



## Research Article

# Self-realization in Advertising Influencing Hindu Festivals

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### ABSTRACT

Advertisement is the most influential tool to persuade the idea of purchasing. This is a form of communication that businesses, organizations, or individuals typically pay for to promote an idea, service, or product. Advertisement is a medium to deliver a message to the targeted group through various media formats, including print, television, radio, online, billboards, social media, etc.

In the era of post-modernization, today's advertisement companies are promoting Western culture by crossing Indian culture and values. So, the lifestyle of the people is being changed by Advertising from Mineral water to Toothpaste. Mostly, they target Hindu Occasions and Festivals to propagate Cross-Culture through their Advertising. This paper explores how Advertisement companies are changing the buying behaviors of not only children but also all age groups of people in Indian society.

So, this study will examine eleven controversial and banned advertisements of different advertising companies by using critical discourse analysis. This study will investigate by using secondary sources, what is the intention of the advertiser in targeting Hindu festivals for propagating cross-cultural thoughts in their content.

## Introduction

Culture is related to the introverted condition of humans. Culture is the lifeblood of society, which is passed on from generation to generation. Culture lies in the impact that values have on life. It encompasses everything from language and communication styles to traditions, rituals, art, and cuisine. It is through culture that societies define their identity, transmit knowledge and value, and maintain a sense of continuity from one generation to the next. The process of Westernization is noteworthy. After the establishment of British rule in India, Indian society began to be drawn to Western culture and gradually became more influenced by it. Thus, the British started spreading Cultural imperialism in India. As a result, from technology to our joint family system, marriage, religion, art, literature, music, and life values, there was an indelible imprint of Western culture. Temptations like global marketization and progressive commercialization of Indian media led to the establishment of Western ideas in India. Ignoring Indian culture, Indian Advertisements gave a rapid

pace to Western thoughts. When compared to other Eastern religions or values, Hinduism is considered to be a more democratic, pluralistic, and tolerant religion in both essence and practice (Tetreault and Denmark 2004, p. 107).

Hindus are the third largest religious group in the world, with a total of 950 million people (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). The perspectives of Hindus festivals have not been taken into account in previous studies on controversial advertising. Eating beef is considered forbidden as cows are considered sacred for Hindus (BBC Religions 2014b). Religious themes and values are prevalent in Indian advertising, with Hindu religious icons often used for comedic effect (e.g., fevicol and Lenvo showing Lord Yamraj in distress) or to deliver sarcastically delivered social messages (e.g., campaigns such as "Gods wear helmets" and domestic violence against Hindu Goddess" (Ridhi Agarwal, Prashant Mishra and Ramendra Singh, 2021). This paper investigates the key strategies used by advertisers to engage with the Hindu community during Hindu festivals and how these

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strategies have evolved. Why are advertisers using the Hindu festival for Product branding instead of other religions?

## Review of Literature

Hofstede (1980) created cultural dimensions theory during 1960-1970. The framework is used to understand the differences in culture across the countries. He defined culture as an interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment. He identified the six dimensions of culture on which a country's culture could be placed: Power distance index, collectivism vs individualism, Uncertainty avoidance Index, Femininity vs Masculinity, Short-term vs Long-term orientations, and Restraint vs Indulgence. Walter Hodges Henley, Jr., Melodie Philhours, Sampath Kumar Ranganathan, and Alan J. Bush 2009: A study shows that an evident Christian sign reflects that the product supports the fundamental premises of related linkage theory with notifying positive ad-evaluative efficacy (Aad, Ab, and PI); also, a non-pertinent Christian sign product linkage has a notifying pessimistic result on ad-evaluative effectiveness. Results show the need for professionals to diligently pick a relative context when embracing Christian signs for their advertisements and to refrain from the partisan use of Christian signs in ads while also accepting the religiosity of the intended audience. Religious teachings establish moral precepts for business relationships, potentially influencing consumer responses to unethical practices (Putrevu and Swimberghek, 2013). Mostly, advertisement companies use offensive content to undermine brand image. The advertiser uses controversial and shocking content as a marketing message to increase attention and hence prove the process of memorizing a product (Dahl et al. 2002). Past study has investigated the influence of religion on consumers' attitudes and behaviours toward offensive advertisement (Fam, Waller, and Erdogan 2004, Fam, Waller and Yang 2008, Parry et al. 2013). Some researchers have found the presence of religious symbols creates a positive attitude toward advertisements and brands (Henley et al. 2009; Taylor, Halstead, and Haynes 2010; Muralidharan and La ferle 2018). Others have found negative feedback and scepticism (Dotson and Hyatt 2000; Taylor, Halstead and Haynes 2010).

