

Propaganda and Marketing: A review

Dr. Smita Harwani
Sr. Assistant Professor
Department of management studies
New Horizon College of Engineering.

ABSTRACT

Propaganda is a concerted set of messages aimed at influencing the opinions or behavior of large number of people. It has been observed that Propaganda and advertising sometimes go hand in hand. This paper focuses on analyzing Propaganda in advertising with special emphasis on Adolf Hitler's propaganda techniques. To create history, knowing history is awfully important. Hitler was well known for his dictatorship apart from that he was exceptional at influencing people, influence is what happens more in modern day marketing, isn't it? Hitler influenced people through technical devices like radio and the loud speaker and around eighty million people were deprived of independent thought in those days due to his propaganda techniques. It can only be imagined what he would have done at present if he had access to all modern means of communication.

Since Hitler's work has been carried out in those fields of applied psychology and neurology which are the special province of the propagandist the indoctrinator and brain washer. Today the art of mind control is in process of becoming a science. To be a leader means to be able to move the masses and this is what today's advertisement methods aim to do. Hitler's aim was first to move masses and then, having pried them loose from their traditional thoughts and behavior. To be successful a propagandist must learn how to manipulate these instincts and emotions. To make them more mass like, more homogeneously subhuman. Furthermore, companies use propaganda to persuade consumers into buying their product, and, sadly, misinformation is found all around people in magazines, on television, on billboards, and in movies. Subconsciously, people let the use of propaganda influence their decision to purchase items that they often would not buy (Essays, UK., 2018). These stereotyped formulas must be constantly repeated for only constant repetition will finally succeed in imprinting an idea upon the memory of a crowd.

What is common between Nazism and advertising? Do you think advertisements are a form of persuasion or propaganda? The above questions will be answered in the final paper the main aim of the paper is to correlate Hitler's psychology and contemporary marketing techniques.

Keywords: Adolf Hitler, Propaganda, Repetition, Advertising, Influencing, marketing.

1.1.Introduction

The art of persuasion is called as propaganda. In general, a message designed to persuade its intended audience to think and behave in a certain manner. Thus *advertising* is commercial propaganda.

Propaganda has been used in some way by every political movement or government since the dawn of time (Lauren Sorenson 2017). Its main goal is to influence. It can be used to sway opinion, to move people to act, or to affect decisions. We may look back at some historical propaganda and laugh at its over-the-top tactics, but in truth, often times propaganda shares some similar techniques used in marketing and advertising today.

Most aspects of propaganda are used to emotionally engage the person you are directing your marketing at (Lauren Sorenson, 2017). Make sure your customers, leads, and potential customers know why you care about them in a way that fosters an emotion. Respond to their inquiries and concerns personally and in a timely manner. Even if the feedback is negative, showing that you are engaged with their feelings about your brand or product allows for interactions that your customers will appreciate and remind them why they chose you in the first place. Every relationship is reciprocal; if you give, they give.

Even though propaganda and advertising have different goals and objectives they both share the same techniques and principles of crowd psychology in order to achieve their objectives. At times they are interconnected, and we often experience propaganda to function as advertising and advertising to act like being a part of propaganda.

Propaganda utilizes the same means as advertising, but it mainly promotes ideas and it aims at shaping people's way of thinking. Most of the times it promotes a negative visual presentation of the opponent. Propaganda appeals mainly to two audiences: the religious and the political. It is in its essence that propaganda constitutes a form of communication education aiming at shaping the conscience of the crowds (Richard Gunderman, 2015).

1.2. The difference between advertisement and propagandas

Advertisement is an attempt to get you to purchase a product. Propaganda is an attempt to change your personal beliefs or values. Therefore, an advertisement is in relationship to a particular product, propaganda is in relationship to ideology.

1.3. Few examples of propaganda in advertising

Propaganda is different than persuasion. A propagandist is only interested in achieving his goals. Persuasion involves a dialogue between two parties. If I'm attempting to persuade you, I make my goals clear, state my case, listen to your concerns; adjust my goals as necessary, etc. Ideally, both sides win. That's not the case with propaganda, which is one-sided with the goals of the propagandist concealed. A propagandist attempts to achieve his goals at all costs.

