# ADVERTISING- The Power of Images

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# Introduction

Communication is the basic need of this day's social life. People talk and they discuss things, somewhere they have discords, so they stop getting together. This brings a gap. At this point in time, everyone has his own interpretation of this gap. Some might call this the discord gap, some often refer to this as the communication gap, and hence everyone accepts that there exist gap. At the ends of these spaces, not are every time human beings. There are often the states, and sometimes the humans at one end and the animals on the second edge. What then fills the gap? "Images". They then create a foundational stone to start over again or somewhere lay the basis of a new understanding. The following research is therefore designed to analyze the power of images in the world of ours.

The world in which we live in today has surrounded us in many ways. In fact, humans are overlapped into the world of images. The reason why we are overlapped in the world of images is our extraordinary exposure to the world of social media. In every second, anyone in the world throws an image, and people get over to it. No one thinks of what the underlying purpose of a picture on media is, but it had already worked before one even thinks about it. As a recent study concluded that a human brain reacts to an image in just 13 milliseconds(Fan & Gordon, 2014). This is what summarizes the power of image in the world of today. Images are everywhere, they are used in ads, in promoting political understandings, in showing solidarity, hence even in celebrating the occasions, the festivals, and the cultures. This shows the power of images. This is also how the ads work. But a part of this debate also includes why sometimes these ads are used to disseminate propaganda? Why sometimes racism plays it part and use images as a tool for propagation of hate things? And why sometimes famous campaigns set disturbance in a society or in the world? To answer all these questions one has to analyze every time every aspect of a media campaign that uses images for the propagation of its message.

# Thesis

Among the various uses of images, the primary of these many remains the propagation of a specific message. Considering the importance of such phenomena- the utilization of Images as a tool can make things work more easily. Therefore, considering all these scenarios one can have a thought that “*Images are designed as such to disseminate definitive message because it allows keeping a space in its different interpretation of any certain phenomena”.*

# Research Question(s)

*How Images disseminate specific messages?*

This primary research question will be supported by the following sub-questions.

*What makes an image catchy?*

*Do images really disseminate hate propaganda?*

*What is the underlying purpose of every advertisement?*

# Theoretical approaches involved

The theory of social interactionism, which is also known as the theory of symbolic interactionism sets the ground for this research. The perspective put forth in this theory is that people get influenced by the symbolic perceptions of the things. That is how it is related to the use of images or pictures, which surrounds us every day. Although this theoretical paradigm is majorly influenced by Max Weber's concept that individually makes up their mind according to their interpretation of things(Giddens, 1971). This is how this theory is relevant to the use of images as a method of creating perceptions in the minds of people. In the year 1920, this concept was introduced in American social literature by George Herbert (Giddens, 1971).

*The Idiosyncratic meanings:* This theory portrays an image of the society in which people refers to the objects by referring to their idiosyncratic meanings. Similarly, not just to the images, people focus their thoughts with the events, places and their interaction with other people as well. Since this research is about the power of images, so just the theoretical assumptions put forward by this school of thought about the images and their attributes will be considered. In their interaction with the images, people focus at first on their primary interpretation of the specific thoughts presented in that image(Kaplan, 2001). Similarly, as just people interpret each other, the same is true with their interpretation of pictures today. For example, a meme on a Facebook post looks wishing Merry Christmas. It will make someone feel pleasant, it will appear not too fascinating to people who don’t celebrate Christmas and it might create a much difficult situation in the conservative societies. Such is the interpretation of images in this world.

*Aspects of Social Experiences*: Some issues like racism, sexism, gender discrimination, and homophobia, etc. are the recent trends of human culture today(Adorno & Rabinbach, 1975). In one way or another, these issues continue to influence the human’s perception. These concepts can also be understood through the lens of social interactionism perspective(Fan & Gordon, 2014) Since their appears no biological bases for racism and gender discrimination, that is how they all are the social constructs, which we perceive about people. This is how the people in this world of today are kind of forced to believe what they are presented with. For example, the black color is associated with a specific race which is seen not to be so good. This is called colorism. This is the reason also that if today a black man is pictured anywhere it will be considered as portraying a specific thought.

