Introduction

Culture has many dimensions and does not mean only the nation or a country. There can be many cultures within the same city, there will be many diversities. People with the same characteristics tend to have the same culture. Cultural thoughts and values change due to the trends of advertising. Investigating cultural differences connected with male/female gender may help both researchers and advertisers better comprehend cultural effects. Advertisements are influencing the consumers behavior when it comes on choosing brands. This behavior is a result of many influences of a culture somebody has grown up with. The effect of advertising may have a positive or a negative effect depending upon what to adapt and how much to adapt. In India culture does influence our advertisers because the ads that are made are done keeping into mind the gender, age difference, society, effects of sudden changes in the trends etc. Trends in a society is not constant and keep on varying with competition and western impact. We try to adapt to the West but also want to be stringent with its applications as it may have a negative effect in the minds of the society.

Cultural impacts ensures us to adapt only that which is appealing to the mass and society and has a strong moral sense. People or mass who try to work against this cultural impact may not be accepted with a smile but rather have to face a severe consequence. Advertisements which come with a western touch and feel also have to keep a futuristic vision and the changing cultural trends so that the consumers may readily enjoy the new changes and also no negativity is portrayed.

a) Companies & Advertisement

Since the early 1960s proponents of globalization have understood that economic development would direct to converging needs and tastes of consumers, and make possible standardization of marketing and advertising1. Nowadays, businesses from the larger to the smaller do consider that it is of great importance to advertise their products or services. Since the competition is growing and there is a great variety of products, companies need to make themselves appeal superior comparing to the concurrents. Not surprisingly, a successful advertisement can lead a company to great profits whereas an unfortunate commercial can drive a company to bankruptcy. For example, some global advertising campaigns that have been broadcasted in China were criticized as offensive. The reason could be that due to cultural insensitivity towards the advertising environment. Moreover, advertising has to be continuous and consistent and not a onetime action. Therefore, it is not irrelevant at all that companies provide high budgets to their marketing departments.
One of the most discussed issues on advertising is if it is doable to convince consumers in different markets with the same advertising message. When planning an advertising campaign it is significant to know if consumers will respond positively or if the advertising message should be adapted in order to represent the local culture. Moreover, advertising is frequently used as reflection of the cultural values. Therefore, they try to be appealing to the values that are supported by the target group. If it is not, then there is a risk that the consumer will not be able to relate to the product.

Creating an advertisement is not as an easy task as somebody could think. The company, first of all, has to choose between an international and a local agency. The choice is depending on many factors such as cost, time, company’s strategy etc. After choosing the ‘right’ agent the company has to give him/her right directions in order to follow the company’s path. In case of choosing a local agency, the cultural differences are reduced to a great extent.

But sometimes the companies may choose an international agency. This may happen if the cultural differences are not so big. The advertiser in spite of all the issues he/she has to face, he/she also has to consider the different cultures that the advertisement is going to be exposed to. When it is about making advertising decisions, a careful, fact-based scrutiny of the dynamic information of how consumers are feeling, thinking, processing, and behaving is vital in taking successful advertising solutions. Especially for companies that may want to follow the same strategy in every country they sell their products or services, they have to think if the same action that is considered to be right in one culture, is also appropriate in another one.

When creating an advertisement, multinational companies have to choose between standardizing their marketing operations or to adjust them to the local conditions. Advertising standardization means to make use of the same optical and verbal communication with only exception the language. It has been discussed several times if standardization of advertisements or making different ones for each country is the best option. The key point here is that making many advertisements is much more costly than just translating the main one to other languages.

b) Advertising & Consumers Markets

The pressure of culture is mainly significant in transferring advertising strategy across the borders, because communication patterns are directly associated with cultural norms in each
The degree to which people like or dislike, approve or disapprove of, advertising in general also is related to their culture. For example, the Dutch and the Scandinavians have a critical position toward advertising, whereas the Americans, the British, and especially the Japanese have made it a part of their daily lives.

