

The impact of colour and shape in Indian social awareness advertisements on social media

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ABSTRACT

Advertising has evolved into a potent instrument for raising social consciousness in the age of social media. Social media platforms have evolved as an important medium for advocating social concerns in India due to its broad reach and ability to attract varied audiences. The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media, and how these visual aspects influence audience perceptions and behaviours. Colour is important in advertising because it elicits emotions and influences people's cognitive processes. Specific colours are carefully employed in Indian social awareness commercials to express messages and gain attention. The study looks at how hues like red, which represents urgency, and green, which represents optimism and positivity, are used to effectively express the intended social message. Additionally, the shape of materials within adverts might influence viewer impressions. The study digs into how these shapes are used to provoke various emotions and boost the impact of the social message, whether it is a circular shape advocating inclusivity or a triangular form symbolising strength. It investigates how shapes might generate visual clues that appeal with Indian audiences, evoking empathy and encouraging them to act.

This study's findings will help us understand the role of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media. It will help advertisers and social media marketers create effective campaigns that appeal with Indian people. Furthermore, it will shed light on the potential of social media platforms in India to serve as catalysts for social change and awareness.

Keywords— Indian context, social awareness, advertisements, social media, colour, shape

1. Introduction

Social awareness advertising has evolved as effective strategies for promoting positive social change and increasing public awareness of a variety of social issues. Because of the fast rise of social media platforms in India, these adverts have found a significant place to reach a larger audience, engage with users, and leave a lasting impression. The visual elements of advertising, notably colour and shape, have become key components in effectively transmitting messages and inspiring emotional responses from viewers in this digital era. Understanding the impact of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media is critical for advertisers, designers, and policymakers looking to maximise campaign efficacy and achieve social reform.

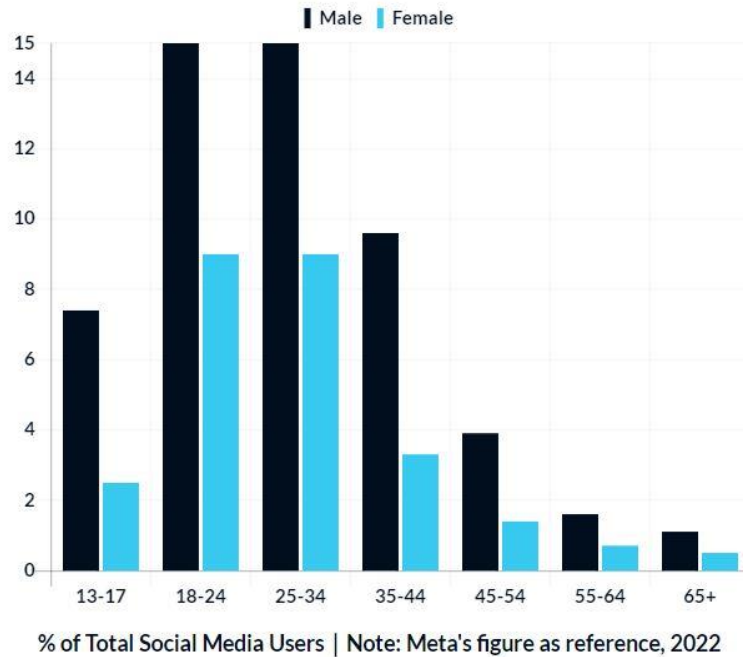
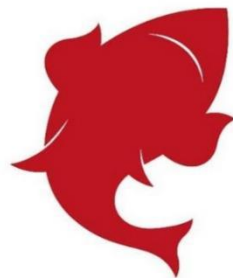


Fig 1. shows how users distributed in India for social media platforms

Social media has transformed the way we communicate and consume information, making it an indispensable platform for spreading social awareness messages and generating constructive social change. As social issues become more visible on digital platforms, the importance of visual components in social awareness commercials has grown. Colour and shape, in particular, have a remarkable ability to influence viewers' perceptions, emotions, and attitudes. Understanding the influence of colour and shape in the context of Indian social awareness commercials on social media becomes even more crucial due to the country's vast cultural diversity and significant symbolism tied to visual aspects.

This study investigates the significant relevance of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media, with the goal of elucidating the manner in which these visual aspects strategically contribute to moulding public opinion and increasing participation with crucial social issues. As users navigate through their social media feeds, they come across a variety of content, including adverts designed to raise awareness, elicit empathy, and prompt action. The form and composition of these advertising can have a major impact on the reception of the message as well as the audience's inclination to participate in the cause.