## Research Gap

The influence of religion on attitudes towards the advertising of controversial products (Fam, K., Waller, D. S., & Erdoğan, B. Z. 2004), Advertisement & Islam: A Muslim world perceptive (Bari, A., & Abbas, R. Z. 2012), The influence of religiosity on consumer ethical judgments and responses toward sexual appeals (Putrevu, S., & Swimberghek, K. 2012), Religion and perceptions of regulation of controversial advertising (Ze-Hua, W., Deshpande, S., Waller, D. S., & Erdoğan, B. Z. 2017), Evaluating the impact of religious icons and symbols on

consumer's brand evaluation: Context of Hindu religion (Agarwala, R., Mishra, P., & Singh, R. 2021) and Religious advertisement of Islamic bank: Aesthetic satisfaction and psychology of colors (Zahra, F., & Usman, M. 2022). But there is a gap in research on Hindu festivals in advertising. So, the present study fills the gap in self-realization in advertising: Influencing Hindu festivals.

## Research Questions

1. What are the key strategies used by advertisers to engage with the Hindu community during Hindu festivals, and how have these strategies evolved?

## Research Objectives

1. To study the textual representation to influence Hindu festivals.
2. To study the discursive practice to influence Hindu festival
3. To identify the cultural and religious perceptive of Hindus in advertising.
4. To examine the strategy that advertisers use Hindu festivals in product branding instead of other religions.

## Theoretical Framework

Fairclough Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA Model): - Norman Fairclough was a British professor of linguistics and English language. Fairclough's work has been highly influenced in the field of language and power. He coins that critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a method of analyzing the role discourse plays in the construction of knowledge, ideology, and power. This Model consists of three dimensions, which are the following:

1. The target of analysis (visual, verbal and visual texts).
2. The methodology on the basis of which can receive and produce text (viewing/speaking/listening/writing/reading/designing)
3. All the conditions which are the key aspects of the socio-historical conditions that carry out these formations.

There are three aspects of Fairclough, critically analyse any text: -

- a) Text analysis (description)
- b) Processing analysis (Interpretation)
- c) Social analysis (explanation)

## Research Methodology

Fairclough's Model of critical discourse analysis is applied to analyse the 11 selected controversial Indian advertisements. In this study, those advertisements had controversy and had been banned by the ASCI. Each advertisement has been analysed on the textual, discursive, and cultural levels. A qualitative research

design was adopted, which seeks to investigate the strategies used by advertisers to engage with the Hindu community during Hindu festivals and how these strategies have evolved.

## Data Analysis and Findings

### Advertisement-1

#### The Advertisement for Salon, 2017

##### Textual Analysis

The Advertisement for Jawed Habib's Salon featured images of Indian Gods on Durga Puja. The Print Ads for the Salon portrayed the image of Goddess Durga along with her children Ganesh and Kartikey. Goddess Saraswati and Goddess Laxmi is also waiting for the Spa in his Salon. The print ad showed the tagline "GODS TOO VISIT JH SALON", JAWED HABIBI, HAIR, AND BEAUTY.

##### Discursive Practice

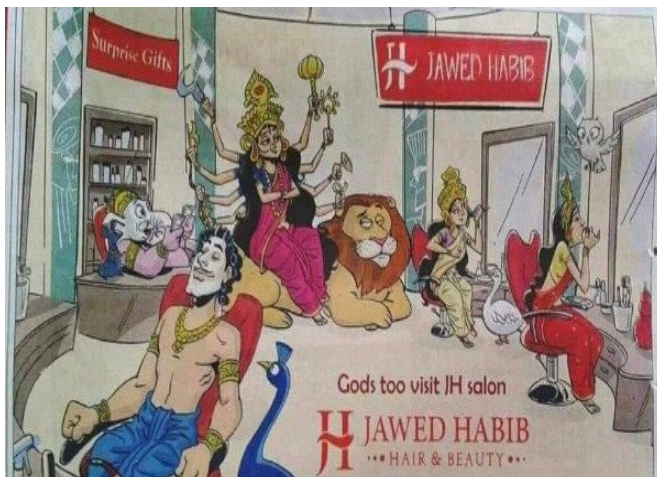
The advertisement tries to promote Jawed Habibi's salon on the Hindu festival Durga Puja. The hair stylist Jawed Habibi is famous for his line of hair salons across the country.

