. Shrivastav analyses this issue in the context of the present and the future.

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