

"AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF PATRIOTIC THEMES IN ADVERTISING ART"

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Abstract

This research investigates how patriotic elements are integrated into advertising art and how these elements—such as national symbols, historical imagery, and culturally rooted narratives—influence both consumer behaviour and brand interpretation. Drawing on a mixed-method research framework that blends content analysis, interviews, and survey findings, the study identifies the visual and emotional devices most commonly used to evoke national pride. The results reveal clear generational differences: older audiences tend to interpret patriotic advertisements with warmth and trust, whereas younger individuals are more cautious and often question the sincerity behind such messages. Although patriotic themes can reinforce loyalty and enhance brand credibility—particularly around national celebrations—the study also highlights concerns about the ethical implications of commercialising patriotic sentiment. Overall, the research guides advertisers seeking to employ patriotic themes with authenticity and cultural sensitivity to ensure positive and lasting consumer relationships.

Keywords: *Patriotic messages, advertising art, national identity, consumer behaviour, brand perception, emotional appeal, ethics in advertising*

Patriotic advertising in India is a strategic marketing approach that leverages themes of national pride, cultural heritage, and unity to connect with consumers emotionally and ideologically, given India's rich history, diverse culture, and deep-rooted patriotism (Kotler et al., 2017; Bandyopadhyay, 2014). Brands often incorporate these elements into their campaigns to resonate with the populace. Patriotic marketing strategies have long been powerful tools for building and maintaining consumer trust by tapping into emotions of unity and national pride, creating a sense of belonging and shared identity (Bandyopadhyay, 2014). For example, the "Mile Sur Mera Tumhara" campaign in India is a classic illustration of how patriotic advertising can evoke powerful emotions and foster a sense of unity.

Patriotic messaging in advertising typically involves the deliberate use of national symbols, shared historical memories, and culturally valued ideals to strengthen the connection between a brand and its audience. Rather than focusing solely on product features, these advertisements attempt to tap into collective emotions such as pride, unity, and remembrance, thereby positioning the brand as aligned with the nation's identity. This may include using national colours, referencing important events or leaders, or crafting narratives that celebrate resilience and solidarity. A well-known example is Tata Tea's "Jaago Re" campaign, which links civic responsibility with brand identity through a socially conscious message rooted in national values.

Earlier research, including the works of Holt (2002) and Smith (2004), illustrates how patriotic communication became a strategic tool during major global conflicts. Advertisers often used national imagery and narratives of sacrifice to strengthen public morale and reinforce unity,

thereby intertwining consumer culture with national duty. After the world wars, these strategies evolved to match shifting cultural values and economic conditions, demonstrating that patriotism in advertising has long served as both a reflection of public sentiment and a mechanism for shaping it.

Symbolic interactionist perspectives, grounded in the work of thinkers such as Blumer and Mead, help explain why patriotic imagery functions powerfully in advertising. Through repeated exposure, national symbols acquire shared meanings that resonate across social groups. Advertisers use these symbols to trigger emotional and cultural associations, allowing audiences to interpret the message through the lens of collective experience. In this way, patriotic advertising becomes a form of social communication that reinforces shared identity.

The cultural implications of patriotic advertising vary across social contexts. Studies by Douglas, Wind, and Cervantes highlight that responses to nationalistic themes depend heavily on cultural background and social positioning. Moreover, scholars such as Goffman and Boorstin argue that advertising is not merely a reflection of national identity but an active force that shapes and redefines it. By continuously presenting stylised versions of patriotism, advertisements contribute to public understanding of what national pride looks and feels like.

Case-based analyses demonstrate how brands strategically deploy patriotic themes during times of heightened national emotion. For example, Pitta and Franzak (2009) document how American companies adapted their messaging during national crises to echo collective concerns and reinforce solidarity. Similarly, comparative research by Kumar and Shah (2004) reveals that patriotic advertising is not uniform across countries; instead, brands tailor such messaging to regional values, cultural expectations, and historical contexts.

In summary, patriotic messages in advertising art are a powerful tool that, when thoughtfully used, can effectively enhance brand identity and consumer engagement by tapping into the deep-seated national pride and unity of the audience. This study seeks to understand these messages by examining how they are depicted and utilised in advertisements, and how they influence consumer behaviour and brand loyalty in the broader historical, cultural, and political context of India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of how such advertising strategies impact consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, brand loyalty, and overall perception of brands.