##### Social Practice

In the Hindu Religion Goddess Durga, Saraswati, and Laxmi are the motivation of Divine Power known as Divine Shakti. Sanatani believes that the Goddess Durga is the combined power of Devi Saraswati, Devi Laxmi, and Devi Kali.

But, intentionally hurting the sentiments of Hindus, Jawed Habibi wanted to target the Hindu Gods through his salon advertising in the upcoming Durga Puja. He tried to expand his business, but Jawed exploited Hindu sentiments. Following backlash and protests from The Hindu, Jawed was forced to apologize.

##### Image-Jawed Habib's Salon Ad



Source-indianculturalforum.in

### Advertisement-2

#### The Advertisement for Manforce Condom, 2017

##### Textual Analysis

In the advertisement of Manforce Condom, the Advertiser featured in Gujrat during Navratri, the porn actress and Bollywood celebrity SANNY LEONE performed this ad to sell condoms. This billboard ad was in the Gujarati language. The tagline was "AA NAVRATRIYE RAMO, PARANTU PREM THI" in Hindi, translating into "KHELO MAGAR, PYAR SE"

##### Discursive Practice

Sunny Leoni, who is the brand Ambassador of Mankind company. Mankind is one of the biggest companies that manufactures the Condom. Sunny Leoni performed with a traditional look and promoted the Condom for safe sex in this billboard ad.

##### Social Practice

Navratri is the most spiritual festival of Hindus. Sanatani believes the power of the world is Goddess Durga. In the Navratri Festival, Sanatani worships the Nine feminine divine power referred to as Shakti.

##### Image-Manforce Condom Ad



Source: timesofindia.indiatimes.com

### Advertisement-3

#### The advertisement for Surf Excel, 2019

##### Textual Analysis

Surf Excel aired its advertisement at the Holi Festival. The ad featured two kids, showing a young Hindu girl and a Muslim boy friendship. In this ad, all kinds are playing with the Holi colors, and the young girl is protecting her Muslim friend from the Holi colors. Because he wanted to go to the



mosque for prayer. At the end of the ad, a Hindu girl says to him “Bad mai rang padega!” (Will color you later). The ad is ended with the tagline “Rang laye sang” (Colours bring people together) and “Apnepan se auron ko rangne me daal lag jaye , to daag achche hain” (Stains that come as a part of good deed are good stains).

#### Discursive Practice

Surf Excel is a laundry detergent brand. Hindustan Unilever Limited is the patent company of Surf Excel. which is famous for its tagline “Daag Achche Hain”. The ad of Surf Excel tried to promote Hindu-Muslim harmony. But after the ad was aired. It faced a backlash.

#### Social Practice

Holi Festival is the most popular festival in India. It is a festival of Love, Colour, and spring. Holi festival brings in lots of positivity and enthusiasm with the colors. It is a festival of symbol of joy and respect to their close ones with Abeer (Colour). In the Vedas and the Purans, there is also the sacred significance of the Holi festival. The ad of Surf-Excel wrongly portrays the meaning of Holi colors. When the Hindu girl saves her Muslim friend, it shows that the colors of Holi are against the Muslim community, Whereas Holi is a symbol of goodwill and love. Thus, the tagline “Daag Achche Hain” does not justify the meaning of ad.

Image-Surf-Excel Ad



Image-Surf-Excel Ad

#### Advertisement-4

The advertisement for Brooke Bond Red Label, 2019

#### Textual Analysis

Brooke Bond released the ad where a man comes with his father in Kumbh Mela. The father is very happy to come with his son. But man, the intention is purposely to leave him in Mela and he gets abandoned in the crowd. When he

sees a younger son-father love bond, then he realizes his mistake and finds him. He meets his father again, who is sitting at a tea stall and has already had ordered two cups of tea because he knew that his son would find him.

