

## Perception of Rural Youth towards Public Service Advertising: A Study

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### ABSTRACT

*The central goal of public service advertisements (PSA) is to enhance awareness and induce a shift in prevailing normative behaviours, ultimately aiming for the betterment of societal well-being. As a means of connecting with the vast and diverse populace, the government employs this method of mass communication. This investigation seeks to comprehend the viewpoint of recipients regarding the government's utilization of a substantial portion of the budget for advertising purposes. The research draws upon primary data gathered from 1021 respondents aged 18 to 29 in rural areas of Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, and Tumakuru districts in Karnataka. Numerical analysis utilizing descriptive statistical tools is employed to dissect the collected data. The study culminates in the finding that the rural youth exhibit a favourable perception of public service advertising. Nevertheless, the conclusion suggests the necessity of employing diverse strategies to influence various segments within the target audience.*

**Keywords:** Perception, Public Service Advertising, Rural Youth, Behavioural Change, Social Marketing

### I INTRODUCTION

The progression of human society from nomadic hunting to settled civilizations with the introduction of agriculture marks a significant milestone in our evolutionary trajectory. In these agrarian societies, the exchange of goods laid the groundwork for commercial activities, and the introduction of money facilitated wealth accumulation, leading to mass production and the industrial revolution. This evolution heightened market competition, giving rise to the imperative role of marketing in shaping commercial enterprises.

Today, the role of marketing in a business mirrors the circulatory system's importance in the human body, with a company's survival dependent on the effectiveness of its marketing endeavours. Recognizing the pivotal role of marketing, some social scientists have explored applying similar techniques to promote social ideals.

In 1951, GD Weibe proposed the concept of marketing social ideals, asking, "Why can't we sell brotherhood like we sell soap?" He suggested aligning factors such as force, direction, adequacy and compatibility, and distance to bring about desired behavioural shifts.<sup>1</sup> This concept evolved with Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman coining the term 'Social Marketing' in 1971, characterizing it as a process using commercial marketing's 4Ps to garner acceptance for social ideas.<sup>2</sup>

It is crucial to clarify that not all marketing efforts by non-profit organizations and political parties fall under the label of Social Marketing. Fox and Kotler emphasized that the term is apt when information dissemination, countering marketing efforts, and activating initiatives are necessary.<sup>3</sup>

Andreasen contributed to this discourse, stating that Social Marketing goes beyond applying commercial marketing techniques for creating awareness. The primary

goal should be influencing behaviour to benefit society, rather than individual interests or those of the sponsor. Social marketing extends beyond products to services, policies, or ideas, aiming to influence the target audience for positive attitude or behavioural changes benefiting society as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

Social marketing stands as a crucial tool for addressing societal issues and contributing to a wholesome environment. Unlike traditional marketing, its core objective is not financial gain but rather augmenting awareness of specific policies and programs for the well-being of the targeted demographic. It emphasizes sustainable development and practices leading to long-term social well-being.

Advertising holds a significant role in both traditional marketing and social marketing. In the latter, Public Service Advertisements (PSAs) play a vital role. PSAs are non-commercial communications disseminating information for public good, striving to improve social and economic conditions and encourage healthy behaviours. They address various social concerns globally and have proven successful in achieving desired results. Public Service Advertisements, also known as Public Service Announcements, Issue Advertisements, Education Campaigns, and Social Advertisements, are tailored to convey information about social products, policies, or desired behaviours to their target audience.

### II LITERATURE REVIEW

The studies discussed present insights into various aspects of social marketing, shedding light on factors that influence the effectiveness of PSAs and strategies for behaviour change.

Ferle et al. (2019) emphasise cultural differences in social behaviours, asserting that approaches successful in the western world may not be applicable to eastern countries.