Today Asian markets are the most rapidly growing, aggressive and promising throughout the world. This gives the opportunity to companies to expand and increase their profits. India is really a series of localized markets with their own characteristics including different economic and cultural settings due to historical reasons. They have their own exclusive sides of history, culture and consumption patterns including variations in consumer tastes and requirements that could differentially affect advertising content. Therefore, companies should be aware of this difference of culture, to make the ‘right’ commercials in each place and be led to success. Understanding cross-national differences is often believed to be a key condition for successful international advertising. This research will be based on cultural differences in order to contribute on giving some directions to companies so that they can improve their advertising campaigns. This study can be interesting for multinational companies which sell their products in many countries and for small firms which wish to expand abroad and involve some international strategies on their advertising campaigns.

c) Cultural differences:

Culture has many dimensions and does not mean only a nation or a country with territory boarders. There can be many cultures within the same country, even within the same city, there will be met many diversities. People with same characteristics tend to have the same culture.

According to Hofstede, culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from culture.

Hofstede states that there are various types of cultural dimensions. The dimension that is going to be investigated is the influence of masculinity-femininity level on consumers towards the gender appearance in advertisements. Masculinity versus its opposite, femininity refers to the distribution of roles between the genders which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found factor to think about when planning a communication strategy. It is a subject that I was interested in myself and it is remarkable to get to know how the
masculinity-femininity dimension in advertisements is influencing the decisions of the consumers. The idea that cultural values identify who we are and therefore have an effect on which advertising appeals we like better has influenced the progress of global advertising strategies and attracted significant research attention. Therefore, companies have to be prepared to make a choice between placing a man or woman in their advertisements. Selecting the right person (man/woman) to appear in an advertisement can influence the consumers’ perception about the product or the company that is advertised.

d) Gender Concepts:-

In this thesis the word “gender” will be used several times. Nevertheless, this can lead to some confusion and therefore it is essential in this part to explain all the related concepts that will be used.

In this research the term masculinity-femininity will refer to the differences between men and women in the society as it concerns their roles and what is expected from them to be done. Another common term that will be used is the “gender appearance”, which refers actually to the biological and cultural gender that appears on nowadays advertisements. The biological and the cultural gender may be two different concepts but in this research they have some common characteristics to share as they concern the appearance of people on advertisements. Therefore, except the obvious biological gender that everybody can see, we will meet also the cultural gender which is determined by the culture of the people that belong to one society.
IMPACT OF ADVERTISING

Advertising has been defined as ‘any paid form for non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified and more narrowly as ‘any human communication intended to persuade or influence buyers in their purchase decisions’. Advertising lies at the juncture where culture and the economy interact: its primary purpose is to sell products and services by stimulating purchasing behaviour and it does this by using strategies that rework culture, creating aspirations and new desires for products. The major environmental factors that impact on advertising are: the economy, demography, culture, the political and legal system). Advertising is itself a cultural product which increasingly affects social attitudes, defines social roles, and influences cultural values. Influenced by these factors advertising evolved and developed a particular profile in western industrialised society in the 20th Century as a means of stimulating the consumption of products generated by new and expanding industries. In recent decades advertisers from the industrialised nations have increasingly targeted international markets, expanding the consumption of foreign products and bringing about widespread cultural change. This study investigates the contemporary profile of advertising in India in the context of these changes and the entry of foreign businesses and advertising agencies into India and the strategies used to target the Indian market.

Advertising, now a days is big business and many industries like magazines, the cable TV industry, newspapers and many other media, non media and communication industries survive only on the inflow of money due to advertising. It is because of this that corporate houses use all possible tactics to get our attention first and money ultimately. Some times these attempts involve illegal, dirty or underhand tricks, making untrue claims) and reliance on false information. Off late, a number of debates have been going on about the social issues in advertising and the catastrophic consequences of improper advertising have been brought to the forefront. The social effects of improper advertising generally manifest themselves in the form of an adverse effect on child psychology , human behavior, value system and perception) boost to materialism, rise of consumerism and corruption , decreased integrity and self confidence of women ; and degradation of relationships in families.
The study concluded that to a greater extent than non-sufferers, anorexics were influenced and their self-image diminished, by advertising images. Further, many critics of advertising hold the contention that advertising promotes materialism and consumerism in society. In a study, it was pointed out that on exposure to advertisements, comparison with advertising images takes place which enhances the materialistic desires of the viewers. A number of other studies have also established a significant and positive relationship between consumerism and advertising. Taking this argument a step ahead, some critics are also of the view that in order to buy the advertised products, people are ready to take loans beyond their repayment capacity or are even ready to commit crimes and resort to corruption. As we can see, past research has claimed that advertising is harmful for the society and negatively influences its viewers. The present study is an attempt to test the validity of this claim.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

