A Study Of Surrogate Advertisement & It’s Effects On Consumer Behavior

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Abstract
In the modern era, advertising is everywhere. Every other day, new advertising strategies are introduced to us. The product's original attributes are hidden by substitute advertising traits, which also make it appear as though it is a relatively common item. In several industries, including the beverage industry, surrogate advertising is becoming more common. One of the evident trends in the Indian advertising sector is surrogate advertising. The effective promotion of several products that are prohibited in India is undoubtedly made possible by this trend. This has significant effects on consumer response when such products are indirectly advertised. The brand image of one product gets duplicated as a result, which helps to market another product under the same brand. A surrogate advertisement is one that promotes a different product using the same label and the same brand as the original one. All of us have seen advertisements for goods like CDs of music, soda, mineral water, etc., but when you try to buy them in the market, they are either impossible to find or not at all. So why do companies spend so much money advertising these products? The solution is in surrogate advertising. This study explores surrogate advertising, including what it is, how consumers view it, how it influences their purchasing behaviour, and how it affects the sales of these products. The primary focus of this research is consumer purchasing attitudes and habits in relation to Surrogate advertising. Primary and secondary data were gathered, together with quantitative data collection tools and statistical techniques, to investigate hypotheses. Due to time and resource limitations, this exploratory research uses a random sampling strategy to gather its primary data. Consumers are given self-structured, closed-ended questionnaire forms to complete.

Keywords: Surrogate Advertising, Consumer’s Buying Behavior, Consumer’s Perception.

Introduction
The word "advertising" comes from the Latin "advertere," which denoted drawing attention to something. Advertising, according to the American Marketing Association, is any paid method of presenting and promoting concepts, products, and services in a non-personal setting by a designated sponsor. The process of promoting a good or service through activities and tactics known as advertising. A product or service is meant to be highlighted in advertising in an effort to draw attention to it. Despite the fact that it has a wide range of uses, the most common one is
commercial advertising, it is frequently meant to promote a certain commodity or service. Hawkers shouting out their items in the early days of towns and markets influenced the development of Indian advertising. Signage, trademarks, billboard advertising, and many other things then developed.

It's believed that Britain is where surrogate advertising first appeared. After drinking alcohol like alcohol, brandy, or whisky, wives started to complain when their husbands started using domestic violence. Advertising for alcoholic beverages was completely prohibited and outlawed due to the opposition's fervent objection. Then the alcohol business began a new form of advertising called as surrogate advertising, in which the names of these alcoholic products were concealed in other advertisements and brands. In India, substitute advertising has been prohibited since 1995, when the Cable TV Regulation Act stipulated that "no advertisement should be authorised which encourages, directly or indirectly, the manufacturing, sale, or use of cigarettes, tobacco products, alcohol, spirits or other intoxicants." The product's original properties are hidden by substitute promotional attributes, which also portray it as being somewhat commonplace. The pan masala and spirits sectors both use surrogate advertising more and more frequently. The main objective is to advertise the products without meeting the standard of being illegal. On national television and other forms of media, it is forbidden to advertise alcoholic beverages and items that contain tobacco in India.

Surrogate advertising is one of the ethical challenges in advertising that is gaining attention in India. For products like alcohol and cigarettes, which cannot be directly marketed in India, this marketing method is employed. It is a type of advertising when the brand image of one product is closely mimicked in order to advertise another product under the same brand. When people see these advertisements, they immediately think of the Original Brand that created them. To hammer the brand name into consumers' minds, this sort of advertising uses a product from a related category, such as club soda or mineral water in the case of alcohol, or products from a completely other category, such as music CDs or playing cards. Advertising substitutes include those for Imperial Blue Cassettes and CDs, Bagpiper Soda, Cassettes and CDs, Royal Challenge Golf Accessories and Mineral Water, and others. The issue arises when conspicuous advertising is used to remind customers of their favourite cigarette and alcohol brands, which aren't allowed to engage in direct consumer marketing. Traditional product advertising is prohibited by national legislation, thus the tobacco and alcohol industries heavily rely on these tactics. Advertisements for such novel products are only labelled as "Surrogate Advertisements" when it is clear that an ulterior aim was behind them. For instance, the "Wills Lifestyle" cigarette brand from Indian Tobacco Company Ltd. may be the most well-known in the sector. The well-known alcoholic beverage brand "Kingfisher Airlines" is a company owned by United Breweries.

