CHAPTER 7.

INFERENCES FROM CONTENT ANALYSIS
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7.1 Scheme of Chapter
Content analysis has been done of print and television ads. Television ads have been analyzed through descriptive narrative analysis and then qualitative content analysis has been done and has been validated through the analysis of in-depth interviews. To further understand the context, the competitive environmental changes have been analyzed for the particular brand and product category. Resnik & Stern’s tool of fourteen information cues has been used to analyze the informativeness of print and television ads. This chapter presents the inferences from content analysis and puts the findings in relation to the research objectives and research questions.

7.2 Research Objectives:
The broad and specific objectives would be understood and answers to the research questions would be derived from the content analysis of print and television ads. The research objectives are:

1. To analyze the change in the advertising content of print and television advertisements, in the post liberalization era
   a. To compare and analyze the advertisement content over the years
   b. To study the use of advertising appeals and changes therein
   c. To study the informativeness of advertisements
   d. To recognize the forces shaping and reshaping the advertising message and content

7.3 Changes in Advertising Content Post Liberalization
Liberalization totally changed the business sector. Monopoly and protection were two words which got lost somewhere in the new age of competition and brand emerged to be the biggest point of differentiation for any company. Consumers awakened to a new age of marketing sophistication as they had innumerable choices in all categories. From consumer durables to fast moving consumer goods, options are plenty and attractive. The advertisements analyzed were selected from a period of last ten to twelve years and therefore the period represents the early days of liberalization when India was realizing the impact of globalization and competition as well as the late 90s
and early 2000s era when the economy and people started reaping benefits of liberalization. The changes inferred from content analysis of ads are described in terms of specific objectives in the following pages.

7.3.1 Comparison of Advertising Content:

7.3.1.1 Gender:
Many commercials of initial period post liberalization focus on men and highlight masculinity and muscle strength. For e.g. lifebuoy ads show men engaged in high energy sports like football and the muscle strength is something which is highlighted in the ads which show the soap as ‘champion’. There are ads which show men as the bread earner, head of the family, protecting wife and kids, going to office, demanding and so on. For e.g. one of the ad of Moov shows husband coming from office and giving his office bag to his wife and asks her to make tea and snacks for him. In the initial ads men have been shown doing socially accepted and apt activities. Like for e.g. Rasna ads always show the mother making Rasna and they never show men in the process of making as men are not supposed to do household work. The late 1990s ads are modern in nature and they show men in unconventional roles and facing newer problems and situations. Like for e.g. for the first time in Moov ad a male is shown suffering from backache.

7.3.1.2 Portrayal of Women:
Women have been used as protagonists or as a background in almost all ads irrespective of the product category. Content analysis of sixty television ads of six brands shows almost all ads using women in the lead or supporting role. In ads of the initial period i.e. 1991 to 1995 which is immediate period post liberalization, portrayal of women is quite stereotyped. Early ads of Fair & Lovely show women as shy, wanting appreciation for fair skin, conservatively dressed, and dressing up to appease their husbands. Life for e.g. a woman in one the ads, is shown in salwar kameez when the situation shown is that of honeymoon. Similarly ads of Moov show women who are housewives and wear saris, slog throughout the day, function on everyone’s demand, juggling between domestic chores and outside work, and portray women as super woman whose life revolves around home, husband, in-laws and kids. Early ads of Cadburys Dairy Milk also show the wife waiting for the husband to come, all
dressed up in a sari to welcome him. One of the introductory ads of Dairy Milk show a relationship between seduction and chocolate by showing luscious red lips taking a bite of chocolate, seductively. Thus, irrespective of the product category or role of woman in the storyline of the ad, early ads portray women either as beauty objects or in a very traditional manner. It is only in late 1990s that a change is visible in the content of ads as far as women are concerned. They are shown as confident, career conscious, and decision makers’ rather then followers. For e.g. young moms shown in Moov ads of 2005-06, are shown as independent, playful, and enjoying their life to the fullest as compared to earlier ads where they are shown buried in domestic chores. The cricket ad with the young girl dancing freely in the ground as her boyfriend hits a six symbolizes ‘breaking free’. Even lifebuoy ads of recent times show women as doctors and decision makers’. Even in case of fairness cream which is for women, the portrayal of women has become progressive and occasions other than marriage are shown.