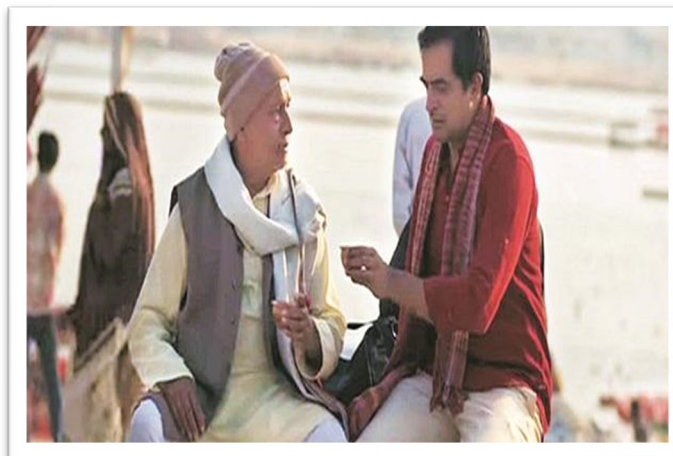
#### Discursive Practice

The Brook Bond Red Label is a Hindustan Unilever brand. The advertisement of Red Label featured a father-son relationship and showed the tagline “ Apno ko Apnao” whereas the ad got a storm from viewers.

#### Social Practice

Kumbh Mela is the most sacred congregation of Hindu pilgrims. Millions of devotees come and bathe in Ganga. They believe the Ganga is a holy river. Devotees consider Ganga as a maa Ganga. Devotees believe by bathing in ma Ganga, they are freed from all their sins. Kumbh Mela has been a medium to transmit knowledge for living spiritual life since the ancient. The complete Kumbh Mela comes every 12 years in 4 Kumbhs such as Prayagraj, Nashik, Haridwar, and Ujjain. Ardh Kumbh means Half Kumbh Mela, which is organized every 6 years. The Brooke Bond Red Label ad negatively portrayed Kumbha Mela as a place where the elderly are abandoned, similar to railway stations and old-age homes.

Image- Brooke Bond Red Label



Source: Source-www.business-standard.com

#### Advertisement-5

The advertisement for Tanishq Jeweller, 2020

#### Textual Analysis

The advertisement for Tanishq Jewellery featured a Hindu woman who married in a Muslim family. The ad shows the custom of a bridal shower organized by her Muslim mother-in-law. All family members are busy celebrating the bridal shower.

### Discursive Practice

Tanishq is a famous jewelry brand. The ad for Tanishq's new collection launched the tagline 'Ekatvam' (Oneness).

### Social Practice

The Hindu ritual of GodhBharai (Baby shower) is an Indian traditional practice during the woman's pregnancy. In this ritual, all family member welcomes the unborn baby and bless him. The controversy began when Tanishq Jeweller showed the interfaith marriage through the advertisement. The Ad was accused of promoting love jihad.

Image- Tanishq Jeweller Ad



Source: [www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com)

### Advertisement-6

The advertisement for Dabur' fem Cream Bleach, 2021

### Textual Analysis

Dabur's Fem cream bleach advertisement was featured at the Festival of Karwa Chauth. The commercial featured two women applying Cream bleach to brighten their faces. And ask each other for whom you are keeping Karwa Chauth. One woman said for his happiness while a second answered for his long life. Then another woman came in the ad and blessed both of them by giving Sargi (A ritual when a Mother-in-Law gives a gift to her Daughter-in-Law).

In last, it is shown that both women had Karwa Chauth together and celebrated all rituals.

### Discursive Practice

Dabur Ltd is an Indian international consumer goods company. Fem:gold cream bleach is Dabur's skincare and beauty product. In this ad, the Dabur company tries to promote same-sex marriages.

### Social Practice

The Festival of Karwa Chauth has a special significance for every Indian woman. Especially in North India, all married women observe fast and celebrate this by offering 'Argya' to the moon on the Chaturthi of Kartik month. Women keep fast throughout the day for the safety and longevity of their Husbands. This festival is the symbol of Love for Wives and Husbands.

The ad for Dabur's Fem cream bleach showed the two lesbians insulting such a bond of love and respect between wife and Husband during the Karwa Chauth festival.

