Effectiveness Of Media In Mobilizing People Towards Social Causes And Campaigns

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INTRODUCTION

Mass media campaigns have three important functions:

❀ They help to keep issues on the social and political agenda.

❀ They fulfil a valuable role in providing legitimacy to community interventions.

❀ They provide a trigger for other initiatives.

The objective of mass media campaigns is to influence the social context and to create a favorable climate in which interventions can be received. The theory of diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 1983) moves from the primarily intra-individual process involved in the models of behavior change to consider a broader model of change within society as a whole. The focus is on the role of opinion leaders and *"early adaptors"* ± the people who are first to adopt new ideas or behaviors (generally speaking, people in the upper socio- economic classes).

Using the mass media for social interventions has both strengths and weaknesses. The strength of the mass media, according to some, lies in helping to put issues on the public agenda, in reinforcing local efforts, in raising consciousness about health issues and in conveying simple information (Tones et al., 1990). The limitations of the mass media are that they are less effective in conveying complex information, in teaching skills, in shifting attitudes and beliefs, and in changing behavior in the absence of other enabling factors. The major strength of using mass media to reach a wide audience ironically creates the major limitation of its evaluation. Three major factors that need to be considered in this are:

❀ Messages may fail to reach the intended audience;

❀ Messages may reach people whom they were not intended for;

❀ Messages may be misunderstood;

❀ Also, follow ups for such campaigns are not easy, with little control over the consequences.

The major parameters (Oenema, 2007) that can be used for the measurements for the campaign effectiveness are:

❀ **Social Demographics :** Information was collected about sex, age, educational level, ethnicity, and self-reported height and weight

❀ **Campaign Exposure :** Campaign exposure was tested on the basis of recall or recognition for the campaign.

❀ **Psychological Constructs :** Attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control for preventing weight gain were each assessed with single items on bipolar 5-point scales.

The evaluation of mass media campaigns can be done in three stages after the need for the research is observed (Wellings et al., 2000). In the formative evaluation, pretesting of campaigns is done to analyze its feasibility to achieve its objectives. The second stage, i.e. process evaluation is done while the campaign is still running. This is to observe the success or failure of the campaign and the effect of social and other factors on the delivery of the campaign, which might lead to the success or failure. Finally, an outcome evaluation is carried out. This is aimed to study whether the campaign had any outcome and whether the intervention was able to produce the intended outcome in a cost-effective manner, as compared to other campaigns or not. The ability to produce intended outcomes can be termed as the effectiveness of the campaigns.

In this research, the authors aim to perform the outcome analysis of some of the social mass media campaigns in India, which have been launched by some of the media groups of the country.

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Campaigns using the mass media need to be evaluated with a methodology which respects their character and the way they work. At the same time, they must be credible enough to influence policy decisions. Several methods can be used to measure effects and effectiveness apart from the experimental approaches. These include cross-sectional designs, tracking designs and cohort studies. Survey investigation is the mainstay of data collection procedures. The type of evaluation tool the researchers used for the study is the knowledge, attitude and behavior (KAB) survey. Typically, KAB surveys investigate exposure to, recall and comprehension of campaign messages and self-reported behavior change. KAB surveys have limitations in the extent to which they can monitor changes wrought in the social context, since their focus is on the individual. They also present problems of validity and reliability. They are particularly susceptible to the influence of the social desirability response. Most surveys are introduced to respondents by reference to the purpose of the survey, and so, responses reflect those assumed to be desired by those responsible for conducting the surveys. Since long, various marketing campaigns are designed and used using mass media to attract and retain customers around the world. This has been shown to be a fairly effective way of launching new products, targeting new markets, retaining old customers and building brands. Effectiveness of these campaigns has resulted in improving the top line of the companies, or beating the competitors in various scenarios. In recent times, mass media has also been used as a platform for launching campaigns for social causes, related to the general public's overall benefits. These may include campaigns like *"Jaago re"* (Tata Tea Campaign) *and "Jessica Lal case"* which have allowed people to raise their voices, if not against the systems, then at-least for a cause. Other campaigns like *"Teach India"& "Lead India"* (The Times of India campaign) have helped bring out ideas and brought people together for general upbringing of the society. There is a need to understand the effectiveness of the media in mobilizing the people towards social campaigns. The present paper showcases that we can learn about which media has historically been appropriate for a particular campaign and thus, it can be used to determine the appropriate medium for launching campaigns like the *Aman ki Aasha* campaign (An initiative of The Times of India and the Jang Group of Pakistan) . Aman ki Aasha is a new campaign that is being launched as a cross country campaign aimed for peace between India and Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