7.3.1.3 Idealism to Realism
Exaggeration in advertising is not a rare phenomenon. Claims made by marketers are usually idealistic in nature. But when a comparison was done across ads of last ten years one definitely feels that the pattern shows that there is a shift from idealism to realism in advertisements. Initial ads talk about the product and its benefits in such superlative manner that the hint of realism is missing. For e.g. all early Fair & Lovely ads highlight the ‘six weeks’ visual. Ads show the girl’s skin turning into pinkish white within six weeks of usage of the cream. Lifebuoy ads also link up the usage of lifebuoy with winning all sports matches and make the brand look more like an energy drink rather than a carbolic soap. If we take the example of Moov commercials in the early 90s one sees a lot of idealism being floated as claims of getting instant relief is depicted. Ads show backache sufferers applying Moov and from the very next day getting back to their hectic routine. However, when analysis of last 5-6 years period was done, a clear shift is visible from idealistic claims to realism. For e.g. Fevicol ads talk more of furniture rather than an unbreakable egg. Fair & Lovely has done away with its ‘six weeks’ claim and talks more about personality and confidence and projects the brand as an enabler to realize one’s dreams. Similarly Lifebuoy ads talk more about the ingredients and prevention of germs and make the communication look very realistic when the “Koi Dar Nahin” idea is expressed through various
creative strategies. Even situations like girl dreaming of becoming a cricket commentator, mother playing hide and seek with kids, family playing ‘antakshari’ in train etc. shown in recent ads portray a near to real life picture. Situations belong more to the everyday routine of an individual and therefore everyone relates to such scenes shown in ads and thus makes the ad look more realistic as compared to an ad showing a dark girl turning into a beautiful damsel and getting selected for the job of an air hostess. One major change that had made the shift from ‘idealism to realism’ faster is the rise of consumerism. Consumer protection groups and legislative bodies governing advertising together keep a close look on false and improper claims. For e.g. the Fair & Lovely ad where the father wishes for a son had to be withdrawn after protests from consumer activist groups and later for quite some time there was a ban on fairness cream advertisements.

7.3.1.4 Target Audience

Any advertisement would have a primary and secondary target audience. However, content analysis of ads from the early post liberalization era shows a very specific focus. Ads talk only and only to the niche target audience the product is aimed at. For e.g. early ads of lifebuoy show only men and in some case his kid. The setting is usually of an outdoor game or a bathroom. One never sees the housewife or family being included in the storyline even though it is toilet soap. Fair & Lovely commercials also talk only to the main target audience and that is women. Things changed as Indian economy adapted itself to the changed marketing environment. All of sudden family got involved in all kinds of purchases. Content analysis of ads in the late 90s and early 2000s show a definite change in ads in terms of target audience. From singular focus ads have moved to family or community focus as far as their target audiences are concerned. Lifebuoy ads which have historically been masculine in tone, now talk to the lady and the entire family as the carbolic soap has turned into a beauty soap that gives protection from germs. The latest ads show a ‘community’ focus as they show kids teaming up with friends for a cleanliness drive be it the street or the cricket stadium. Fair & lovely commercials also now show family and the brand somewhere gets integrated with all members of the family. Moov ads also show the ‘family’ feeling when they portray kids playing with their friends and mom or when they show the happy Indian joint family enjoying in the train.
7.3.1.5 Other Observations

Almost all ads of earlier times use “English” language. The ads of Cadburys Dairy Milk use English language and most of the models are shown wearing western clothes. It somewhere shows the influence of western culture and can be inferred that this would be due to the strong impact of foreign label products which entered in the Indian market post liberalization. It was a time when Indian consumer did not have the luxury to use certain kind of products and therefore the initial ads of Cadburys Dairy Milk and Fair & Lovely use English language. The concept of a fairness cream, a moisturizer or a milk chocolate was quite new for India and thus, these products are positioned as westernized as there was a craze for foreign brands.

7.3.2 Advertising appeals:

Content analysis reveals an interesting observation in case of appeals used in advertisements. It is observed that over the years, appeals have remained the same with a little bit of change here and there. Slice of life and emotional appeals are used in most of the commercials. Slice of life has been effectively used in all Rasna commercial and it continues throughout. Similarly in case of Cadburys Dairy Milk fun filled situations is used across the ten year period. It is interesting to note that in case of both the brands i.e. Rasna and Cadburys Dairy Milk, the brands have been repositioned to respond to newer set of marketing challenges. But even after the repositioning of the brand, the appeal remains the same. For e.g. Rasna got repositioned as a health drink but used slice of life appeal in its ads of “Rasna Rozana”. Similarly Cadburys Dairy Milk is on the move to capture the “Mithai” market and no longer is only chocolate. But it continues to use slice of life with a hint of humour in its commercials. This observation can be taken further to conclude that ads of both brands were an instant hit with the consumers’ right from the early days of 1990. Advertisements have made the brands a household name and therefore even though after a drastic change in the brand and creative strategy, the execution i.e. the appeal still remains the same.