Psychologists have been extremely interested in the persuasion techniques used by advertisers. The main contribution of this field has been that it has exposed how the persuasion techniques used by advertisers are directed to the unconscious region of the human mind. This region contains our hidden wishes, memories, fears, feelings, and images that are prevented from gaining expression by the conscious part of the mind. In addition, this unconscious region, as the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung suggested can be divided into two regions: a personal unconscious, containing the feelings and thoughts developed by an individual that are directive of his/her particular life schemes and a collective unconscious, containing the feelings and thoughts developed cumulatively by the species that are directive of its overall life pattern.

Advertising has also been the target of numerous major analytical, critical, and technical investigations. The implicit question that most of such studies have entertained is whether advertising has become a force molding cultural mores and individual behaviors, or whether it constitutes no more than a "mirror" of deeper cultural tendencies within urbanized contemporary societies. Although this question was not answered in any definitive fashion, it may be safe to say that the one thing which everyone agrees is that advertising has become one of the most recognizable and appealing forms of social communication to which everyone in society is
exposed. The images and messages that advertisers promulgate on a daily basis delineate the contemporary social landscape.

There is no doubt advertising plays a definitive role in shaping some behaviours in some individuals. The highly inflated amount of consumption of fast foods, tobacco, and other media-hyped substances is probably related to the slick promotion plays utilized by magazine ads and television commercials. However, even though people mindlessly absorb the messages promulgated constantly by advertisements, and although these may have some subliminal effects on behaviour, we accept media images, by and large, only if they suit our already established preferences. It is more accurate to say that advertising produces images that reinforce lifestyle models.

Advertisers are not innovators but are reinforcing lifestyle behaviors than in spreading commercially risky innovations. In this sense, advertisements are not in themselves disruptive of the value systems of the cultural mainstream; rather, they reflect shifts already present in popular culture. And if they are really psychologically effective, it is primarily because they tap into deeply-ingrained mythical and metaphorical structures of the mind. Moreover, advertising has affected not morality but the cognitive style with which people process and understand messages. Cognitive style was defined as the mode in which, and the degree to which, the senses are used in processing information.

Advertising has rendered our cognitive style of information processing much more visual based on visual images and, thus, more compact and holistic. Since the embedding of advertising as a form of social discourse, people have much more inclined to process information quickly and unreflectively.

**CULTURAL STUDIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

Technology change resulting in urgent changes on human life, by the beginning of 21st century has dictated the life-styles forcing inevitable acclimatization. Change in life-styles has blurred the existing cultural practices and the facets of it have undergone severe changes. So, formal studies of the cultural changes are inevitable to avoid paranoid and apprehensions. Surprisingly, despite being heavy users of new media, non-elite urban middle-class men continue to be attached to previous family arrangements. The striking continuity of non-elite and their gender
culture in the face of new meanings introduced by foreign media suggests that institutions are fundamentally important in rooting the fit between cultural orientations and institutional structures. Social theorists today often emphasize the mutually reinforcing nature of culture – meanings, norms, values – and structure – the way society is organized. But contemporary theorists too often sidestep consideration of the relative causal importance of cultural and structural factors. The high potential new media affects life-styles & culture of regions and people. More than studying the existing effects of the new media on societies it is of higher importance to address some crucial issues pertaining to the relevance of some practices under new media that seem to pose risks or dangers on living patterns, organized living, international understanding and consistent comfortable survival of the earth.

THE PRESENT SCENARIO

The major purpose of this section is to shed some light on the psychology of advertising. As it explains, "there is a new hunger to understand what advertising does".