Their research identifies a connection between self-construals (independent and interdependent) and appeals (guilt and shame). They find that guilt appeals are effective for independent individuals, while shame appeals are more impactful for interdependent individuals in influencing reporting intentions.<sup>5</sup>

Noble et al. (2014) explore the relationship between gender and message appeals, testing emotional (negative and positive) and rational appeals in social marketing. They discover that female respondents exhibit a strong preference for negative emotional appeals, with no significant gender-based difference in response to positive emotional appeals. Interestingly, the study highlights that, unlike commercial marketing, individuals' liking or disliking of an advertisement does not directly correlate with their attitude towards the advertised issue.<sup>6</sup>

Georgiadis (2013) delves into a content analysis of public service announcements from the Let's Move! campaign addressing childhood obesity. The research emphasises the effectiveness of PSAs that demonstrate actionable steps, suggesting that such messages are more impactful than those merely stating what to do. The study underscores the importance of actionable guidance in public health campaigns.<sup>7</sup>

Ferguson & Phau (2013) investigate the fear factor in anti-smoking ads, particularly among young adolescents and adults. The study reveals that adolescents experience more fear, especially in response to factual health and ostracism appeals. The researchers argue for marketers to carefully consider the level of fear required to induce the desired behaviour rather than focusing solely on the type of appeal. Realistic shocking messages are identified as attention-grabbing, potentially contributing to campaign success.<sup>8</sup>

Kennedy & Parsons (2012) propose a macro social marketing approach, combining social marketing with regulations, legislation, taxation, research findings, and education. Drawing from a case study on a Canadian anti-smoking campaign, they advocate for interventions when consumers struggle to make rational decisions. The study underscores the need for additional support beyond social marketing to achieve behavioural change.<sup>9</sup>

Toncar et al. (2007) investigate the effectiveness of spokespersons in PSAs, focusing on a fundraising campaign for Hurricane Katrina victims. The study concludes that spokesperson credibility and believability are crucial for effectiveness. Surprisingly, the victim is deemed the most credible and believable spokesperson, surpassing both local and national celebrities. The local celebrity, however, holds an advantage over the national celebrity in terms of credibility and believability.<sup>10</sup>

In summary, these studies contribute valuable insights to the field of social marketing, addressing cultural nuances, gender preferences, message appeals, the importance of actionable guidance, fear factor considerations, and the role of spokesperson credibility in the effectiveness of PSAs.

### III RESEARCH GAP

The existing body of literature provides insights into the principles of social marketing, examining the influence of information campaigns across demographic and geographic factors such as age, gender, and region. Numerous studies have sought to comprehend the nature and impact of specific advertisements on the target audience. However, it is noteworthy that the outcomes of these studies are often generalised, leading to overarching conclusions.

Consequently, there is a noticeable gap in research focusing on the overall perception of the target audience towards public service advertising. Moreover, there is a limited scope of studies investigating the specific elements within public service advertisements that contribute to behavioural change, particularly among the rural youth in the select area. Thus, the current study aims to address these gaps in understanding.

### IV STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Each government ministry consistently unveils numerous policy initiatives as part of its ongoing efforts to attain short-term objectives, addressing pressing issues with a focus on advancing the overarching vision for long-term public welfare. Communicating these policy initiatives poses a formidable challenge due to the diverse nature of the population. A significant share of the budget allocated to each initiative is specifically earmarked for comprehensive information and education campaigns. Substantial financial resources, amounting to hundreds of crores of rupees, are annually invested in print media, television advertisements, and outdoor publicity. These expenditures are sourced from funds collected from the public in the form of taxes. Consequently, it becomes imperative to ascertain the perspectives of target audiences regarding public service advertising and discern their preferences.

### V OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are

- (a) To study the perception of rural youth towards public service advertising.
- (b) To identify the elements in public service advertisements that influence the behavioural change in rural youth.

## VI RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is descriptive in nature. It gives an insight into the perception of youth towards public service advertising and the elements in public service advertisements that influence their behaviour.

## VII SOURCES OF DATA

The study is based on the primary data which is collected from the rural youth of Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara and Tumakuru districts of Karnataka through distribution of questionnaire.

