

SOCIAL MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITY

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ABSTRACT

Social Marketing is a planned process for influencing consumers and its components of marketing and consumer research, advertising and promotion play important role in topics like health, environment, and other important issues. Impact of Social Marketing on Consumer Responsibility Project is taken up to understand the influence of social marketing campaigns on consumer perception and behavior. Social Marketing combines the best elements of the traditional approaches to social change in an integrated planning and action framework Thus the role of market research agencies becomes crucial in determining not only the target audience, but also in studying their likes and dislikes, motivations, drives and behavior that may aid or deter the efforts taken to bring about behavior change. We find that the awareness of social campaigns can influence the consumers' responsibility. Since social campaigns also impact the goodwill of the brand it is important for consumers to establish the association correctly. The aim of a social cause is to influence a change in the consumers' behavior in a positive way. The level of awareness of these campaigns, brands, brand ambassadors and parent company among the respondents was identified. The influence these campaigns have on the brand loyalty, consumer behavior and how the respondents prioritize these campaigns were checked.

KEYWORDS: Brand, Brand Ambassadors, Consumer Responsibility and Social Campaigns

INTRODUCTION

Social Marketing is a planned process for influencing change. Social Marketing is a modified term of conventional Product and Service Marketing. With its components of marketing and consumer research, advertising and promotion (including positioning, segmentation, creative strategy, message design and testing, media strategy and planning, and effective tracking), Social Marketing can play a central role in topics like health, environment, and other important issues. In recent times, campaigns have been launched in areas such as health promotion environment, education, economy and other issues like family violence, human rights, and racism. Social Marketing combines the best elements of the traditional approaches to social change in an integrated planning and action framework, and utilizes advances in communication technology and marketing skills.

It uses marketing techniques to generate discussion and promote information, attitudes, values, and behaviors. By doing so, it helps to create a climate conducive to social and behavioral change. The role of market research agencies becomes crucial in determining not only the target audience, but also in studying their likes and dislikes, motivations, drives and behavior that may aid or deter the efforts taken to bring about behavior change.

Impact of Social Marketing on Consumer Responsibility is taken up to understand the influence of social marketing campaigns on consumer perception and behavior. Its intent is to create positive social change. The different consumer responsibilities as prescribed by the UN General Assembly are: Critical Awareness, Action, Social Concern, Environmental Awareness and Solidarity. The changes sought in Level of Social marketing effectiveness are awareness, engagement, behavior, social norms and well being. The researcher got an opportunity to conduct a market research and to identify the level of awareness of social marketing campaigns on consumers. The researcher also gained insight about influential social marketing campaigns and their impact on brand loyalty, consumer buyer decision, perception and behavior. The corporate can understand the intricate Corporate Communication features that would enhance consumer responsibility and social awareness. Not much research is done under consumer responsibility. Through this research, the factors involved in successful social marketing are identified for the benefit of the forthcoming corporate communications.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Wiebe (1951/52) was the first to consider selling brotherhood like soap, by which he revolutionized the marketing concept. For the first time people began to think seriously that the methods used very successfully to influence behavior in the commercial sector, might transfer to a nonprofit arena. Wiebe evaluated four different social change campaigns, and concluded that the more similarities they had to commercial marketing, the more successful they were. This intellectual progress has been matched by the development of both pedagogy and practice. The danger is that Social marketing practices follow the text book product, lifestyle and goes quickly from maturity to decline. It has been known for many years that the way to avoid this fate is to innovate (**Levitt 1960**)¹. **Kotler and Zaltman (1971)**² developed the idea into a recognizable discipline and coined the term 'social marketing' and defined it as: "the design, implementation and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product planning, pricing, communication, distribution and marketing research." Social marketing did not go unchallenged. **Manoff (1985)**³ argues that the exact techniques of marketing, for example, that there should be a Product, need not be adhered to completely, rather that the usefulness of the strategy be made most appropriate to the situation. Social marketing ideas are innovative, and made distinct changes in the practice of what was then almost exclusively called health education. Social marketing in public health should not be confused with the marketing activity of new commercial health care and hospital corporations. This wider body of economic thought en-compasses social needs ("welfare" is the term of art) with the pure economic advantage of any given action (**Nicholson 1985**)⁴. In the 1990's **Andreasen (1994)**⁵ emphasized that marketing, whether social or commercial, is about human behavior – changing, reinforcing and encouraging it. Primary theories behind social marketing include the health belief model, stages of change theory and social learning theory (**Heimdinger and VanDuyn, 1995**)⁶. The Health Belief Model attempts to explain, but also predict health behaviors by examining current attitudes and behaviors held by individuals. Other aspects of social marketing were also