❈ **Newspaper Readership[1] :** After going through the paper titled *"Measuring Newspaper Readership: A Qualitative Variable Approach by Edward C. Malthouse and Bobby J. Calder, North-western University, U.S.A"*, the researchers came to a conclusion that audience measurement is essential for newspapers and other media. In the survey, the researchers focused on the quantitative aspects of newspaper readership, which was measured by taking some particular indicators of the reading activity. This measurement was focused to find the causes and consequences of newspaper readership activity. The researchers used 2 of the 6 questions mentioned in the research paper as a part of the questionnaire to measure the newspaper readership frequency; however, simple ordinal scale was used to measure the same, unlike the probabilistic one mentioned in the paper.

❈ **Internet Use Frequency:** The researchers went through the paper on internet use frequency, which emphasized on the logistic regression models to isolate the influence of different demographic and socio - economic factors like age, gender, educational qualification, employment situation, geographic location, household income and composition, as well as the type of connection or place of internet access. Logistic regression has the advantage of quantifying the impact of explanatory variable, while controlling other variables. However, to minimize the number of questions of the present research, which focused on media as a whole, but not the internet alone, the researchers restricted themselves to just a single question that determines the daily frequency of internet usage.

❈ **Brand Awareness[2]:** The paper *"Brand and Advertising Awareness: A Replication and Extension of a Known Empirical Generalisation"* by Jenni Romaniuk, Byron Sharp, Samantha Paech& Carl Driesener suggests us that awareness measures are used extensively to determine the brand performance. The three most important measures for evaluating brand awareness are spontaneous, top of the mind, aided recall. The authors found the later two to be appropriate for the present study.

❈ **Brand Association:** The paper signifies the importance of brand association in the customer preferences for a product. Nowadays, Brands are so important that companies plan to include it as an asset in their balance sheets. The various ways in which brand association generates value to the customers were identified as helping to

process/retrieve information about a brand, generating a need to buy and formation of positive attitudes towards it. Thus, brand association was taken as one of the predictor variables for the impact of the social campaign (Brand associations and consumer perceptions of value of products By Nzuki Kithung'a Peter, University of Nairobi).

❈ **Media Exposure:** The measurements for Newspaper readership, Internet frequency and Television viewership were done on a 5 point ordinal scale. Internet frequency and television viewership were recorded by single questions, however, the newspaper readership was measured on two different parameters - the amount and frequency of readership .Cumulative effect of the two factors was considered by taking geometric mean of both and getting one single value for newspaper readership on a 5 point scale. To measure the total media exposure on a whole, cumulative effect of all three mediums was taken by calculating the geometric mean of the same. Thus, the media exposure was brought down to a single value on a 5 point scale.

METHODS

❈ **Sample:** A total of 139 respondents with varied demographics participated in the floated survey . The survey was floated on the internet, and most of the respondents were from metros and big cities. 75.53% were male respondents and 24.64% were female respondents. Majority of the respondents were from cities, which are well connected and have media access.The respondents fell in the age category of 19-65 years, with mean age - 25 years.

❈ **Measures :** Ordinal scare of 1-5, with Geometric mean for Media exposure were used for the study. 5 point scales were used for types of media.

❈ **Gender:** Respondents' gender was used as a moderator variable, with mediation being measured for both male and females.

❈ **Frequency Of Media Exposure:** Frequency of media measure was also used as a moderator variable. Media frequency was calculated using respondents' usage of internet, print media and television.

❈ **Type of Media:** Respondents were asked about how did they come to know about the Teach India campaign.

❈ **Shift In Brand:** Respondents were asked that did the campaign influence them to shift to The Times of India or read The Times of India along with their current newspaper.

❈ **Impact Of Social Campaign :** Respondents was asked about their involvement in the Teach India campaign. For this, a five-level scale including No recall, Recall, Responsiveness, Action and finally, the Impact was used. Recall meant that if respondents were only able to recall the campaign; respondents were considered as responsive if they registered for the campaign. If they attended any workshop, it was taken as an action taken by them. Finally, if they taught students at the centers, the campaign impact was taken as complete.