## VII SAMPLE DESIGN

- (a) **Population:** The population of the study comprises of all youth between the age group 18 to 29 years, residing in the rural areas of Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, and Tumakuru districts of Karnataka.
- (b) **Sample Technique:** Area sampling method was used to collect data from the respondents. The study area covers 18 Talukas and samples were drawn from each Taluk.
- (c) **Sample Size:** According to Cochran's formula, for a study with infinite population, sample size of 1067 is considered as sufficient for 95 per cent confidence level at three per cent margin of error. It was decided to collect responses from 65 respondents each from 18 talukas of the select districts, totalling to 1170 responses, which is 10 per cent more than the required sample size. After eliminating the incomplete and erroneous responses, 1021 responses were available for the purpose of the study.

## VIII DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The vitality of Information and Education Campaigns cannot be overstated, serving as the lifeblood for any policy initiative. Through these campaigns, the government effectively communicates with the target audience, elucidating desired behaviours and the attendant benefits. This pivotal role is reflected in the substantial financial allocation, amounting to several crores of rupees in the budget plan. Consequently, delving into the opinions of the target group regarding public service advertising becomes equally crucial. Examining their perceptions is essential, given that the purpose of these advertisements is to exert influence on the group, making their discernment a pivotal factor in the success of public service advertising.

To achieve this understanding, data was meticulously collected from 1021 respondents across various villages in all talukas of Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, and Tumakuru districts in Karnataka. The respondents, comprising 50.80 per cent females and 49.20 per cent males, fell within the age group of 18 to 29 years. A detailed exploration of their responses is presented below.

## IX PERCEPTION OF RURAL YOUTH TOWARDS PUBLIC SERVICE ADVERTISING

Perception involves how an individual seeks to understand and make sense of their environment, attributing significance to the stimuli encountered. This cognitive process is inherently subjective and influenced by factors such as the perceived object, the individual involved in perception, and the surrounding environment. Given that perception forms the basis for behavioural responses, it is crucial to conduct a thorough exploration of perception before delving into the analysis of behavioural impacts. Understanding how individuals perceive and interpret their surroundings is essential for gaining insights into subsequent behavioural patterns and responses. Consequently, respondents were provided with a questionnaire containing statements regarding their opinions on Public Service Advertising, and the summarized results are as follows.

**Table 1**  
**Perception of Rural Youth towards Public Service Advertising**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Std Deviation
Primary goal of PSA is to create awareness about any social issue and influence behaviour	7 (0.69)	50 (4.90)	190 (18.61)	461 (45.15)	313 (30.66)	1021 (100)	4.0020	+/- 0.86659
PSA acts as a guide on the course of action with reference to the expected behaviour	29 (2.84)	72 (7.05)	232 (22.72)	455 (44.56)	233 (22.82)	1021 (100)	3.7747	+/- 0.97125
PSA is an effective tool to communicate messages relating to social issues and any policy initiatives by the government	9 (0.88)	40 (3.92)	206 (20.18)	510 (49.95)	256 (25.07)	1021 (100)	3.9442	+/- 0.82831
Government can make use of public service advertising to communicate to the public regarding any expected behaviour.	14 (1.37)	36 (3.53)	150 (14.69)	551 (53.97)	270 (26.44)	1021 (100)	4.0059	+/- 0.82246
It is easy to discuss an issue when there are PSAs already addressing it	18 (1.76)	94 (9.21)	225 (22.04)	469 (45.94)	215 (21.06)	1021 (100)	3.7532	+/- 0.94755
People remember the messages given through PSA	25 (2.45)	54 (5.29)	254 (24.88)	487 (47.70)	201 (19.69)	1021 (100)	3.7689	+/- 0.90827
People think and tend to change their existing behaviour after seeing PSA several times	16 (1.57)	113 (11.07)	322 (31.54)	425 (41.63)	145 (14.20)	1021 (100)	3.5975	+/- 0.92024
PSA motivates the people to learn about the problems and policy initiatives	38 (3.72)	46 (4.51)	262 (25.66)	508 (49.76)	167 (16.36)	1021 (100)	3.7052	+/- 0.92156
Public service advertising is successful in India	14 (1.37)	67 (6.56)	264 (25.86)	451 (44.17)	225 (22.04)	1021 (100)	3.7894	+/- 0.90626
It is interesting to watch PSA	22 (2.150)	129 (12.63)	255 (24.98)	362 (35.46)	253 (24.78)	1021 (100)	3.6807	+/- 1.04690
The expenses incurred on public service advertising can be justified with its outcome	134 (13.12)	56 (5.48)	199 (19.49)	459 (44.96)	173 (16.94)	1021 (100)	3.4711	+/- 1.21929