Propaganda alone has a larger influence on people and for this reason it can be used by trusts or industries; i.e. a firm that sells a specific coffee brand promotes their product (this is advertising) while the coffee industry promoting through the media that 1-2 cups of coffee a day are good for your health (this is propaganda). Thus we can link some of the ads like Surf excel (DAAG ACHE HAIN..!), Coca Cola (THANDA MATLAB COCA COLA), Maybelline New York (AMERICA'S FAVORITE MASCARA) etc. to Propaganda

2. Objectives

- To identify and understand the technique of propaganda adopted during Adolf Hitler's period and the modern propaganda technique.
- To study the awareness level of the respondents towards the propaganda techniques used by the marketers.

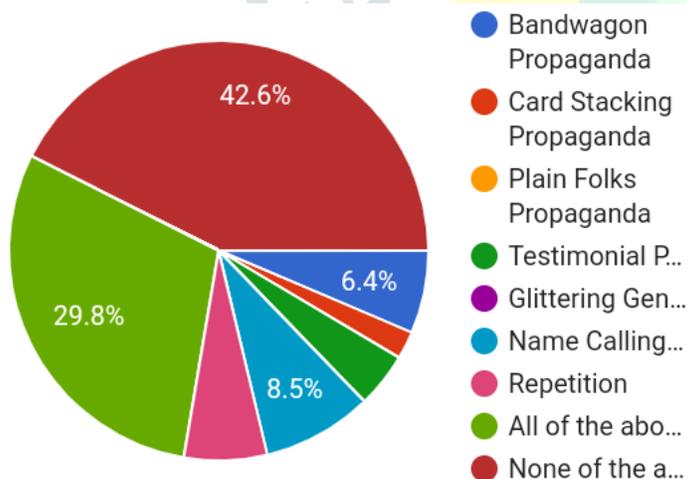
3. Research methodology

Descriptive research design has been used in this study; Stratified Random Sampling was used to select the elements of the sample. The sample size is 50 respondents, belonging to above 20 years of age within the Universe of Karnataka state. The period of study is 1 week and the Data has been collected through questioner's method and online method, respondents were selected from various MBA colleges/universities. Secondary data was collected through text books, Internet, Auto-Biographies etc.

4. Data analysis and interpretation

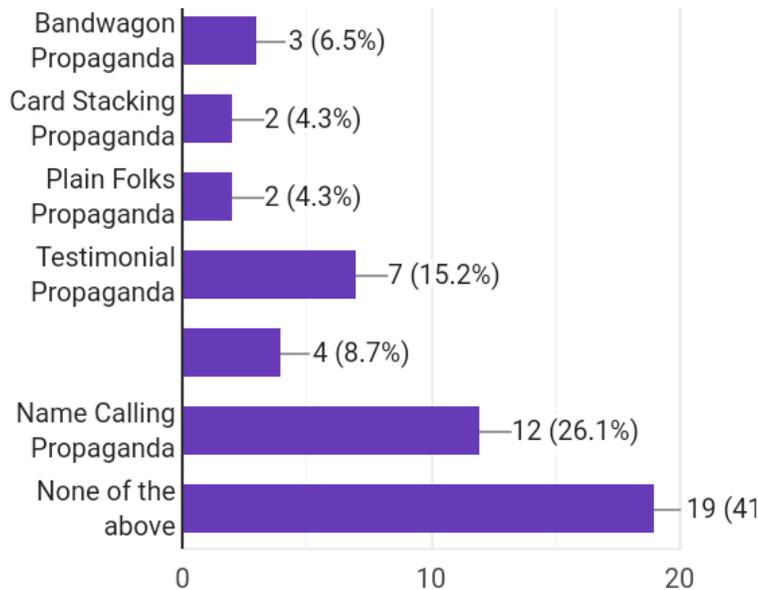
Figure 4.1: Awareness of Propaganda techniques

Respondents were asked to fill the form based on some propaganda devices, the options were as follows 1.Name calling 2.Glittering generalities 3.Transfer 4.Testimonial 5.Plain folks 6.Card stacking 7.Band wagon.