**Ethical issues in advertising**

Communication between the manufacturer and the consumer is facilitated by advertising. The role of advertising in modern society is continually growing along with industrialisation and increased market access. A widespread and powerful force that shapes attitudes and behaviour in the ultra-
modern world is advertising, which employs the media as its medium. It occasionally goes beyond the standard position of "fair and truthful" data and images, presenting obscene, unwanted, and unethical scenarios that have a negative impact on society in general, but especially on the young population. There are several unethical classified ad types, including those with sexual or obscene overtones, those advised by utilising children, surrogate advertising, subliminal advertising, fraudulent and misleading adverts, etc. Incredibly important for the revival of our Indian culture, customs, ethics, and legacy is the ethical aspect of Indian commerce.

**Literature Review**

Due to the issue's recent emergence and the fact that it primarily concerns nations where the government or regulatory body restricts the promotion of such harmful products, there is a dearth of research on alternative advertising and its impacts. If alcohol or cigarette sales have altered as a result of this promotion, it is the most commonly asked question. Senger (2008) they found that, in contrast to the earlier study, restrictions on cigarette advertising led to a reduction in tobacco consumption. They came to the conclusion that while a comprehensive set of restrictions on tobacco advertising would reduce tobacco use, a partial ban would likely have little to no effect. In the event that it promotes more usage, cigarette and alcohol advertising is detrimental to the general public's health. The similar argument is made by supporters of public health. According to Latin and Cherm (2003), they fail to acknowledge that the availability of advertising has an impact on the amount of money spent on alcohol and tobacco-related items. They investigated the bulk of studies on the effects of general advertising and restrictions on advertising on the demand for cigarettes and other tobacco products around the world. They concluded that partial advertising restrictions are likely to have little or no influence on the consumption of such products because a complete ban on advertising for these products had no effect on sales or overall demand. Dhintra (2013): He believes that surrogate advertisements are often not just dishonest but also frequently give misleading and dishonest information. It has a detrimental impact on the market as a whole. As a result of the negative consequences it causes, surrogate advertising needs to be addressed, and strict regulatory measures should be implemented to accomplish so. Taniya and Stuti claim in their study from 2014 that "Tobacco advertising law puts all brands at risk." They made an effort to comprehend how businesses can encounter issues if their trademark or brand is mistakenly connected to the advertising of subpar goods because it is the same as or similar to a brand connected to the subpar product. A number of questions about the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Directive's potential effects on businesses that don't deal in tobacco were addressed by them. Ashutosh (2006) they used a statistical technique known as factor analysis to look at how consumers perceive surrogate advertising. Because the findings of their survey revealed that, generally speaking, people had significantly more negative than positive perceptions of this advertising, they came as a surprise. Regarding the ads, they didn't feel strongly either way. A sizable percentage of respondents asserted that surrogate advertising is anti-social because it seeks to promote a good that is typically seen as being harmful to society, fosters false impressions and seeks to deceive the customer, insults the customer's intelligence, degrades morals, and is
deceptive. Surrogate advertising, on the other hand, was regarded by some as a fun activity, a fair game, and a modern way of life. There were those who had no idea what surrogate advertising was, and there were people who couldn't understand it. The majority of individuals still consider surrogate advertising as harmful, unethical, and immoral despite the survey's findings to the contrary. Sally and Jane finished their fascinating investigation into the marketing of alcoholic beverages in 2015. Their research was split into two sections. The researcher's initial presumption is that alcohol advertising has the greatest impact on overall consumption and that it alone expands the market. In the second part, the authors provide a list and a quantitative analysis of the key correlates of alcohol consumption in the UK.

A study titled "An Empirical Paper on Surrogate Advertisements: A Pioneering Trend" was released in 2013 by Varalakshmi.T. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the benefits of surrogate marketing, including how they affect consumer purchasing behaviour and company branding. In today's economic climate, surrogate advertisements serve as both a lucrative marketing tool and a means of deception.

In "Surrogate Advertisements: India's Response to International Regulations," published in 2017, Barcelona Panda makes an effort to understand the concept of "Surrogate Advertisement" in relation to the National and International Regulations in place, as well as the prevalence of this practise in the Indian market today. He contends that surrogate advertising is frequently false and dishonest in addition to being deceitful. Corporates employ this tactic since the threat is only minimally addressed by current regulation.