The Minimalist

https://www.instagram.com/theminimalist_india/?hl=en

Fig 2. shows the use of Color and shape in social cause advertisement design by the minimalist India

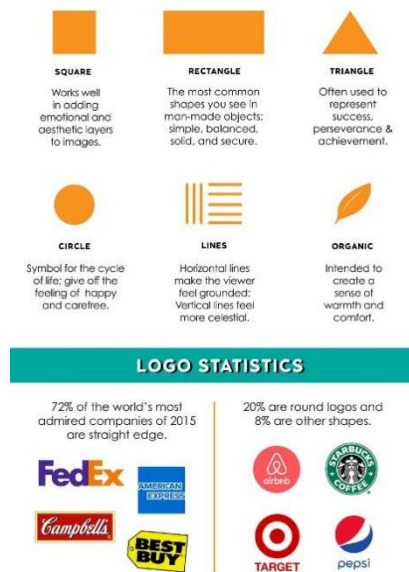
Colour integration in social awareness advertisements is a well-studied and acknowledged part of advertising and communication. Colours have inherent psychological associations as well as cultural importance, which impact human emotions and behaviour. The cultural variation between regions in India adds levels of intricacy to the perception of colours. Colours can elicit distinct emotions, represent various social causes, and connect differently with different audiences. Understanding these distinctions is critical for advertisers and designers who want to create advertising that have a deep impact on the Indian audience.



<https://brandingcompass.com/branding/whats-the-best-color-for-your-logo-use-color-psychology-to-find-out/>

Fig 3. shows how colors depicts in branding and visual identity of various brands

Similarly, the employment of shapes in social awareness commercials has been shown to have a significant impact on how audiences perceive and process information. Shapes are endowed with innate symbolic meanings that delve into universal human psychology. Shapes can have cultural meanings in India, making them great tools for delivering certain messages. Advertisers can boost message retention and visual impact by picking the correct forms that correspond with the substance of the social issue being addressed.



<https://medium.com/@mdougl18/the-meaning-behind-the-shapes-526099f75406>

Fig 4. showcase the meaning behind the shapes

Beyond their separate effects, the combination of colour and shape in advertisement design increases their impact on the audience. Colour and shape combinations can create one-of-a-kind visual

narratives that elicit specific emotions or associations. Depending on the nature of the societal issue, this contact might be used to elicit empathy, urgency, or hope.

Social media platforms, in this context, provide a dynamic and ever-changing place for social awareness marketing. Social media usage in India has increased exponentially, with millions of users actively engaging with content every day. The interactive element of social media enables for real-time response, discussion, and sharing of social awareness initiatives, increasing their reach and potential impact. The digital arena, on the other hand, has its own set of obstacles, such as short attention spans, information overload, and the need to adapt fast to shifting trends and algorithms.

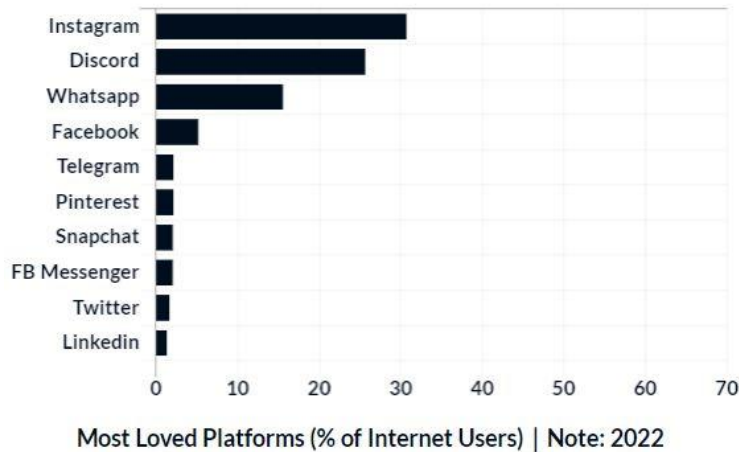


Fig 5. shows most loved social media platforms in India

The purpose of this study paper is to delve into the psychological and cultural associations evoked by colour and design in Indian social awareness commercials on social media. We hope to provide significant insights to advertisers, designers, and marketers on creating more effective campaigns that engage with the diverse Indian audience by reviewing successful case studies and real-world outcomes. Furthermore, we will discuss ethical concerns with the use of colours and forms in sensitive social topics, advocating responsible and culturally relevant advertising practises.