Interpretation: Based on pie chart we can see that the 42.6% proportion of people doesn't have any idea about propaganda techniques even though they have encountered it numerous times. In India there are very few study on propaganda has been done by researchers so major objective of the study is to know how we are aware of it. It is seen that overall respondents are inclined slightly more towards none of all propaganda techniques.

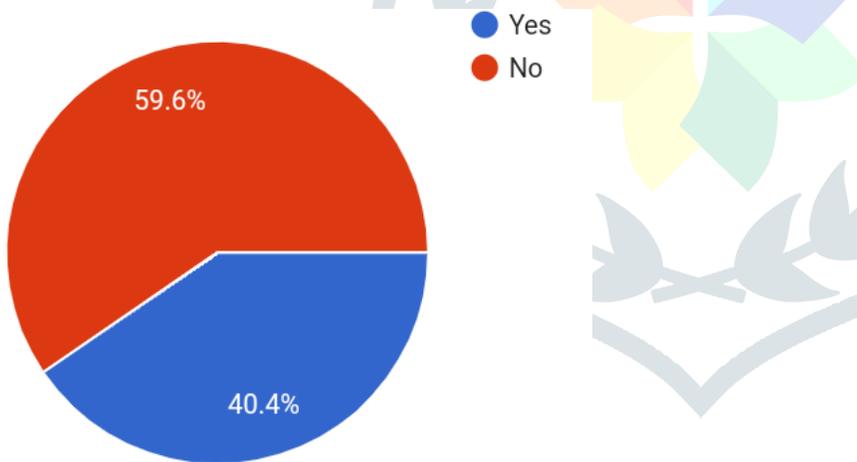
Figure 4.2: Most effective propaganda techniques



Interpretation: The above bar diagram reveals that 19 out of 50 people said that None of the above. Even though all the above should have made the highest number of people saying all the above because all the propaganda types/devices used by Hitler on those worked for him. However, since the previous chart already revealed about the lack of awareness about the techniques of propaganda, it is obvious that the respondents would find it difficult to identify the most effective technique.

Hence, it's recommended to make more awareness about propaganda devices used in modern marketing world which will aid the consumers not get manipulated and which will also assist them not to get misinformation which are transferred by modern day propagandists.

Figure 4.3: Acceptance of consumers for Media influence



Interpretations: If we try to take about what propaganda is, it is a concerted set of messages aimed at influencing the opinions or behavior of large number of people. When this question was asked, 40.4 % of respondents said **yes**, that they get easily influenced by media. Being rational customer and having marketing background they said media is so powerful device which will influence easily and thus, advertising is commercial propaganda. It has been observed that, even though 40% of the respondents consciously accept that they get influenced by advertisements, they really are not much aware about the propaganda techniques.

5. Correlation of Hitler’s propaganda technique with modern marketing propaganda technique.

5.1 Need for correlation

Hitler used various means of propaganda devices to be *successful dictator*. Using of propaganda tool will not only help in the formation and development of a leader but also *successful marketer*, yes you heard me right by taking only good essentials of Hitler’s propaganda technique and understanding how he could able to understand human psychology and how he used that to influence people will help a lot

to be successful “marketer” & “advertiser”. Hitler used two propaganda tools regularly to control the masses, those are Bandwagon & Repetition devices.

Firstly, he used Bandwagon tool in the name of “herd-poisoning” which implies that, if the people are in the masses they stop thinking individually and follow what the crowd (herd) is doing and, they stop questioning. Influencing people is very easy through this technique and it really works.

Secondly, he used repetition technique to ‘condition’ the people. *Conditioning* is the process of modifying a person behavior. By repetition Hitler completely changed human behavior of Germany and rest is history. The modern-day advertisers repeatedly display their advertisements following the same strategy of propaganda.

5.2 Types of propaganda technique then and now.

Advertisers, influencers, and politicians have been using propaganda techniques for generations now. Simply put, a propagandist uses emotional and persuasive means to derive desired outcomes from others. Mostly for their own personal gains. As human beings, we begin to lose all sense of rationality when we’re driven by emotions. And that’s exactly how propagandists exploit other people. But the process isn’t as simple as it may seem, in fact, there are a number of different types of propaganda.