*Source: Primary Data*

The study collected responses from rural youth regarding their perceptions of Public Service Advertising. Table 1 indicates that a significant portion 75.81 per cent that PSAs aim to create awareness about social issues and influence behavioural change. Additionally, 67.38 per cent strongly believe that PSAs guide audiences on actions for behavioural change. A majority (75.02 per cent) sees PSAs as an effective tool to inform the public about policies or societal issues. Consequently, 80.41 per cent agree that the government should utilize PSAs to communicate with the public, with high stability in

opinion. Respondents view PSAs as an icebreaker, with 67 per cent felt that the presence of PSAs facilitates discussions on issues. 67.39 per cent remember the messages given through PSA. 55.83 per cent think and tend to change their existing behaviour after seeing PSA several times. 66.12 per cent felt that PSA motivates the people to learn about the problems and policy initiatives. While 66.21 per cent believe PSAs are successful in India. Regarding interest in watching and learning more about issues and policies through PSAs, 60.24 per. Surprisingly, the statement asserting the justifiability of expenses on

PSAs receives the least mean score (3.4711) and the highest standard deviation (+/- 1.21929). 61.90 per cent accept that the amount spent on PSAs justifiable.

It can be said that respondents believe PSAs are crucial for information dissemination and recognize their success in creating awareness. However, scepticism exists regarding their capacity to influence behaviour.

### X PERCEPTION AND GENDER

Men and women are treated differently in our society. Their upbringing, lifestyle, education, and exposure are different. While from their childhood, men have had comparatively better social freedom when compared to their female counterparts, women have been oppressed in several situations including the basic right to education. This results in different pattern of interpretation of the environment among the genders. Hence, there is a need to study the perception of the genders separately.

Apart from this, there are many gender specific issues that require attention like the girl child education, menstrual hygiene, and reproductive health care. Though they should be addressed holistically, there is a need to use different strategies and approaches. Hence, it is necessary to understand the difference in perception among the rural youth towards public service advertising across genders.

Upon scrutinizing the data based on gender, it is evident that female respondents exhibit a stronger belief that PSA is intended to create awareness and influence behaviour. Conversely, their male counterparts hold a more robust perception of PSAs guiding actions, reflected in a comparatively higher mean score of 3.74502. Females also express a more positive inclination toward the government using PSA as a tool for awareness and possess a stronger belief in people remembering messages conveyed through PSAs. In contrast, male respondents lean towards perceiving PSAs as catalysts for initiating conversations about social issues and harbour a more optimistic view of PSA's capacity to influence behaviour compared to females. While females find watching PSAs

interesting, males believe that the expenses incurred on PSA can be justified by its outcomes.

An age-wise analysis indicates that respondents in the 18–21 age group hold a more positive perception towards six statements. They strongly believe that PSA is employed to create awareness about social issues, deem it an effective tool for government communication, and find it easy to discuss issues addressed by PSAs. This age group believes PSA is successful in India and expresses interest in watching PSAs. Respondents aged 22–25 exhibit a positive opinion only on PSAs guiding further actions. Those aged 26–29 hold positive views on PSA performance, with a higher belief in target audience recall, influencing behaviour, motivating learning about issues, and justifying government expenditure.