contentious. Most fundamentally, Elliott (1995a⁷ and 1995b⁸), Tones (1996)⁹ have argued that the social marketing product is immutable, and consequently social marketers are concerned with selling or advocacy, rather than marketing. However, Stead and Hastings (1996)¹⁰ have argued that social marketers can and do alter their offerings (e.g. substituting harm minimization for abstinence in drugs misuse programmers) and without this type of flexibility social marketing becomes meaningless. The research study based upon the descriptive method of collecting data and analyzing. In the present study, an extensive use of both primary and secondary data has been made in order to achieve the objectives of this study. First-hand information was collected from 300 respondents. The sampling type incorporated in the research is a Non probability Convenience Sampling. Five-point scale is used to measure the influence and awareness level. Four-point scale is used to identify the impact of brand loyalty. Mean square value was used to analyze the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Awareness of Consumer Responsibilities

Consumer Responsibility	Not at All Aware	Slightly Aware	Somewhat Aware	Moderately Aware	Extremely Aware	Mean
Critical Awareness	10	21	55	103	111	3.95
Action	17	26	73	116	68	3.64
Social concern	13	35	74	100	78	3.65
Environmental Awareness	15	26	73	113	73	3.68
Solidarity	43	41	63	82	71	3.32

MSV – 3.65

Critical awareness has high awareness among the respondents. It is inferred that the responsibility to be more alert and to question the price and quality of the product that is bought is high. This further shows the development in consumerism in today's market.

Table 2: Campaign Awareness

Campaigns	Not at All Aware	Slightly Aware	Somewhat Aware	Moderately Aware	Extremely Aware	Mean
Oral health month	12	9	25	61	193	4.38
Use mobiles, Save trees	25	16	33	75	151	4.04
Jaago Re	79	35	66	69	51	2.93
Lead India	37	29	58	86	90	3.54
Guest is God	48	26	47	82	97	3.51
Heaven can wait	92	47	53	52	56	2.78
Healthy life	21	18	29	49	183	4.18
Take back	60	35	52	69	84	3.27
Desh Ko Arpan	103	36	51	64	46	2.71
Consumer rights awareness	37	41	50	82	90	3.49

MSV – 3.48

High awareness of 'oral health', 'Use Mobile, Save Trees' campaigns among the respondents supports the result of high level of environmental awareness consumer responsibility among them. Campaigns with eco-friendly cause are highly supported by the respondents.

Table 3: Association of Campaign with Brands

Campaigns and Brands	Correct		Wrong	
	Nor	%	Nor	%
Colgate – Oral health	229	76	71	24
IDEA - Use mobiles, Save trees	234	78	66	22
Tata Tea - Jaago Re	216	72	84	28
Times of India - Lead India	207	69	93	31
Indian Tourism Ministry - Guest is God	198	66	102	34
Axion - Heaven can wait	196	65	104	35
Saffola Gold - Healthy life	251	84	49	16
Nokia - Take back	228	76	72	24
Tata Salt - Desh Ko Arpan	216	72	84	28
Govt. of India - Consumer rights awareness	206	69	94	31

From the above table, it is inferred that most of the respondents were able to link the brands to the corresponding campaigns correctly. 84% of the respondents have correctly associated Saffola Gold with Healthy Life campaign. This is hugely due to the fact that the campaign and brand are easily associated with each other using the message.

Table 4: Association of Campaigns with Brand Ambassadors

Brands and their Ambassadors	Correct		Wrong	
	Nor	%	Nor	%
Indian tourism Ministry – Amir Khan	248	83	52	17
IDEA – Abishek Bachan	257	86	43	14
Colgate – Anushka Sharma	252	84	48	16

Among the brands IDEA was associated with its ambassador to the highest level (86%). Abishek Bachan surely fits with Idea positioning him as a hip and popular with crowds' guy. This also signifies the shift in focus of IDEA from classes to masses.