Seven common propaganda devices:

1. BAND WAGON PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler:

The "band wagon" is a device to make us follow the crowd, to accept the propagandist's program. Here his theme was "Everybody's doing it." His techniques range from those of medicine show to dramatic spectacle.

One of the great unifying principles adopted by the National Socialists is that of hate. Among the passages deleted from the English version of *Mein Kampf*, Hitler has written: “Hate is more lasting than dislike, and the thrusting power for the mightiest upheavals on this earth has at all times come less from scientific recognition than from a fanaticism that fills the souls of the masses and in a forward-driving hysteria.”

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

As human beings, we have this innate desire to fit in. And that’s exactly the kind of follow-the-herd mentality technique is.

Bandwagon propaganda is all about persuading the target audience to act. It’s about creating an urge amongst people to become a part of the “in crowd”. To enforce such a feeling, advertisers typically use phrases like, “join the crowd” or “trending now” for their products and services.

Keyword/Phrases to look for under Bandwagon Propaganda:

“Everyone, ours, yours, don’t miss out, be part of, sweeping the nation, don’t get left out, Best seller, most popular product, Join the sensation”.

2. CARD STACKING PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler

"Card stacking" is a device in which the propagandist employs all the arts of deception to win the support for himself, his group, nation, race, policy, practice, belief, or ideal. He stacks the cards against the truth. He uses under emphasis and overemphasis to dodge or evade facts.”

The misrepresentation of facts works in two ways. On the one hand, there is a rigorously enforced censorship, backed by an elaborate spy system and the constant threat of concentration camps. By this means the regime can suppress facts, prevent discussion and expression of discontent and opposition. This largely accounts for the fact that many visitors on returning from Germany report, that they have heard no expression of discontent. On the other hand, the regime has freedom to give publicity to falsehoods.

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

Now, this technique is perhaps most popularly used. It involves the deliberate omission of certain facts to fool the target audience. The term card stacking originates from gambling and occurs when players try to stack decks in their favor. A similar ideology is used by companies to make their products appear better than they actually are. Most brands use this propaganda technique to downplay unsavory

details about their products and services. For instance, some companies may cleverly conceal “hidden charges” and only talk about the benefits of their products and services, like 100% pure, best brand etc.

3. TESTIMONIAL PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler:

Testimonial propaganda is a statement especially one giving recommendation of someone’s or something’s worth or character.

From the fact that "the Fuehrer knows the goal and knows the direction," it follows that his is the supreme testimonial. No authority and no adjustment which does not follow from or accord with his can be right. No specialist knows better than he, no recommendation can be better than his.

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

Testimonial propaganda is popular advertising technique that uses renowned or celebrity figures to endorse products and services. Now in this case, when a famous person vouches for something, viewers are likely to take account of the credibility and popularity of that person.

This establishes trust and boosts the credibility of that brand. Consequently, some brands may also use figures like doctors and engineers (basically experts) to promote their products and services.

Examples of Testimonial Propaganda:

Boost has used celebrities such as Sachin Tendulkar, Virendar Sehwag, MS Dhoni & Virat Kohli to endorse Boost.

4. GLITTERING GENERALITIES PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler:

"Glittering generalities" is a device by which the propagandist identifies his program with virtue by use of "virtue words." Here he appeals to our emotions of love, generosity, and brotherhood. Much that is to the interest of those who control the regime is praised in terms of the "community good" and "comradeliness."

To the same end there is considerable talk about subjecting all "narrow" and "selfish" interests to the "welfare of the community." Such words as "labor" and "sacrifice" are given additional "virtue" by ceremonials and dramatic awards. The most sweeping generality is that conveyed by the word volk (folk or people). The Volk, after purging itself of Jewish blood, is to return to the true Germanic tradition of the middle Ages.

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

Glittering generalities is a propaganda technique where propagandists use emotional appeal or/and vague statements to influence the audience.

Advertising agencies thus use the phrases like “inspiring you from within” or “to kick-start your day” to create positive anecdotes. This makes the product look more appealing, resulting in better sales.

For better effect, brands may use hyperboles, metaphors or lyrical phrases to attract more attention.

5. NAME CALLING PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler:

"Name calling" is a device to make us form a judgment without examining the evidence on which it should be based. Here the propagandist appeals to our hate and fear”.