❈ **Tests :** Mediation/Moderation Analysis and Q factor calculation were used for measuring levels of impact using Aided/Unaided awareness.

ANALYSIS

The study uses the four-step method developed by Kenny et al. (1998) and Baron and Kenny (1986) for mediation analysis. The first step uses impact of the campaign as the criterion variable in the regression equation and type of media as the predictor. The second step uses brand shift as the criterion variable in the regression equation and type of media as the predictor. The third step uses impact of the campaign as the criterion variable in the regression equation and brand shift as the predictor. The fourth step is to compare the first and the third regression models to identify effects of the mediator. The study also analyzed the role of two moderators - gender and exposure to media of the respondents. All four steps mentioned above for the mediation analysis were analyzed again for female/male as well as three levels of media exposure (low/medium/high).

RESULTS

As per the survey, the Teach India campaign led to brand shift in around 17% of the respondents towards The Times of India. From the 139 respondents, 60 were already reading this newspaper, whereas, 24 respondents started reading due to the campaign.

From the Table 1, it can be inferred that Mediation effect shows that the both media type and brand shift were significantly related to the impact of the campaign on respondents. However, the type of media could not be related significantly to the shift in brand. The direct and indirect effects of the primary predictor variable (media type) have been depicted in the table. And 5% significance levels have been analyzed in all of the statistical analysis.

❋ Moderation (gender) (Table 2 and Table 3) shows that for males and females, unlike the combined effect, media type could not be significantly related to the impact in mobilizing people. However, in this too, the attribute brand shift was related significantly with the impact.

❋ Moderator (level of media exposure) (Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6) show that for level 1 exposure, apart from the combined effect, only brand shift is significantly related to the impact of the campaigns. The primary predictor did not show any significant relationship with the impact. However, media type along with the brand shift was significantly related to the final impact of the campaign. For testing the hypotheses, relationships between all attributes were assessed at the same time. Media type and brand shift were significantly related to activism/impact on people. However, when the relationship between media types and brand shift was evaluated, it was found that this relationship is not significant. This violates the condition for establishing a mediation effect[3,4]. Thus, brand shift does not mediate the effect of media type on impact. This was confirmed using Sobel's[5] formula, with the z statistic value came to be 1.82, which is greater than 1.96. Thus, at 5% significance level, the mediation effect was absent. It was also found that these relationships were moderated by the gender of the respondents and the level of exposure to different types of media on respondents. However in all the analysis, mediation effect was not significant. Overall moderation/mediation effect can be observed in the Figure 1 (at 5% significance level): From the weights given on each of the relationship line (depicted by an arrow), the following points can be inferred.

❋ Gender has a significant moderation effect only on the relationship between brand shift and impact.
❋ The influence of the brand shift on campaign impact/activism is higher than that of media type on campaign impact.
❋ Media exposure significantly moderates the relationships between brand shift and activism and that between media