In her paper "Role of Surrogate Advertising in Alcohol Marketing," Komalpreet Singh (2019) focuses on the laws and guidelines governing surrogate advertising in India as well as the idea of surrogate advertising.

**Research Objective**

1. To ascertain how consumers feel about alternative advertising.
2. To understand how surrogate advertising affects the sales of the products being sold.
3. To be informed of media fads that assist companies in preserving their brand reputation.
4. To investigate how surrogate advertising affect consumer purchase behaviours.

**Research Methodology**

The data was compiled from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data is gathered using the prescribed questionnaire and interviewing process. The survey was to receive a maximum of 100 responses. The secondary data, on the other hand, was compiled via an examination of numerous online publications, including blogs and webpages.

The main information was gathered using a well-thought-out questionnaire that also contained optional, closed-ended questions. In addition to examining the consumer's attitude towards and level of comprehension of surrogate advertising, the questionnaire also looks at the consumer's demographic profile.
Secondary data is gathered from a variety of national and international journals, as well as from newspaper articles, the internet, a number of business magazines, journals of national and international renown, and state and national organisations that deal with surrogate advertising.

Demographic Profile of the Study

**TABLE 1: Gender Profile of the consumer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER OF CONSUMERS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2: Age-wise distribution of the respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER OF CONSUMERS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-30 YEARS</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31- 40 YEARS</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41- 50 YEARS</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOVE 50 YEARS</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows the respondents' age breakdown into four groups. According to the respondents' age distribution, 32% of the sample's population was between the ages of 18 and 30, followed by 30% of consumers between the ages of 31 and 40, 26% between the ages of 41 and 50, and 12% over the age of 50.

**Awareness level of surrogate advertisement**

**TABLE 3: Awareness Level of Surrogate Advertisement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWARENESS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that 84% of individuals surveyed are unfamiliar with the word "surrogate advertisement."

**Media that influence consumers to Influence Surrogate Advertising**

**TABLE 4: Advertisements that influence consumers**
The above table indicate on Advertisements that influence consumers with regard to surrogate advertising.

**Consumers' perspectives on surrogate industry advertisements**

**TABLE 5: Consumers' perspectives on surrogate industry advertisements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSUMERS’ OPINION</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage Consumption</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misleading</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous to health</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table shows that 34% of consumers believe surrogate industry advertisements stimulate use, 30% believe they are deceptive and harmful to health, and 6% believe they are entertaining.

**Suggestion**

1. Enacting clear and unambiguous regulation outlaws the use of substitute ads for numerous products sold under a single brand name.
2. Because of their greater impact and capacity to target consumers, other marketing channels like direct marketing and mobile marketing may be a choice for these businesses.
3. Increasing the Advertising Standards Council of India's capabilities so that it may take action against false and deceptive advertisements and maintain a close check on devious legal evasion, rather than just sending notices.
4. Developing a strategy to make sure that national and international laws are properly carried out.
5. Advertising firms are required to have a thorough understanding of the merchandise sold under the same brand as the commercials they are promoting, and those that create Surrogate Advertising should face legal consequences.

**Conclusion**
We all experience the effects of advertisements every day. Despite the ban on directly or indirectly promoting goods related to surrogate advertising, the market share of this sector is successfully increasing. In order to determine whether surrogate commercials in Noida City have any effect on consumers' purchasing decisions for substitute items, a study was done to ascertain consumers' knowledge and perceptions of such advertisements. It is acknowledged that the brand can influence buyers to buy the goods. A sample of respondents was examined during the study to determine whether the customer's purchasing habits and the surrogate advertisements that were broadcast through the media had any relationship at all, as well as to determine what aspects of the surrogate advertisements the customer found appealing enough to use them. Surrogate advertising has shown to be a potent method for connecting with consumers for a specific brand. Even though their original items no longer receive television advertising, these brands continue to see higher sales volume each and every year despite ceasing to promote their original products. Thus, even after forbidding the advertising of their original products, surrogate advertising has played a vital role in helping these companies remain in the market.

Since advertisements have a significant and extensive impact, they are not employed inappropriately. From this perspective, they have been kept under government control. To address this, the government has established the Code of Conduct for Advertising. The Advertising Standards Council of India sets the ideal standards for ads in accordance with this Code of Conduct. If the presenter of these adverts is trying to deceive the public by giving them inaccurate information about the product or making false promises, they are misleading society and, of course, could have undesirable effects. Trapping people in their traps is extremely unethical, especially when you're playing with young children's minds.

References