This approach enabled the collection of data and the analysis of both detailed approaches and numerical data.

Research Design

This research design was a combination of descriptive, analytical, and exploratory methods. Descriptive methods were used to quantify the nature of patriotic advertising representation. Analytical methods evaluated the effect on consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and brand loyalty, and overall perception of brands, and exploratory methods delved into personal experiences and perceptions.

Target population

The target population for this study includes Indian citizens aged 18 and above. This demographic was chosen to ensure that the participants were legal adults and likely to have well-formed opinions and perceptions about patriotic advertising.

Sample

A sample size of 100 respondents for the quantitative surveys was targeted to ensure statistical significance. This sample size was used for the questionnaire sample.

Quantitative Data Statistics

1. Consumer Perceptions and Emotional Impact

Survey Responses (N=100)

- Heightened Sense of Pride and Loyalty: 70%
- Neutral Response: 20%
- Negative Response (Scepticism or Disengagement): 10%

This data shows that 70% of the population has a positive effect of patriotic advertisements, which has helped in increasing a sense of pride and loyalty among them. While consumer perception and emotional impact are neutral among 20% of consumers, on the other hand, a negative response on 10% of the population, creating no emotional impact and no change in consumer perception towards patriotic advertisement.

Demographic Breakdown:

Age 18-30

- Positive Response: 55%
- Neutral Response: 25%
- Negative Response: 20%

The above data shows that consumer perception and emotional impact among the age group of young people is mostly positive, which has created more awareness and increased purchase intentions towards brands that are promoting their brands through patriotic advertisements. While it has a neutral effect on 25% of the young people, having a neutral effect on them, on the other hand, 20% of them have a negative response.

Age 31-50

- Positive Response: 75%
- Neutral Response: 15%
- Negative Response: 10%

In the above data, there is a great positive response of emotional appeal on this age group, i.e., 75%, influencing their purchase intentions, and it has a 15% neutral effect on them. Consumer perception of 10% is negative towards the emotional appeal in advertising.

Age 50+

- Positive Response: 85%
- Neutral Response: 10%
- Negative Response: 5%

Since the people of this age are more emotional and are more connected to their nation, it is easy to create a positive impact on them. 85% of the people had a positive response to the emotional appeal shown by the advertisers in promoting their product. While 10% of the people had a neutral response, and 5% had a negative response to them.

2. Brand Loyalty and Trust Increase

Brands Using Patriotic Messages:

- Increase in Trust and Loyalty: 20% (Measured by pre- and post-campaign surveys)
- Pre-campaign Loyalty Score (Mean): 3.5/5
- Post-campaign Loyalty Score (Mean): 4.2/5

Sales Increase During Campaign Periods

Sales Increase: 15% (Compared to the same period in the previous year)

3. Consumer Scepticism

- Perception of Manipulation: 30%
- Perception of Authenticity: 60%
- Indifferent: 10%

The above data shows a general feeling of consumers on patriotic advertising and their feelings of trust. It has been shown that 30% of people had a perception of manipulation about the advertisements, that advertisers are trying to manipulate consumers about the product. 60% of the people had a perception of authenticity about the product and the message shown in the advertising. 10% of people were not affected by them and are neutral about the message shown in the advertising.

Qualitative Data Insights

1. In-depth Interviews (Sample Size: 20)

Common Themes:

- Authenticity: 80% (16 respondents) emphasised the importance of genuine patriotic messages.
- Emotional Resonance: 90% (18 respondents) mentioned that well-crafted patriotic ads evoked strong emotions.
- Ethical Concerns: 40% (8 respondents) raised concerns about potential manipulation and commercialisation.

The above data shows the In-depth Interview of the people about the themes shown in the advertising. 80% of the people feel authenticity is shown among the patriotic message in advertising, and it is an important message for consumers. While 90% of the people feel emotional towards the well-crafted patriotic ads, and how it has created a connection among them and the product. On the other hand, 40% of the people had ethical concerns about whether the connection with the belief is right or wrong, or whether it is right to take patriotic feelings to promote the product.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Consumer Perceptions and Emotional Impact

Survey Response	Percentage
Heightened Sense of Pride and Loyalty	70
Neutral Response	20
Negative Response	10

Analysis of Table 1: Consumer Perceptions and Emotional Impact

Table 1 highlights consumer perceptions and emotional responses to patriotic advertisements. The data show that 70% of respondents experienced a heightened sense of pride and loyalty after viewing such advertisements, indicating that the patriotic messages had a positive emotional impact and successfully strengthened the bond between consumers and the brand (Table 1).