Image- Dabur' fem Cream Bleach Ad



Source: [timesofindia.indiatimes.com](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)

### Advertisement-7

The advertisement for Manyavar- Mohey Clothing Brand, 2021

### Textual Analysis

The Advertisement for Manyavar- Mohey bridal wear brand featured the Bollywood Actress Alia Bhatt. In this advertisement, Alia Bhatt performs the role of a Hindu bride. In the ad, Actress Alia Bhatt is shown at the wedding 'Mandap' waiting for the rituals before the marriage is finalized. Alia Bhatt questioned the KanyaDaan ritual and summarized it should be KanyaMaan.

### Discursive Practice

Manyavar-Mohey is a traditional clothing brand. Actress Alia Bhatt is the brand ambassador of this brand. The Advertisement suggested an alternative to the Hindu wedding ritual of KanyaDaan as KanyaMaan. In this Advertisement, viewers question the modern spin on the Hindu rituals.

### Social Practice

The ritual of Kanyadaan is considered a sacred ritual in Hindu marriage. As per Vedas, there are two biggest

donations (Maha Daan), one is a Cow donation (Gow Daan), and the second is a girl donation (KanyaDaan). It is considered an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, and the bride is an incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi. Therefore, there is an emotional and religious significance for the bride's parents. The parents of a girl who gets this opportunity of KanyaDaan are considered to be fortunate. In the Ad of Manyavar-Mohey, the Actress manipulates the true meaning of KanyaDaan and tries to set the anti-Hindu narrative that parents are considering their daughter as a burden and property.

Image-Manywar-Mohey Ad



Source: [economictimes.indiatimes.com](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com)

#### Advertisement-8

The advertisement for Fab India, 2021

##### Textual Analysis

The advertisement for Fabindia Brand featured Hindu traditions on the Festival of Diwali. The ad shows the girls those are coming out to understand the Indian traditions and festivals. A boy brings them to his home and make them feel the culture and traditions of Indian families. The girls wear Indian clothes and celebrate Diwali with Indian families. The ad creates the tagline in Urdu phrase. The advertisement promotes its new Diwali festival collection by naming Urdu phrase "Jashn-e-Riwaaz"

##### Discursive Practice

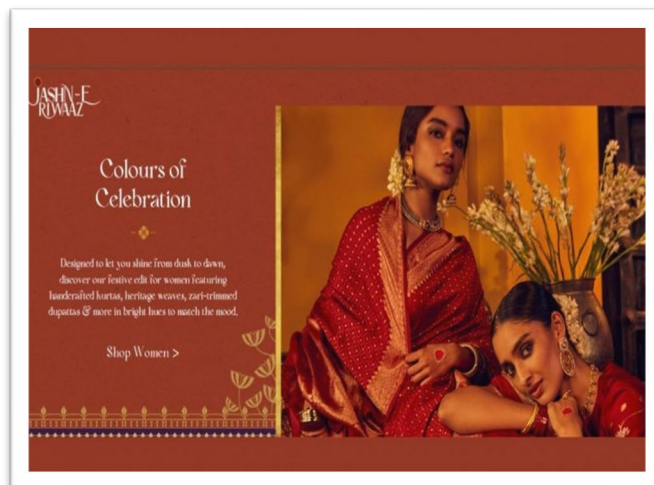
Fabindia is an Indian company that retails garments, home furnishings, fabric, and traditional crafts. Fabindia featured the ad with the Urdu tagline "Jashn-e- Riwaaz" on the festival of Diwali.

##### Social Practice

The advertisement for Fabindia Brand realised the festival collection on the festival of Diwali by using the Urdu tagline "Jashn-e- Riwaaz". Diwali is a festival of lights and positivity. On the day of Diwali, Hindus wear new clothes and worship

goddess Lakshmi with their families. The ad of Fabindia shows how Hindu families celebrate the Diwali festival and traditions. The ad promotes the new Diwali clothing collection but uses the Urdu phrase "Jashn-e-Riwaaz" in their tagline. After the controversy on the realized ad, Fabindia company denied that the ad is not based on the Diwali collection.