In case of Moov ads have always been high on emotional appeal and have shown warmth of relationships. With changing times, the expression of warmth has changed and therefore the symbols in the ads have also changed to keep in tune. For e.g. early ads show joint family and the husband applying Moov to wife suffering form
backache. Now ads have more to do with the playful mom and kids and by the activities through which both are deriving happiness and entertainment, warmth gets expressed. Fevicol ads have always involved the viewer through humour and entertainment value of the story in the ad. Fevicol ads never educate or give product knowledge. It simply but brilliantly links the brand with the humour and makes the brand look as a part of the narrative. Lifebuoy ads have changed drastically as far as the appeal and its creative execution is concerned. Early ads of Lifebuoy talk direct as far as germs and killing of bacteria as product benefits are concerned. Ads today continue talking about all these product benefits but in a much subtle fashion. It does not show muscles and champion's body to show superiority. Over the last few years, ads of Lifebuoy have become aspirational and talk more on the broader issues of cleanliness, health and hygiene. The theme of protection from germs and bacteria has taken a backseat and the brand now communicates on a broader canvas.

7.3.3 Informativeness of Advertisements:
Resnik & Stern's fourteen information cues were used as a tool to find out the level of informativeness of ads in print and television. It was found that all advertisements fall into the category of informative ads if the criterion is presence of at least one information cue in the ad. Thus, it was found that all print and television ads were in a position to help consumer make an informed choice of products or services. The information cue that got the highest representation was 'packaging or shape of the product' across both the mediums i.e. TV and print.

7.3.4 Forces Shaping Ad Content:
Content analysis of ads shows distinct changes in the pattern of communication. The forces that have led to these changes were analyzed in the context of the changing and competitive marketing environment. The change in the economic reforms led to disturbances across categories and forced the marketing giants to take note of the changed scenario and respond to these changes by advertising content. The major forces that have shaped ad content in the last decade are explained here:
7.3.4.1 Consumer
The consumer has grown from being the “poor soul” to the “most powerful” entity for a marketer and that gets reflected in the communication of brands. Over the years the consumer has obtained a prime status in all marketing strategies because of the fact that he has more choices and media exposure. Consumer has become aware and educated due to cable and satellite television and internet penetration in the country. India today is a young nation with more than half of its population below the age of 35 making it a very lucrative proposition. Youth have changed the heart and soul of communication as the language they understand is very unique and the orientation towards life is very different. Women as a target audience has transformed from being a “house-wife” to a “power-wife”. Education and financial independence has made them a potential consumer base as they take independent product decisions and demand customized products. In general if one takes note, liberalization and globalization are now more than a decade old in the country. The changes that they brought are now the norm of life for the consumers and society. Thus, the impact of media explosion, brand proliferation, consumer knowledge, competition is now being seen and distinctively felt in the marketing and communication strategies of brands in India. Therefore, the culture and consumer behaviour are areas that need to be revisited and researched. Rituals, definitions of marriage, joint family system, education, values, traditions, customs, gender definitions and role everything has undergone a transformation and has greatly impacted the ad content of brands.

7.3.4.2 Competition
Competition gave a new meaning to corporate existence. Survival of the fittest became the rule of the game. Today, advertising budgets are set keeping in mind the competitor’s budget and continuous research is needed to be in the race. Ad content has changed from being simplistic to being highly competitive. Competitive references and establishing superiority over competing brands is an important base for deciding the ad content. Consumer insight mining has gained a huge popularity in the past few years because of the fact that every brand wants to connect with the consumer in a manner superior to competition. Competition has resulted into advertising being seen as a tool to establish the superiority of the brand over the other players in the market. This has resulted in marketers focusing on strategy and creativity in order to give a better end product in terms of ad content.
7.4 Research Questions:

a. Has the duration of advertisements shortened over a period of time?
   a. The duration of advertisements has not shortened over a period of time. On an average, ads are either of 30 seconds or 60 seconds. Most of Fevicol and Cadburys Dairy Milk ads were found to be of 60 seconds. However, it was observed that after release of a new ad, and once the awareness is established, 10-15 second snippets of the same ad are released by the company. Therefore, the traditional 30 second commercial dominates till date.