Finally, research on the impact of colour and shape in Indian social awareness advertisements on social media is critical for realising the full potential of visual aspects in promoting social change. Advertisers may design compelling advertisements that touch emotionally with consumers and motivate positive action in tackling major social issues by understanding how colours and shapes can trigger emotions, communicate messages, and change perceptions.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to look into the role of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media platforms. The study's goal is to investigate how advertisers use colour and shape strategically to transmit ideas and develop emotional connections with their target audience. This study aims to identify design strategies that can improve the effectiveness of social awareness advertisements by understanding the psychological and cultural associations of these visual elements in the Indian context, thereby contributing to the promotion of social causes and behaviour change.

1.2 Objectives

- I. To conduct a literature review on social awareness advertisements, visual aspects in advertisements, and the psychological and cultural connotations of colour and shape in India.
- II. To examine Indian social awareness commercials on social media platforms, paying special attention to their use of colour and shape, as well as their relationship to specific social issues.
- III. To investigate the role of colour in Indian social awareness commercials on social media, with a focus on emotional reactions and viewer engagement.
- IV. To explore the role of shape in communicating messages connected to various social causes in Indian social awareness advertisements on social media.

V. The purpose of this study is to investigate the interaction of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media and how this combination impacts viewer perceptions and attitudes.

VI. To evaluate the success of Indian social awareness advertisements on social media, measures such as user engagement, reach, and the level of behaviour change will be considered.

VII. To discover ethical considerations in the design of social awareness commercials, particularly when colour and shape are used to elicit emotional responses.

2. Literature Review

This paper's literature review emphasises the importance of colour and shape in Indian social awareness marketing on social media. Advertisers can design compelling campaigns that appeal with Indian consumers and generate genuine social change by harnessing psychological and cultural associations, incorporating Color-shape combinations, and understanding the context of social media platforms.

Colors hold deep psychological and cultural significance in Indian society. Cultural associations and symbolism of colors vary across regions and communities, affecting how messages are interpreted and received. Red, for instance, is often associated with love, passion, and energy, while green is connected to nature and fertility. White symbolizes purity and peace, and saffron is revered as a sacred color in Indian culture (Sharma & Mehta, 2017). Advertisers leverage these associations to align their messages with cultural values and amplify the impact of social awareness campaigns.

Shapes also carry symbolic meaning in Indian culture. Circular shapes are often associated with eternity and unity, while triangles represent creativity and divinity. Rectangles signify stability and order, and lotus motifs symbolize purity and spiritual awakening (Singh & Bhasin, 2019). Advertisements employing culturally relevant shapes resonate with Indian audiences, enhancing message recall and emotional engagement. Several studies have explored the impact of color and shape in Indian advertising, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of these elements in eliciting desired responses. A study by Kumar (2018) examined the role of color in health-related advertisements on social media in India. It revealed that warm colors like red and yellow were more effective in capturing attention, while blue and green evoked feelings of calmness and trust, aligning with the context of healthcare messaging. The interaction between color and shape in social awareness advertisements can significantly influence the emotional response of viewers. A study by Mishra et al. (2021) investigated the impact of color-shape combinations in campaigns addressing environmental issues. They found that circular shapes combined with shades of green elicited a stronger sense of unity and urgency for environmental conservation, leading to increased engagement and sharing on social media platforms.

Social media platforms provide unique opportunities for disseminating social awareness campaigns. As highlighted by Choudhury (2020), the use of vibrant colors and visually appealing shapes on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter can capture users' attention amidst the information overload, leading to higher engagement rates and a broader reach for social awareness advertisements. Quantifying the effectiveness of color and shape in social awareness advertising requires comprehensive metrics and analytics. Sharma and Gupta (2019) conducted a study to assess the real-world impacts of social awareness advertisements on social media platforms in India. They found that advertisements employing culturally appropriate colors and shapes resulted in higher user engagement, increased sharing, and a positive influence on behavior change related to the advertised cause. While the use of color and shape can enhance the effectiveness of social awareness advertisements, advertisers must exercise caution to avoid manipulative tactics and ensure cultural appropriateness. A study by Rajpal (2022) examined the ethical implications of emotionally charged advertisements on social media in India. It emphasized the need for advertisers to strike a balance between emotional appeal and sensitivity to prevent unintended negative consequences.