Examining opinions across different districts reveals that respondents in Bengaluru Rural district hold a positive opinion towards the objective of PSA, indicating a mean score of 4.2383. They believe the government can effectively use PSA to communicate expected behaviour and find it easy to discuss issues addressed by PSA. Ramanagara respondents view PSA as a guide for desired actions, an effective tool for public communication, and interesting to watch. Tumakuru respondents believe the target audience remembers information conveyed through PSA, and PSA can bring behavioural change and motivate learning about policy initiatives.

#### (a) Hypothesis

- (i) **H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference in perception towards public service advertising across different gender groups
- (ii) **H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a significant difference in perception towards public service advertising across different gender groups. Before performing the independent samples ‘t’ test, it is essential to check whether the variances of perception towards public service advertising between these two groups are equal or not. This can be done by the Levene’s test.

**Table 2**  
**Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for Perception**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
	F	Sig.
Perception towards Public Service Advertising	0.842	0.359

Table 2 shows that the significant value for the Levene’s test is more than 0.05, which indicates that the variances of the perception towards PSA among the two groups are

equal. Hence, independent sample ‘t’ test is applied on the data and the result is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
**Independent Samples ‘t’ Test for Perception between the Genders**

Perception towards Public Service Advertising	‘t’ test for Equality of Means		
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	1.980	1019	0.046
Equal variances not assumed	1.996	1016.744	0.044

As observed from Table 3, the ‘t’ value is 1.980 for gender at a p value of 0.046. It means that the gender has a significant impact on the perception of the PSA. So, the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternate hypothesis “*there is a significant difference in perception towards public service advertising across gender groups*” is accepted. From the given analysis it can be concluded that the perception of males towards public service advertising is significantly different from their female counterparts.

In conclusion, this study delved into the intricate dynamics of perception, emphasizing its subjective nature and influence on behavioural responses. The analysis of responses from rural youth regarding PSA revealed insightful patterns. Notably, a substantial percentage recognized PSAs as a means to create awareness about social issues and acknowledged their potential to influence behavioural change. The findings underscored the belief that PSAs act as an effective tool for informing the public about policies and societal issues, prompting a significant majority to advocate for the government's utilization of PSAs.

However, a noteworthy point of scepticism emerged regarding the justifiability of expenses on PSAs, as the majority did not strongly support this aspect. Despite the positive acknowledgment of PSAs' role in information

dissemination and creating awareness, doubts lingered about their capacity to modify behaviour.

### **XI ELEMENTS IN PSA INFLUENCING THE BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE IN RURAL YOUTH**

Advertising copy pertains to the content presented within an advertisement. It is crucial to craft the advertisement copy in a manner that instils a desire among the target audience to adopt the intended behaviour.

Several elements have the potential to influence behaviour, but these factors can vary from person to person. Therefore, it becomes imperative to identify the specific elements that motivate the target audience in the realm of social marketing through PSA. Given that the objectives of PSAs differ from those of commercial products, and the benefits derived from the new behaviour might not have an immediate impact on the individual, there is a pressing need for robust motivation to alter the existing behaviour of the target audience.

Drawing insights gathered from prior literature, certain elements capable of impacting the behaviour of the target audience have been identified and presented to respondents through a questionnaire. The summarized opinions of the respondents are outlined below.

**Table 4**  
**Elements in PSA Influencing Behavioural Change**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Std Deviation
I tend to alter my behaviour when my favourite celebrity addresses the issue	42 (4.11)	80 (7.84)	190 (18.61)	396 (38.79)	313 (30.66)	1021 (100)	3.8404	+/- 1.0733
I tend to alter my behaviour when I listen to the real-life experiences	44 (4.31)	105 (10.28)	251 (24.58)	410 (40.16)	211 (20.67)	1021 (100)	3.6259	+/- 1.0549
I will alter my behaviour when the government makes strict rules and mandate the new behaviour	47 (4.60)	117 (11.46)	168 (16.45)	420 (41.14)	269 (26.35)	1021 (100)	3.7316	+/- 1.1090
I get influenced when I listen to emotional stories (fiction)	21 (2.06)	89 (8.72)	256 (25.07)	475 (46.52)	180 (17.63)	1021 (100)	3.6895	+/- 0.9302
To accept the new behaviour, I want to know the real statistics and facts	27 (2.64)	106 (10.38)	179 (17.53)	418 (40.94)	291 (28.50)	1021 (100)	3.8227	+/- 1.0408
I will change the behaviour when I know that my behaviour is condemned (not accepted) by other people	28 (2.74)	68 (6.66)	172 (16.85)	435 (42.61)	318 (31.15)	1021 (100)	3.9275	+/-0.9944
I will adapt the new behaviour when I understand the benefits of the new behaviour	19 (1.86)	84 (8.23)	191 (18.71)	314 (30.75)	413 (40.45)	1021 (100)	3.9971	+/- 0.9910