The psychology behind the work you produce is even more important than a well turned phrase or a nifty new television optical ... That is what it is all about: getting inside people's heads and getting them to act". It should be kept in mind that different ads do different things; so not every ad works the same way. However, most advertising works its way through the same general process. The steps in this process can be referred to as perception, communication, learning and persuasion. While these are steps in a process, they also identify the primary effects of an advertisement on a view. In other words, certain features of an ad are there to aid in the viewer's perception, communication learning and persuasion.

Attention is a mental state indicating some level of awareness, that the mind is engaged, and that it is focused on something; in other words, tuned in. Advertising that grabs attention is intriguing, novel, unusual or surprising. Relatedly, the biggest perceptual problem for advertising is inattention. Many advertising messages simply wash over viewers without any attention being paid to them. Another problem is divided attention, when the audience is doing something else and is only half listening or half watching the ad. Many ads get half the mind and one eye. Accordingly, if the ad does not give noticed, it is very difficult, then for the message to make any
impression. Therefore, most advertising is designed to be intrusive. Moreover, when more messages are presented to people than they are able to concentrate on, they have to sort out the messages some way. We filter out the items that do not interest us and that we do not agree with, and we simply do not pay any attention to those messages.

Research has shown that the human memory is like a filing cabinet. Advertisements are filed according to some personal pattern of organization using slots, or files, that contain related information. Ad messages are usually compressed and restructured to fit into the individual filing system. Sometimes the message is changed beyond recognition. In this connection, many surveys points out that “most readers come away from their reading not with a clear, precise detailed registration of the contents on their minds, but rather with a vague, misty idea”. Sometimes, most information is filed as fragments or traces. These fragments are pulled back to the ‘top’ of the mind by the use of cues; which are certain words or visuals that will elicit previously learned information.

Psychologists know that it is easier to remember things that are grouped rather than separate elements. This is important for advertising designers who use the graphic principle of grouping to bring things together physically that belong together, by using placement and space. In addition, repeating an advertisement helps reinforce the message and locks it into the mind. As psychologists argue, people need to hear something three times before it crosses the threshold of perception and enters into memory. The ad that gets through the perceptual process is described as having impact. Impact refers to an advertisement’s ability to control the viewer’s perceptual process overcoming audience indifference, grabbing attention, maintaining interest, and anchoring the product firmly in memory. If advertising is to communicate effectively, it must present its message clearly. This is harder than one might think because clarity can be compromised both at the sending end and the receiving end. Clarity is measured by the level of understanding of the viewers. The ad is clear if it is free from impediments and obstacles to communication, such as undefined terms, unfamiliar references, poor organization, and faulty logic. One way to strengthen the clarity of an advertisement is to make it single-minded. The way a message is put together, both words and visuals, determines how the viewer proceeds through it. Ineffective communication can result from poor order.

Advertising seeks to develop both associations and understanding. The process of making connections and linking ideas, called associations, is particularly important to how advertising
works. Advertising frequently tries to link a product or service to a certain situation, activity, lifestyle, or type of person. Image transfer occurs when a product takes on characteristics of these associations. The idea is that when people think of these situations, they also think of the product. Some products, like BMW and Rolex watches, are linked with successful executive lifestyles.

Advertising uses cognitive understanding to follow the logic of an argument, make discriminations and see differences, compare and contrast features, comprehend reasons, and, in general make sense of important ideas. When something is learned, that means the information or experience has been anchored in memory. Consumers who have tried a product and linked it have learned something positive from the experience. They likely will use it again. That how “brand loyalty” is built up from a series of satisfactory experiences.

Persuasion is also another factor that is created through advertising. More specifically, persuasion affects the structure of people's beliefs, opinions, attitudes, convictions and motivations; these, in turn, motivate people to act. An attitude is a state of mind that is positive, or negative, or natural. Changing an attitude is very difficult. Attitudes are entrenched deep in people's psyches and are interwoven with lots of other related values and opinions. When people's emotions are touched, they experience a strong personal feeling or some other kind of passion. Ads use appeals to the emotions. In addition, a successful persuasive message builds conviction a strong belief in something. Conviction usually results when proof is provided or an argument is delivered effectively. Advertising is believable when product claims are proved and an advertisement provides reasons to buy a product or a service.