Image- Fab India Ad



Source: [www.thevoiceoffashion.com](http://www.thevoiceoffashion.com)

#### Advertisement-9

The advertisement for AU Bank, 2022

##### Textual Analysis

The Advertisement for AU Bank has featured Kiraya Adwani and Actor Amir Khan. The advertisement shows the Hindu wedding ritual. In the ad, the groom (Amir Khan) is doing the ritual of Vidaai instead of the bride (Kiara Advani). Kiara Advani asks Amir Khan why the bride did not cry during the ritual of Vidaai. Why didn't you cry? At the end of the ad, the groom (Amir Khan) has decided to move into the bride's home and does Grah Pravesh (entering house ritual) in her house. Amir Khan appeals to viewers with "Badlaav Humse Hai".

##### Discursive Practice

AU Bank is a small finance bank. AU Bank, starring Bollywood Actor Amir Khan and Actress Kiara Advani. In the ad, the celebrities tried to set a new narrative of reversing the traditional Vidaai ritual.

##### Social Practice

The ritual of Vidai is a very touching and emotional ceremony for every Indian girl and her parents. It occurs when the girl moves from her parents' home. According to Hindu customs, girls' parents convey their best wishes to their daughters during the Vidai ritual. On the other hand, some scriptures believe that when a girl stays in her birth



home, she brings happiness and prosperity. After marriage, she brings happiness when she departs her husband's home and is considered to be a form of Mahalakshmi. In an aired advertisement Actor Amir Khan and Kiara Advani tried to set the wrong perception of the Vidai ritual. Therefore, the ad had controversy and demanded the boycott of AU Bank.

Image-AU Bank Ad



Source: bestmediainfo.com

#### Advertisement-10

The advertisement for Swiggy, 2023

##### Textual Analysis

Swiggy created a billboard advertisement and reel for the festival of Holi. The billboard Ad shows two eggs and three messages: Omelette, Sunny side up, and kisi ke sarr pr. The billboard ad also mentioned the hashtag #BuraMatKhelo and "Get Holi essentials on Instamart".

##### Discursive Practice

Swiggy is India's largest online food ordering and delivery application. It also provides grocery deliveries through the Instamart platform. Swiggy featured a billboard and reel on the festival of Holi. The Ad mentioned the hashtag #BuraMatKhelo. At the same time, the billboard ad and reel faced backlash.

##### Social Practice

Holi is a festival full of color and happiness. It is celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm not only in India but also all over the world. On the day of Holi, people spread happiness by applying colors and gulal to each other. The children have fun with Pickari and colored balloons. The billboard advertisement wrongly presents the meaning of Holi. The ad and reel feature eggs related to color balloons and questions about enjoying Holi through the hashtag #BuraMatKhelo.

#### Image-Swiggy Ad



Source: organiser.org

#### Advertisement-11

The advertisement for Bharat Matrimony, 2023

##### Textual Analysis

The ad for the Bharat Matrimony application featured a woman. The ad shows a woman whose face is colored with Holi Gulal, and she tries to clean her face in front of the mirror. When she cleaned her face, bruises and marks of domestic violence appeared on her face.

The ad read,

Some colors don't wash away easy. Harassment during Holi leads to immense trauma. Today, a third of women who have faced this trauma have stopped playing Holi. In the end, the ad appeals to,

"This Women's Day, let's choose to celebrate Holi in a way that is safe and inclusive for women".

##### Discursive Practice

Bharat Matrimony is an online matrimony service. Bharat Matrimony featured an ad on International Women's Day and the Holi festival. The released ad raises the voice for violence against women in India.

##### Social Practice

Holi festival is a sacred festival for Hindus. This festival is the victory of good over evil. On this day, Holika sat with devotee Prahlad into the fire to kill him. Lord Vishnu protected Prahlad from the demon Holika. The fire burned the demon Holika, and Prahlad was saved by the Lord Vishnu's blessing. Since Holi started being considered as the festival of protection from evil. The theme of the released ad on International Women's Day seems to link women's harassment with Holi. It claimed that most women suffer violence during Holi, which needs to be stopped.