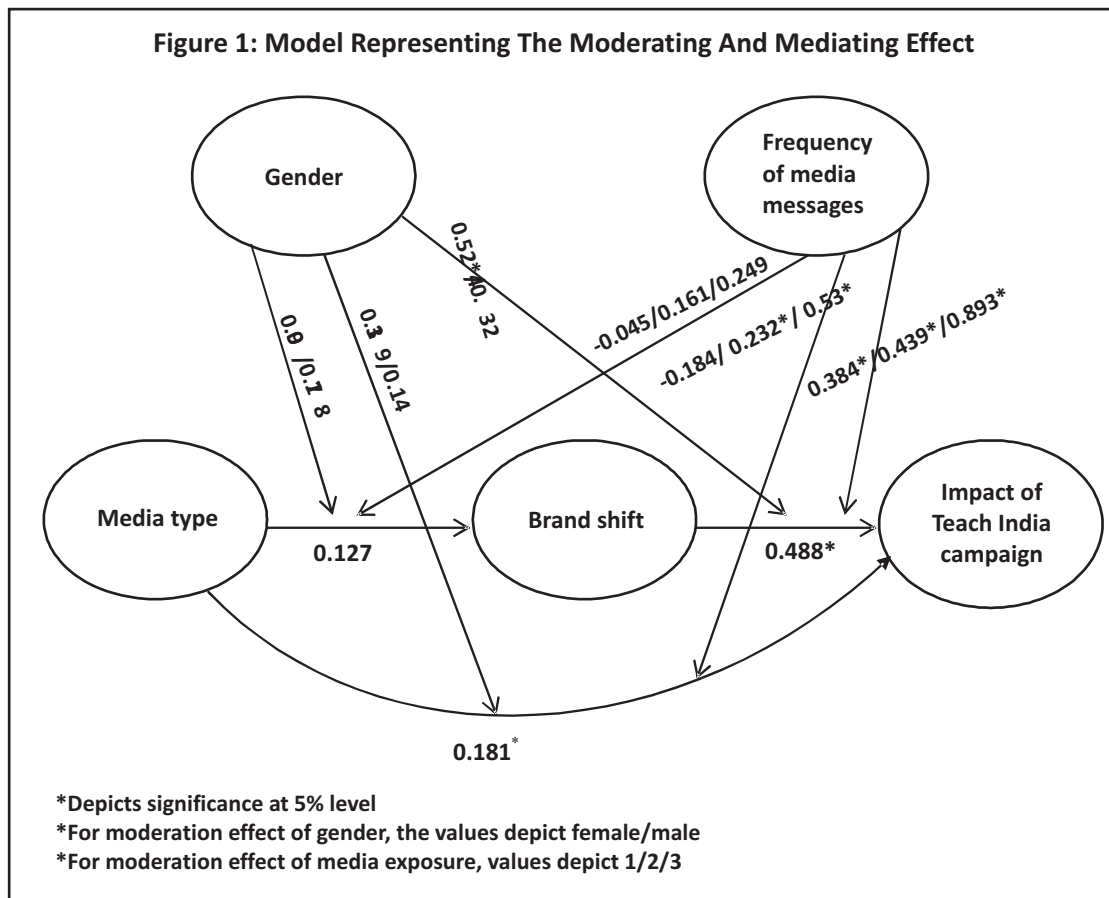

Figure 1: Model Representing The Moderating And Mediating Effect

*Depicts significance at 5% level
*For moderation effect of gender, the values depict female/male
*For moderation effect of media exposure, values depict 1/2/3

Table 1: Mediation Effect						
Relationship Tested	R^2	Significance (R^2)	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Mediation Effect
Media type on Impact	0.033	0.033	0.224	0.181	0.033	No mediation
Brand Shift on Impact	0.238	0	1.465	0.488	0	as media
Media type on Brandshift	0.016	0.137	0.052	0.127	0.137	doesn't
Combined on Impact	0.253	0				significantly
Media			0.15	0.121	0.107	affect
Brand Shift			1.419	0.473	0	brand shift
	Direct effect	0.181	Indirect effect	0.061976		
	Total Effect	0.242976				
						Sobel's Z statistic = 1.82

Table 2: Moderation Effect - Gender, Female Gender (0)						
Relationship Tested	R^2	Significance (R^2)	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Mediation Effect
Media type on Impact	0.102	0.062	0.419	0.319	0.062	No mediation as
Brand Shift on Impact	0.27	0.001	1.262	0.52	0.001	media doesn't
Media type on Brandshift	0.008	0.606	0.167	0.09	0.606	significantly
Combined on Impact	0.345	0.001				affect brand
Media			0.361	0.274	0.065	shift
Brand Shift			1.202	0.495	0.002	
	Direct effect	0.319	Indirect effect	0.0468		
	Total Effect	0.3658				

Table 3: Moderation Effect- Male Gender (1)						
Relationship Tested	R^2	Significance (R^2)	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Mediation Effect
Media type on Impact	0.02	0.151	0.167	0.142	0.151	No mediation as
Brand Shift on Impact	0.186	0	1.587	0.432	0	media doesn't
Media type on Brandshift	0.032	0.07	0.555	0.178	0.07	significantly
Combined on Impact	0.191	0				affect brand
Media			0.079	0.067	0.464	shift
Brand Shift			1.543	0.42	0	
	Direct effect	0.142	Indirect effect	0.076896		
Moderation Effect	Total Effect	0.218896				

type and activism.
❀ This moderation effect has a higher magnitude with an increase in the level of media exposure.