b. Has the message delivery shifted from background to interactive?
   a. The research conducted on hundred commercials show that most of the ads have voiceovers. However in terms of script or the story, it can be said that the message delivery has shifted from background to interactive. Earlier ads were more of product demonstrations and consumer education. However, the recent commercials are more interactive in terms of the nature of presentation of the idea, script, characters and the product features and ad message. Thus, it can be said that the message delivery has shifted from background to interactive.

c. Has the emphasis shifted from copy to visuals in print advertisements?
   a. An in-depth analysis of print ads surely reveals that the emphasis has shifted to visuals from copy. Most of the ads in the sample have brilliant visuals and they are the real headlines of the print advertisement. Copy in the samples studied was found to be more of a sub-text and gave information regarding the distribution channels and special offers. Again the colours and visual used relate to what is used in other mediums indicating an integrated marketing communications approach. Print ads are high on visuals related to the product or colours that signify the brand and its identity. Like for e.g. all Vodafone print ads either shows the kid and the pug or the red colour which shows the brand change from Hutch to Vodafone.

d. Has there been a basic shift from idealism to realism in ads?
   a. Yes there has been a basic shift from idealism to realism. Analysis of earlier ads show lots of exaggeration in claims made which has now
become subtle or realistic in nature. The advertising claims have now become more rationalized and closer to the real world. This can be put in a context by understanding the fact that over the years the consumerism movement has gained ground in India and brands play on the safer side by making claims which cannot be challenged by either competition or consumers.

c. Has the level of informativeness changed over the years?

a. All ads analyzed in the sample were termed as 'informative' ads as information cues were found to be present in the communication. However, the type of information provided in the ad has changed. Earlier ads are high on exact figures and number and give exact information indicating a fact that the objective of the ad is to educate the consumers. However, recent ads are providing information but in a subtle manner and giving implicit information. This suggests that consumers have progressed in terms of brand awareness and market knowledge and advertisements if just one of the "consumer touch points".
7.5 Conclusions
The major conclusions derived from the analysis of data are:

- All ads were informative as one of the fourteen information cues was found to be present in the ads. The cue that had the strongest presence was packaging or shape of the product.
- Ads have shifted from portraying conventional roles of genders to unconventional roles.
- Portrayal of women has positively changed over the years. Women are shown in constructive roles and the portrayal is progressive in nature.
- Ads have shifted from idealistic and exaggerated claims to realistic claims and show a picture near to reality.
- Ads show a shift in focus from the “individual” to a “community”.
- The copy language has shifted from “English” to “Hindi” or “Vernacular”.
- Slice of life and emotional appeals are the most commonly used appeals in ads of all times and no significant change have been noted in this aspect.
- Print ads have shifted from copy-focus to visual-focus.

7.6 Future Areas of Research
Content analysis is an interesting research methodology and when combined with a dynamic field like advertising and brand communications, can prove to be a killer combination. Some of the ideas for future research are listed below:

- As an extension to this research, future research studies can focus on content analysis of advertisements using the online and new media. This would be an interesting study as minimum work has been done in new media.
- In order to obtain in-depth knowledge, a content analysis of advertisements of competitive brands in a particular category can be done. This would give an idea of the competitive communication and would highlight the positioning strategies of brand within a particular product category.
- A content analysis of advertisements of selected brands before liberalization and after liberalization can be done in order to get an
idea about the changes in ads in the protected and liberalized period.

- A study can be conducted to check the content of advertising along with the consumer’s perception towards the communication and the brand in order to derive the relationship between the communication and consumer’s perceptions.

7.7 Implications of Research

The research presented in this thesis can be of use to students of advertising as well as marketing practitioners from the industry. Some of the recommendations for marketing and advertising professionals are as under:

- Historical research of brand communication often reveals an insightful “story” of the brand.

- Content analysis of advertisements is helpful as a method to deconstruct an ad into different elements and then try to see a whole picture by analyzing all the elements.

- There is a strong connect between the content of advertisements and the macro environment changes in the form of social, cultural and economical changes.

- Content analysis of commercials is a good method to interpret the consumer adoption and learning process as far as brand communication is concerned.