# Analysis

Considering the theoretical paradigm presented above, and the primary question of this research, it is believable that images disseminate specific meanings based upon the social, cultural, ideological and some bit the religious norms. For example; one who wants to disseminate a specific thought or in case specific propaganda, he will make use of such areas to materialize his thoughts. Why are all these so vulnerable to the ill thinking of others, the reason lies in their vast existence. One other reason remains their deep association with the self of people(Schor, 2007). People live their whole lives on the pretext that their associations of religions, cast, color or creed is the most sought after- this is how then all these are used to portray a specific image which not necessarily could conform to the idea of everyone, nor it can disperse a specific thought.

Catchy or attractive is the second thing which is the prerequisite of any image. Normally, the powerful image is not necessarily catchy, nor does it can be confirmed that it will serve the purpose. Does the question still remain that how a catch-less image will work? How it can convey a message? The simple search for this quest is imaging the attributes of a society that are widely accepted. For example, when the same-sex marriages were claimed lawful by the US Supreme Court, every social media surfer exploded in with creating images, regardless of its impact on the ideologies of millions of Muslims living in the United States. That is where a catchy- or not so catchy campaign has resulted in nothing for the millions of people out there in the United States.

Images are not anytime a propaganda tool. It is again one's perception that categorizes image as a hate thing or a loved thing. The interactionism perspective suggests that how the first images are created in the minds of people, is true same for the images. For example, one might not assume the firing incidence video of the Christ Church images as visually sensitive, for him they can be a source of information and for some, they are pathetic or visually sensitive. Similarly, the image of the gun released by the authorities could be seen from a diverse perspective. For the students of terrorism studies, this is a new addition in the case studies, similar for the reporters it is just another dynamic, but for the people whose loved ones have lost their lives in that incident, this image has a totally different and surely worst attraction to them.

The advertisement is generally made with a collection of images. It mostly and sometimes involves the videos and speeches that is how the chances for the interpretation increases. There then comes many aspects that needed to be judged and interpreted. Therefore it becomes difficult to grab the underlying purpose of the advertisement. The interactionist perspective suggests that any advertisement will be based on your interaction with things. Never can it force anyone to follow the suite, nor does it become a burden over anyone. That is how an individual is free to assume whatever he wants to take out of that. Some sociologists believe that advertisements are like less penetrating bombshells, which cannot hurt at once, but will keep on being a source of influences. So, never an advertisement is like a thing that is confirmed too or be influenced by.

# Conclusion

The images are important because they don’t have words, they don’t have any specific connotations. Anyone can take the meanings out without being told or conveyed. This is the importance of images. As the research mentioned above that our minds react in milliseconds to an image sums the debate all for this. One can associate a large thought in his mind with a specific image. Similarly one may attribute a feeling of sadness or happiness with any image or even with any advertisement. This is the reason why the advertisement companies tend to create an advertisement that are near to these emotions. Which tricks their minds. With the change in the social order and increasing globalization, an advertisement has increased, a massive viewership has been added to it. Similarly, there are now hundreds and thousands of meanings associated with a single phenomenon. This is how the power of the image is being created, and shape is been given to the saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. One more aspect to this is the involvement of actors such as our social and cultural ideologies and some time the religious ideologies to this. Normally it is done to add more meaning to a thing but it literally turns sometimes things back. It frustrates people when they find that they are being emotionally trapped. This is when a negative aspect of the advertisement and the use of images is added. It gradually then shifts to a level when things become uncontrollable and come out from the order. This is chaos and disorders in our lives. Since it is proved that when we attach a positive feeling to anything- it is somehow have been affected by the images running after and upon us. Same is true for the negative things present in our society, they are also here by a minor or a major push by the advertisement and this day media campaigns.

# References

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