In as much as the first task of the National Socialists was to destroy simultaneously all trade unions as well as all liberal democratic institutions, it was necessary to make the people believe that these were devilish inventions, cleverly designed by malicious persons to ruin the German people.

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

Now, this type of propaganda uses a completely opposite approach to glittering generalities. As the name suggests, this propaganda technique involves using derogatory phrases to create a negative opinion about someone or some other brand.

Consequently, the brand may also speak negatively about an idea. For instance, a company that sells plant-based products may talk about how inhumane it is to kill animals. For this purpose, they may also criticize fast food chains businesses.

Example of Propaganda

Advertisement by Burger King and how they indirectly compare their Whoppers with McDonald's famous Big Mac.

6. TRANSFER PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler:

"Transfer" is a device by which the propagandist carries over the authority, sanction, and prestige of something we respect and revere to something else".

Something approaching deification of Chancellor Hitler is an outstanding example of this device. Nazi propagandists seek to establish him as a quasi divinity and to transfer to him the religious feelings of the German people; then to transfer from him the "divine" sanction to the policies, practices, beliefs, and hatreds which he espouses. Some party spokesmen and supporters refer to Hitler in terms like those applied to Christ.

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

This type of propaganda uses a technique to project certain qualities (this can either be positive or negative) of a person, ideology or object to other things and people.

This kind of propaganda uses many different symbols to achieve a favorable outcome.

Examples of Propaganda

Major soft-drink brands were accused of having traces of pesticides a couple of years ago. While these allegations were on the rise, the entire carbonated-drink industry took a hit. During this same period, fruit juices and other drinks were able to do great business. Even the use of celebrities in advertisements helps the marketer to transfer the 'respect' and 'faith' in the celebrity to the brand itself.

7. PLAIN FOLKS PROPAGANDA

Propaganda Techniques used by Adolf Hitler:

"Plain folks" is a device used by politicians, labor leaders, business men, and even by ministers and educators to win confidence by appearing to be people like ourselves or common man-"just plain folks among the neighbors."

While the Fuehrer is canonized, an attempt is made to transform him into a "man of the people." In this, the propagandists are greatly assisted by his habits, for he effects ordinary clothes, wears no medals other than his simple Iron Cross, eats plain food and that sparingly, and leads a quiet, secluded life. He is pictured as a man of the people meeting plain folks in their ordinary walks of life, enjoying with them their simple work and pleasures. Hitler himself makes the same appeal to his people. He is no longer a plain man but a common soldier.

Propaganda Techniques used by modern Marketers:

We have noticed how some brands use ordinary folks to promote their products and services as opposed to celebrities.

The goal here is to demonstrate how the product is meant for everybody and will provide value to everyone. This method is commonly used in the advertising the general public has started to grow skeptical towards paid celebrity endorsements. Today, buyers are on the lookout for REAL experiences instead of the glossy images portrayed on television.

Plain Folks Propaganda Examples:

Coca-cola uses plain folks by showing average people having fun and being happy together while they are being served coke.

6. Conclusion

The thin line between propaganda and advertising.

Although an advertising message reaches the consumer on a personal level, the consumer itself not only reacts under the influence of the advertisements but it also copies the behavior. It thus inevitably becomes what in marketing is called the 'target audience'.

Propaganda has no meaning and hence no effectiveness except in terms of life conditions of people-their needs, fears, hatreds, loves, aspirations, prejudices, and traditions. These affect propaganda as much as propaganda affects people." National Socialist propaganda is

based on the hatreds, fears, aspirations, and traditions of the German people. That explains its success-that, together with the fact that most of the German people and doubtless many of the Nazi propagandists themselves were unable to analyze, evaluate, and appraise the Nazi propaganda and its possible consequences. Whether Hitler or his fellow Nazis were sincere or insincere, racketeers or honest men, is not a matter of prime importance. What is of importance is that they won to their cause honest, earnest men and women who in their turn became zealous and effective propagandists for National Socialism.

To conclude with there are lot of factor which are common with Nazism and advertising. To be successful in the field of marketing and advertising one must explore the hidden forces which were common between Nazism and advertising.

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