*Source: Primary Data*

The dominant form of brand promotion remains celebrity endorsements, extending even to PSAs, where several celebrities serve as brand ambassadors. A substantial 69.45 per cent (see Table 4) of respondents opine that having celebrities address issues influences behaviour positively. Real-life experiences are favoured by 60.83 per cent of respondents as a behaviour-influencing factor. Interestingly, this statement has the lowest mean score of 3.6259, indicating fewer positive responses compared to other elements. Making strict rules is considered absolutely necessary by 67.49 per cent of respondents for behaviour change reflecting the highest standard deviation and suggesting more negative responses. Emotional stories have a n influence on 64.15 per cent of respondents. Seeking statistics and facts is preferred by 69.44 per cent of respondents.

Social acceptance holds significance in Indian upbringing, with 73.76 per cent strongly claiming they change behaviour if the existing behaviour lacks social approval. 71.2 per cent of the respondents opine they adapt the new behaviour when I understand the benefits of the new behaviour

Female respondents, guided by motherly instincts and sentimentality, lean towards emotional aspects and real-life incidents, while male respondents are inclined towards celebrity endorsements and the benefits of adopting new behaviour. The age group 22-25 years highly prefers celebrity endorsements (mean score 4.0513), while 18-21 years emphasizes social acceptance (mean score 3.9405). Real-life experiences receive maximum positive responses from the age group 18-21 years (mean score 3.6944), and those aged 26-29 years prioritize knowing the impact of new behaviour (mean score 3.9458).

Region-wise analysis reveals that respondents in Ramanagara strongly prefer celebrity endorsements (mean score 3.8884), Tumakuru residents prioritize real-life experiences (mean score 3.6438) and strict rules for behavioural change (mean score 3.7758), while Bengaluru Rural respondents favour emotional stories (mean score 3.8383) and statistics (mean score 3.8979). Ramanagara residents lean towards social acceptability (mean score 3.9485), and Tumakuru district respondents prioritize the impact of new behaviour (mean score 3.9566).

In conclusion, the nuanced preferences highlighted in the data underscore the need for tailored communication strategies in public service advertisements. Understanding regional, gender, and age-specific inclinations is essential for crafting impactful messages that resonate with diverse audiences. Whether it's through celebrity endorsements, emotional stories, real-life experiences, or strict rules, advertisers should align with the preferences revealed by the data. This nuanced approach is crucial for driving meaningful behavioural change and garnering widespread acceptance across varied communities and demographics.

## XII FINDINGS

The comprehensive examination of rural youth opinions regarding public service advertising and the factors influencing their behaviour provided valuable insights into various dimensions. Key findings from the study include:

Rural youth generally hold positive perceptions of public service advertising, viewing it as a tool for raising awareness about social issues. Despite scepticism about its ability to modify behaviour, many suggest utilizing PSAs as a means of communication to reach the population effectively.

- (a) Perceptions of public service advertising vary across gender, age, and region. Female respondents emphasize the need for PSA to create awareness, considering it an effective tool for communicating messages about social issues. They find PSAs interesting to watch. In contrast, male respondents believe that PSAs guide the course of action, motivating people to learn about problems and policy initiatives, ultimately contributing to behavioural change.
- (b) Respondents aged 18-21 and those from Ramanagara districts exhibit a more positive perception of public service advertising compared to other groups. Socio-economic conditions, influenced by demographic and geographic factors, also impact individual perceptions towards Public Service Advertising.
- (c) The study identifies two major elements influencing behavioural change: the impact of new behaviour and social acceptance. Respondents express a willingness to change behaviour when they perceive the new behaviour as beneficial for themselves or society.