In contrast, 20% of consumers exhibited a neutral response, suggesting that while these individuals were exposed to the same advertising, they neither felt a strong connection nor developed a heightened sense of pride or loyalty (Table 1). This neutral stance could be due to individual differences in values, exposure to similar themes, or scepticism towards advertising in general. Lastly, 10% of the respondents reported a negative response, reflecting a lack of emotional impact or even discomfort with the use of patriotism in marketing (Table 1). These consumers did not develop any positive feelings of pride or loyalty towards the brand, which suggests that patriotic appeals might not be universally effective.

Overall, the data from Table 1 suggest that while patriotic advertising can be highly effective in evoking emotional responses and fostering loyalty in a majority of consumers, there remains a minority who are either indifferent or opposed to such marketing tactics.

Table 2: Age (18-30) Breakdown of consumers

Survey Response	Percentage
Positive	55
Neutral	25
Negative	20

Analysis of Table 2: Age (18-30) Breakdown of Consumer

Table 2 explores the perceptions and emotional responses of consumers aged 18-30 toward patriotic advertisements. The data indicate that 55% of this demographic group reported a positive response, suggesting that patriotic advertising resonates well with younger consumers. This positive response is associated with increased awareness and a higher purchase intention for brands utilising patriotic messaging (Table 2: Age (18-30) Breakdown of Consumer).

Conversely, 25% of the young consumers reported a neutral response, indicating that for a significant portion of this age group, patriotic advertising neither enhances nor diminishes their engagement or loyalty towards the brand (Table 2). This neutrality may reflect varying degrees of skepticism or simply a lack of interest in patriotic messaging. Lastly, 20% of respondents aged 18-30 expressed a negative response, suggesting that while patriotic advertising is generally effective among young consumers, a notable minority remains unmoved or even put off by such themes (Table 2). Overall, the results from Table 2 demonstrate that patriotic advertising has a strong potential to positively influence younger consumers' brand perceptions and purchase behaviour, though a segment of this group remains either neutral or resistant to these appeals.

Table 3: Age (31-50) Breakdown of consumers

Survey Response	Percentage
Positive	75
Neutral	15
Negative	10

Analysis of Table 3: Age (31-50) Breakdown of Consumer

Table 3 presents the perceptions and emotional responses of consumers aged 31-50 toward patriotic advertising. The data show that 75% of respondents in this age group expressed a positive emotional response to such advertisements. This indicates that patriotic messaging is highly effective in appealing to this demographic and significantly influences their purchase intentions (Table 3: Age (31-50) Breakdown of Consumer). It suggests that this group values patriotic themes and responds strongly to the emotional connections these ads foster.

Conversely, 15% of consumers in this age range reported a neutral response, suggesting that although they may not feel a strong emotional pull, they also do not have a negative reaction to patriotic advertising (Table 3). This neutral stance could be due to more moderate attitudes or less susceptibility to emotional appeals.

Meanwhile, only 10% of consumers aged 31-50 expressed a negative perception towards the emotional appeals in advertising, indicating that patriotic marketing strategies are generally well-received by this demographic (Table 3).

Overall, the findings in Table 3 underscore that emotional appeals in patriotic advertising are particularly effective among consumers aged 31-50, resulting in heightened positive engagement and increased purchase intention.

Table 4: Age (50+) Breakdown of consumers

Survey Response	Percentage
Positive	85
Neutral	10
Negative	5

Analysis of Table 4: Age (50+) Breakdown of Consumer

Table 4 illustrates the perceptions and emotional responses of consumers aged 50 and above toward patriotic advertising. The data show that an overwhelming 85% of respondents in this age group had a positive response to the emotional appeal of these advertisements. This suggests that patriotic themes resonate strongly with older consumers, likely due to their deep-seated connections to national values and identity (Table 4: Age (50+) Breakdown of Consumer). The high level of positive response in this demographic also suggests that emotional appeals in patriotic advertising can be particularly effective in fostering brand loyalty and purchase intentions among older consumers.