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Contrary to the researchers' expectation, the relationship between the type of media and impact of a campaign is not mediated by a brand shift. Instead, both - types of the media and brand shift are directly related to the effectiveness of a campaign. The finding of this study does support the positive effect of training on retaining employees, but does not support the notion that training helps embed employees in their jobs. Therefore, the research implications of the study are:

Table 4: Moderation Effect - Frequency Of Media Usage (Level 1)						
Relationship Tested	R^2	Significance (R^2)	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Mediation Effect
Media type on Impact	0.034	0.35	-0.19	-0.184	0.35	No mediation as
Brand Shift on Impact	0.148	0.044	1.307	0.384	0.044	media doesn't
Media type on Brandshift	0.002	0.822	-0.014	-0.045	0.822	significantly
Combined on Impact	0.175	0.09				affect brand
Media			-0.173	0.167	0.368	shift
Brand Shift			1.281	0.377	0.049	
	Direct effect	-0.184	Indirect effect	-0.01728		
	Total Effect	-0.20128				

Table 5: Moderation Effect - Frequency Of Media Usage (Level 2)						
Relationship Tested	R^2	Significance (R^2)	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Mediation Effect
Media type on Impact	0.054	0.024	0.309	0.232	0.024	No mediation as
Brand Shift on Impact	0.193	0	1.319	0.439	0	media doesn't
Media type on Brandshift	0.026	0.119	0.071	0.161	0.119	significantly
Combined on Impact	0.22	0				affect brand
Media			0.22	0.165	0.08	shift
Brand Shift			1.239	0.413	0	
	Direct effect	0.232	Indirect effect	0.070679		
	Total Effect	0.302679				

Table 6: Moderation Effect - Frequency Of Media Usage (Level 3)						
Relationship Tested	R^2	Significance (R^2)	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Mediation Effect
Media type on Impact	0.28	0.042	0.63	0.53	0.042	No mediation as
Brand Shift on Impact	0.798	0	2.432	0.893	0	media doesn't
Media type on Brandshift	0.062	0.372	0.109	0.249	0.372	significantly
Combined on Impact	0.899	0				affect brand
Media			0.39	0.328	0.005	shift
Brand Shift			2.21	0.812	0	
	Direct effect	0.53	Indirect effect	0.222357		
	Total Effect	0.752357				

1) The study suggests a new way of measuring campaign effectiveness, which has not been done much in India.
2) The study can act as a basis for assessing the impact of different types of media on campaigns.
3) Campaigns designed based on the results of the present study can be used for brand building by different media groups.
4) The campaign results can be used as a reference to predict the impact of other campaigns.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUMMARY
This particular study was conducted to try and capture the social awareness as generated among the people regarding the effectiveness of social campaigns in mobilizing people towards these causes. A major limitation of the study was that it focused only on one campaign (Teach India).

This restricted the researchers' constructs to single variables as most of the proposed attributes were for comparison of different types of campaigns. Since some parts of the survey dealt with the respondents painting a social picture of themselves, the study by its very nature becomes open to the effect of social desirability bias. This bias reflects a tendency of the respondents to try and deny socially undesirable traits, claim the socially desirable ones which they expect, and place them in a favorable light. This in turn is shaped by what people believe are the acceptable norms in society. Norms are important determinants of what would constitute behavior that is socially acceptable, as they determine what makes a good impression in a given situation (Atteslander & Kneubuhler , 1975). This particular factor can potentially inhibit a study, which tries to gauge people's response in any area of social responsibility. The researchers tried to limit the extent of this factor by framing the questionnaire in a form that doesn't allow the respondents to change the way they reacted. Furthermore, giving an option to the respondents wherein they could choose not to disclose their identity while filling in the responses helped the authors further to reduce this bias. However, the desire to appear socially desirable is so strong in people that they may not completely trust the fact that their responses could not be traced to them and would thus focus more on appearing socially acceptable.Another limitation of the study was that the survey used cross-sectional, self-reporting questionnaire to collect the data. This prohibits the researchers to understand the causal relationships between various attributes. Thus, it makes it difficult to analyze which type of media is actually impactful in mobilizing people for social causes. The future research can be done before and after such campaigns with focused targets, which can be analyzed to obtain causal relationships. Also, more number of attributes could be analyzed in the constructs used. Most of the respondents of the survey fell between the ages of 24-28 years. Thus, the research cannot be generalized for a complete population. In summary, this study gives a new direction in analyzing the effectiveness of media campaigns in building brands along with educating/mobilizing society towards socially relevant causes.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

❀To include the attributes that could not be included in the present study.

❀To have the research in an experimental basis i.e. pre and post an event, so that the measurements can be better interpreted.

❀To conduct similar researches that still do not exist for other causes, like effectiveness of green marketing.

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