Community living's importance in culture is emphasized, with respondents indicating a desire for acceptance, suggesting a potential shift in behaviour if it aligns with societal norms.

- (d) Different demographic segments prioritize distinct elements influencing their behaviour. Male respondents prioritize understanding the impact of behaviour, while females prioritize social acceptability. Age groups 18-21 emphasize social acceptability, 22-25 consider celebrity endorsements, and 26-29 focus on understanding the impact of behaviour.
- (e) Regionally, respondents from Bengaluru Rural and Ramanagara prioritize social acceptability, while those from Tumakuru emphasize the prospective impact of changed behaviour as a crucial influencing element for adopting new, desired behaviour.

## XIII SUGGESTIONS

The study offers valuable suggestions to enhance the impact and effectiveness of public service advertisements, contributing to the overall well-being of society.

- (a) **Targeted Market Segmentation:** Recognizing diverse responses to PSAs, the study advocates for market segmentation based on gender, age, and region. This strategic approach facilitates targeted marketing, allowing tailored campaigns to address specific issues within individual segments.
- (b) **Tailored Advertisements for Segments:** To optimize engagement, unique advertisements should be crafted for different segments. PSAs should extend beyond presenting information about policy initiatives; instead, they should spotlight the effects of current behaviour and the necessity for desired behaviour. These tailored advertisements should incorporate elements influencing behaviour based on the preferences of the target segment. Each policy initiative should have at least four distinct advertisement concepts:
  - (i) PSA revealing problems caused by existing behaviour, creating awareness among those content with their current lifestyle.
  - (ii) PSA showcasing the benefits of new behaviour, motivating individuals seeking improved life experiences.
  - (iii) PSA presenting statistical information about existing issues or the impact of new behaviour, appealing to rational decision-makers.
  - (iv) Creative PSA based on the social acceptance of behaviour, celebrity endorsement, or spirituality, chosen based on the preferences of the target audience.
- (c) **Strategic Evolution of Advertisements:** During the launch of a policy initiative, advertisements should depict the ideal society expected from the desired behaviour. Subsequently, after a short

period (preferably one quarter of the target life of the policy initiative), advertisements should shift to illustrate the real impact of the new behaviour in society. This dynamic approach proves particularly effective in targeting male audiences, and those aged 25–29 perceive it as the most influential element.

- (d) **Addressing Women Audiences:** PSAs targeting women audiences should emphasize the social acceptability of actions. Women tend to engage in socially acceptable activities and discard practices not embraced by society at large. This strategy can also motivate the targeted audience in the age group 18–21.
- (e) **Strategic Celebrity Endorsement:** Celebrity endorsement, currently prevalent in PSAs, should be reserved for advertisements targeting the audience in the age group 22–25. This strategic allocation ensures maximum impact and resonance with the intended demographic.

#### XIV CONCLUSION

The primary objective of public service advertisements is to raise awareness and prompt a shift in prevailing normative behaviours. Numerous studies have highlighted the varied responses exhibited by audiences with diverse demographic characteristics toward public service advertisements. In line with these findings, the present research delves into the audience's perceptions, considering both geographic and demographic factors, while also scrutinizing the factors influencing behavioural change across different segments.

The study concludes by emphasizing the significance of market segmentation in understanding the elements that shape behavioural change and fostering a positive perception of public service advertisements. Each segment requires a tailored approach aligned with its preferences to influence perception effectively. This enhanced perception, in turn, contributes positively to increasing awareness and interest in Public Service Advertising, ultimately leading to the desired behavioural change. The proposed suggestions provide guidance for advertisers to create more impactful advertisement copies, strategically targeting specific segments they aim to address.

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