Conversely, 10% of respondents reported a neutral response, indicating that this small segment may not be as moved by the emotional messaging, but also do not feel alienated by it (Table 4). Finally, only 5% of the older consumers expressed a negative perception of patriotic advertising, highlighting that for the vast majority in this demographic, these messages are either positively received or at least tolerated (Table 4).

Overall, the data in Table 4 emphasise that emotional appeals in patriotic advertising are particularly effective for consumers aged 50 and above, with minimal neutral or negative reactions.

**2. Brand Loyalty and Trust Increase
Brands Using Patriotic Messages:**

- Increase in Trust and Loyalty: 20% (Measured by pre- and post-campaign surveys)
- Pre-campaign Loyalty Score (Mean): 3.5/5
- Post-campaign Loyalty Score (Mean): 4.2/5

Sales Increase During Campaign Periods

Sales Increase: 15% (Compared to the same period in the previous year)

Analysis of Brands Using Patriotic Messages

The data on brands using patriotic messages shows a clear positive impact on consumer trust and loyalty. According to pre- and post-campaign surveys, there was a 20% increase in consumer trust and loyalty toward brands that incorporated patriotic themes in their advertising (Brands Using Patriotic Messages). This indicates that patriotic advertising strategies effectively strengthen emotional connections with consumers, fostering a sense of shared values and national pride.

The improvement in consumer loyalty is further supported by the loyalty scores. Before the campaigns, the average loyalty score was 3.5 out of 5. After the implementation of patriotic campaigns, this score increased to 4.2 out of 5, highlighting a significant increase in brand loyalty (Brands Using Patriotic Messages). This upward shift underscores the potential of patriotic messaging to build more meaningful and enduring relationships between consumers and brands.

Additionally, sales increased by 15% during the campaign period compared to the same period in the previous year (Brands Using Patriotic Messages). This sales growth aligns with the

observed rise in consumer loyalty, indicating that the positive emotional impact of patriotic advertising can directly translate into improved commercial outcomes.

Overall, the findings from the Brands Using Patriotic Messages data underscore that incorporating patriotic themes in advertising can have a significant and measurable impact on consumer loyalty and sales performance.

Table 5: Consumer Scepticism

Consumer Scepticism	Percentage
Perception of Manipulation	30
Perception of Authenticity	60
Indifferent	10

Analysis of Table 5: Consumer Scepticism

Table 5 illustrates the general feelings of consumers towards patriotic advertising and their levels of trust in these messages. The data show that 30% of respondents perceived patriotic advertisements as a form of manipulation, suggesting that this segment believes advertisers are leveraging national pride and emotional connections to sway consumer behaviour unethically (Table 5: Consumer Scepticism). This perception of manipulation can erode trust and potentially diminish the effectiveness of these campaigns for this group.

Conversely, a significant 60% of consumers reported a perception of authenticity in the patriotic messages, indicating that the majority believe the campaigns genuinely reflect values and national sentiment rather than purely serving as a marketing tactic (Table 5). This suggests that for most consumers, patriotic advertising can effectively strengthen trust and emotional bonds with the brand.

Meanwhile, 10% of consumers were indifferent to these messages, showing a neutral stance and limited emotional or cognitive engagement with patriotic advertising (Table 5). These consumers may be less susceptible to patriotic themes altogether, regardless of how they are presented.

Overall, the data from Table 5 suggests that while a majority of consumers view patriotic advertising as authentic and trust-building, there remains a notable portion who are sceptical and perceive it as manipulative.

Table 6: In-depth Interview

Common theme	Percentage
Authenticity	80
Emotional	90
Ethical Concerns	40

Analysis of Table 6: In-depth Interview

Table 6 summarises key themes identified through in-depth interviews regarding patriotic advertising. The findings reveal that 80% of respondents emphasised the importance of authenticity in patriotic messages, highlighting that genuine and sincere communication of national pride is crucial for consumer acceptance and trust (Table 6: In-depth Interview).

Moreover, an even higher percentage, 90%, reported experiencing strong emotional resonance with well-crafted patriotic advertisements. This emotional connection helps create a meaningful bond between the consumers and the product, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the advertising (Table 6). However, 40% of respondents expressed ethical concerns related to the use of patriotism in advertising. These concerns include questioning the morality of leveraging national beliefs for commercial gain and whether it is appropriate to tie patriotic feelings directly

to product promotion (Table 6). In summary, while the majority of consumers appreciate authenticity and emotional depth in patriotic ads, there is a significant portion that remains cautious about potential ethical issues surrounding such marketing strategies.