Table 5: Influence Level

Brands & Campaigns	Not at All Influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Moderately Influential	Extremely Influential	Mean
Tata Salt – Desh Ko Arpan	28	28	73	88	83	3.57
Govt. of India - Jago Grahak Jago	27	26	63	107	77	3.60
Nokia – Take Back	24	31	71	66	108	3.68
Axion – Heaven can wait	52	49	65	83	51	3.11
Saffola Gold – Healthy life	22	17	48	66	147	4.00
Indian Tourism Ministry – Athithi Devo Bhavan	45	30	43	87	95	3.52
IDEA – Use mobiles, Save Trees	28	35	48	53	136	3.78
Colgate – Oral Health month	22	23	42	49	164	4.03
Tata tea – Jaago Re	53	50	71	73	53	3.08
Times of India – Lead India	35	34	80	83	68	3.38
Lifebuoy – Swasthya Chetna	22	21	44	86	127	3.92

MSV = 3.61

From the table it is clear that Colgate's Oral Health (4.03), Saffola Gold's Healthy life campaign (4.00), Lifebuoy's Swasthya Chetna campaign (3.92), IDEA's Use mobiles Save trees campaign (3.78) and Nokia's Take Back campaign (3.68) have influenced towards supporting the social cause. Campaigns having health concern messages, environment betterment messages are highly influential. The environmental awareness and social concern are the two consumer responsibilities that results in the success of many social campaigns.

Table 6: Buying Decision

Factors	Not at All Influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Moderately Influential	Extremely Influential	Mean
Cost	16	8	36	96	144	4.15
Convenience	17	5	51	92	135	4.08
Performance	13	20	57	93	117	3.94
After Sale	36	28	79	77	80	3.46
Ease of Use	23	21	58	108	90	3.74
Symbol	41	27	89	82	61	3.32
Fashion	39	25	63	85	88	3.53
Health	8	10	27	63	192	4.40
Social impact	13	22	72	104	89	3.78
Environment impact	13	30	56	103	98	3.81
Economic impact	28	31	57	103	81	3.59

MSV – 3.8

From the above table it is inferred that the General factors (Cost, Convenience and Performance) and Consumer Responsibility factors (Health and environmental impact) influence the respondents buying decision. The level of environmental and social concern observed is high among the consumers.

Table 7: Influence on Social Behavior

Campaigns	Not at All Influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Moderately Influential	Extremely Influential	Mean
Oral Health	16	17	46	84	137	4.03
Use Mobiles, Save Trees	13	18	63	95	111	3.91
Jaago Re	52	37	83	83	45	3.11
Lead India	28	28	83	87	74	3.50
Guest Is God	30	31	69	79	91	3.57
Heaven Can Wait	29	30	81	90	70	3.47
Healthy Life	21	19	43	87	130	3.95
Take Back	29	39	63	80	89	3.54
Desh Ko Arpan	48	47	62	90	53	3.18
Consumer Rights Awareness	27	25	56	87	105	3.73

MSV – 3.6

The campaigns 'save our tiger', 'Healthy life', 'Use Mobiles, Save Trees' and 'Consumer Rights Awareness' have influenced the behaviors. The respondents project the capability to be influenced and change to positive practices that aid the environment and their health.

Consumers are highly aware of the consumer responsibilities. They are more alert and question the price and quality of the goods/services being purchased. They are aware of the impact of their consumption on the environment and the impact of their lifestyle..Awareness about product promotion with social cause is about 50.3%.The awareness of social campaigns can influence the consumers' responsibility. Since social campaigns also impact the goodwill of the brand it is important for consumers to establish the association correctly. The ultimate serendipity of this association is the impact on brand loyalty. The first step required to trigger a positive outcome from a social campaign is through the influence it makes on the consumers. This influence is not even among the consumers because it directly reflects the consumer responsibilities each possess. The social campaigns have a high influence on the consumer brand loyalty. The buying decision process is complex to understand as it varies between different consumers. Some give importance to cost or quality or functionality or environmental impact of the product. This indirectly relates to the consumer responsibility, innate in the consumers. The aim of a social cause is to influence a change in the consumers' behavior in a positive way.

CONCLUSIONS

The project “Impact of Social Marketing on Consumer Responsibility” was taken up to identify the influence of social marketing campaigns on consumer attitude and behavior. Social marketing is the application of marketing principles keeping in view the public or social interests. The influence of these campaigns to the consumers was identified with the help of a structured questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed under three categories – Awareness, Engagement and behavior change. The level of awareness of these campaigns, brands, brand ambassadors and parent company among the respondents was identified. The influence these campaigns have on the brand loyalty, consumer behavior and how the respondents prioritize these campaigns were checked. The findings give insights to a successful social campaign like having a brand ambassador who better suits the ideology of the social campaign and integrated marketing. Consumers are more open to health, environmental and social concerned campaigns. It is suggested the companies meticulously select those causes that impact the consumers’ responsibilities. Social marketing not only records the philanthropic side of a brand, but eventually it also impacts the customers’ loyalty towards the brand.

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