## Image-Bharat Matrimony Ad



Source-www.dnaindia.com

Table 1. Critical Discourse Analysis of Controversial Advertisements

Ad	Textual Analysis	Discursive Practices	Social Practices (Cultural and Religious Perspectives)
1	Promote Salon for Hair and Beauty treatments on Durga Puja	Gods also visit JH Salon, featuring Hindu God and Goddess	The inappropriate portrayal of Hindu deities waiting for hair spas in Jawed Habibi's salon is hurting Hindu sentiments.
2	Promote Condom on the Festival of Navratri	Khelo magar pyar se, Appeals for safe sex on Navratri	Targeting the Navratri festival for promoting condoms is not acceptable to Hindu beliefs.
3	Promote detergent power on Holi Festival	Apnepan se auron ko rangne me daal lag jaye ,to daag achche hain" ( Stains that come as a part of good deed are good stains), showing Hindu-Muslim friendship	To set a narrative that the colors used in the Holi festival are unsafe for the Muslim community.
4	Promote Tea using the	Apno Ko Apnao, to	To depict the elderly being

	Kumbh Mela event	Speak against the abandonment of elders	abandoned during Kumbh Mela rather than seeking refuge in an old age home goes against Hindu beliefs.
5	Promote Jewellery in Godh-Bharai Ritual	Ekatvam (Oneness), to margins Hindu-Muslim traditions in Godh Bharai ritual	Promoting Hindu-Muslim interreligious marriage and setting a narrative of Love-Jihad does not satisfy Hindu sentiments.
6	Cream Bleach for skin fairness on Karva Chauth	Promote same-sex marriage on Karva Chauth.	Targeting the sacred relationship between Hindu spouses is not aligned with the culture.
7	Promote Bride's wear on Hindu wedding rituals	To set alternative to KanyaDaan to KanyaMaan	The Hindu Vedic wedding ritual has been questioned and does not satisfy the culture and Hindu beliefs.
8	Promote festival collection for garments on Diwali festival	Jashn-e-Riwaaz shows Hindu festival rituals and traditions by using the Urdu phrase	Using inappropriate Urdu phrases in rituals and traditions of Diwali by Jashn-e-Riwaaz.
9	Promote Bank services in the wedding Vidaai ritual	Badlaav humse hai, to reverse the vidaai wedding concept	To change the Vidaai wedding ritual by having the groom depart instead of the bride is not acceptable to Hindu beliefs.
10	Promoting online food ordering service on Holi festival	Omelette, Sunny side up, and kisi ke sarr pr. suggesting not playing	Showing an inappropriate association between eggs and colored



		colored balloons on Holi festival via #BuraMatKhelo	balloons during the Holi festival is not acceptable for Hindu beliefs.
11	Promote online matrimony service on International Women's Day and Holi festival	Kuch rang kabhi nhi mitate (Some colors don't wash away easy), appealing to women not playing Holi.	Inappropriately linked women harassment with Holi, and claimed that women suffer violence during playing Holi.

## Conclusion

Hinduism has a vast pantheon of gods and goddesses, each personifying various aspects of the one true God (Agarwala, R., Mishra, P., & Singh, R.2021). Advertising is one of the most effective tools to influence ideas and transmit culture. Using advertising to influence ideas and transmit culture is effective, but it poses a risk to maintaining religious and cultural values. In the past, an Indian cricketer received intense criticism for appearing in an advertisement dressed as Lord Vishnu and holding a shoe (Press Trust of India 2013, 2017). So, the advertiser should carefully use religious symbols, traditions, and rituals.

This study analysed 11 controversial Indian advertisements across various media platforms, including online, billboards, print, and television. Some advertisements have been criticized for using Hindu rituals in inappropriate ways or sarcastically portraying Hindu gods and goddesses. As a result, advertisers have faced backlash from consumers and have either removed the ads or issued apologies.

Because the majority of the population of Hindus in India take advantage of the fact that Hindus are more tolerant than other religions (Tetreault and Denemark 2004, p. 107). Advertising companies target Hindu festivals rather than other religions. Advertisers arbitrarily present Hindu Festivals for their benefit, in which Hindu customs, traditions, and beliefs are being shown differently. The advertiser also tries to present the ad in an inappropriate way through the celebratory endorsement, causing readers to view and remember these advertisements.

This study suggests the yield of practical value for advertisers and policymakers. These findings may help advertisers and practitioners to be aware of elements in their advertising that conflict with the consumers' beliefs and religious values. especially when targeting the Hindu festival.

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