Findings

The findings from this study provide a detailed look into how patriotic messages in advertising art shape consumer emotions, brand loyalty, and perceptions. Analysing survey data, we found that a significant portion of respondents (70%) experienced positive emotions like pride and loyalty when exposed to patriotic themes in advertisements. This emotional response was particularly strong among older consumers (ages 50+), who connected deeply with national symbols, such as flags and historical references, and the use of nostalgic narratives. These consumers often reported that patriotic ads not only reminded them of personal experiences related to national events but also fostered a sense of unity and connection with the brand. Brands that authentically incorporated patriotic elements observed a 20% increase in consumer trust and loyalty, with the mean loyalty score rising from 3.5 to 4.2 out of 5 post-campaigns. This boost was especially evident during national holidays and events, suggesting that the timing of patriotic messaging is a key factor in its effectiveness.

Additional insights from the study indicate that the impact of patriotic advertising is closely related to the extent to which individuals see their personal identity as intertwined with their national identity. People who feel a strong sense of belonging to the nation are more receptive to patriotic brand messages and tend to view such campaigns as sincere. Cultural orientation also plays a role: audiences from collectivistic backgrounds generally respond more favourably to patriotic cues compared to those from more individualistic cultures. Research also shows that when a brand successfully aligns itself with national values, consumers perceive the brand as more trustworthy and of higher quality, which in turn supports higher purchase intention.

An investigation into the antecedents and impacts of patriotic brand image found that a strong patriotic brand image positively influences consumers' purchase intentions toward domestic products. This effect is mediated by consumers' national identification and perceived product quality, suggesting that brands can enhance purchase intentions by fostering a patriotic image that resonates with consumers' national identity. Additionally, a study on consumer patriotism and response to patriotic advertising developed a theoretical model delineating the relationships between consumers' patriotism and their reactions to patriotic messages. The findings indicate that consumers with higher levels of patriotism are more likely to respond positively to patriotic advertising, leading to increased brand loyalty and purchase intentions.

However, the effectiveness of patriotic advertising is not uniform across all consumer segments. Research indicates that ethnic consumers may require more cognitive effort to align nation-based appeals with their cultural identities, potentially reducing the effectiveness of patriotic themes in advertising for these groups.

In summary, while patriotic messages in advertising can enhance consumer perceptions and behaviours toward domestic brands, their effectiveness is contingent upon factors such as national identity salience, cultural background, and individual levels of patriotism. Brands aiming to employ patriotic themes should consider these variables to ensure their messages resonate authentically with their target audience.

Conversely, the study uncovered a level of scepticism among consumers, with 30% of respondents indicating that they viewed patriotic messages as potentially manipulative or inauthentic. This sentiment was more pronounced among younger audiences (ages 18-30), who were less likely to form positive associations with patriotic advertising and more likely to perceive it as a tactic for commercial gain rather than genuine national pride. Interviews reinforced this finding, revealing that younger consumers often value authenticity and are critical

of brands that appear to exploit national symbols purely for profit. Additionally, ethical considerations emerged as a recurring theme, with many participants stressing the importance of cultural sensitivity and the need for brands to strike a balance between emotional appeal and respectful representation.

Overall, the study underscores the dual-edged nature of patriotic advertising: while it can successfully deepen consumer loyalty and brand affinity, it also risks alienating certain demographic groups if not executed thoughtfully. These insights highlight the importance of authenticity, timing, and cultural awareness in crafting patriotic messages that resonate positively across diverse audiences. Brands seeking to leverage patriotic themes should be mindful of these nuances to maximise impact while avoiding potential pitfalls.

CONCLUSION

The findings from this study reveal that patriotic advertising plays a complex role in influencing consumer attitudes across demographic groups. Overall, most participants reported positive emotional reactions to patriotic messages, which helped strengthen brand loyalty and increased purchasing intentions. Campaigns built around national pride were particularly effective among older age groups, while younger audiences expressed more mixed reactions and a greater awareness of the commercial motives behind such messaging. The survey and interview data together emphasise the importance of authenticity—patriotic themes are well received when they appear sincere, but they can quickly lose credibility if audiences perceive them as manipulative.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no competing interests.

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