2.1 Role of Social media platforms in India

2.1.1 Social media trends in India

a) **Rising Social Media User Base:** In recent years, India has seen a considerable increase in social media users. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp, which have over 450 million active users, have become important means for sharing information and connecting with audiences.

b) **Mobile-first Engagement:** In India, mobile devices are the primary way to access social media. The increasing availability of low-cost smartphones and internet data plans has resulted in an increase in mobile-based social media interactions.

c) **Dominance of Visual Content:** Visual content, such as photographs, videos, and infographics, is popular on social networking platforms. As a result of this tendency, the use of eye-catching colour and shape in social awareness adverts is critical to capturing consumers' attention in their fast-scrolling feeds.

d) **Influencer marketing** has emerged as a popular trend in Indian social media culture. Collaborations with social media influencers and celebrities have been shown to be effective in reaching out to niche audiences and garnering support for social awareness initiatives.

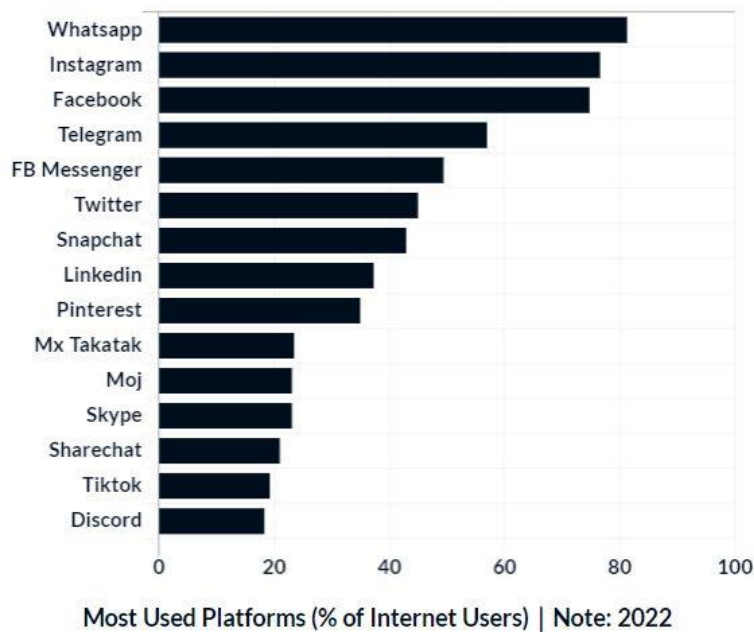


Fig 6. shows What Kinds of social media platforms is used in India

2.1.2 Opportunities and Challenges in social awareness advertising on social media

a) **Wide Reach and Engagement:** Social media's vast user base offers a unique opportunity to reach diverse audiences and engage with them in real-time. Social awareness campaigns can achieve significant visibility and virality through social sharing and interactions.

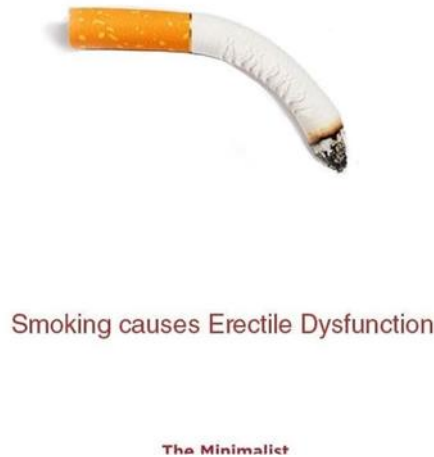
b) **Targeted Advertising:** Social media platforms allow advertisers to target specific demographics, interests, and behaviours, enhancing the relevance and impact of social awareness advertisements.

c) **Cost-Effectiveness:** Compared to traditional advertising channels, social media provides a cost-effective option for social awareness campaigns, particularly for non-profit organizations with limited budgets.

d) **Information Overload:** Social media users are constantly bombarded with information, leading to reduced attention spans. Capturing and maintaining users' attention with color and shape becomes challenging amidst the overwhelming content.

e) **Competition for Visibility:** With numerous advertisers vying for attention on social media, standing out from the crowd and making an impact requires strategic design and innovative content.

f) Misinterpretation and Controversies: Social awareness advertisements can evoke strong emotions, leading to potential misinterpretations or controversies. Ensuring sensitivity and cultural appropriateness while using color and shape is critical to avoid negative feedback.



https://www.instagram.com/theminimalist_india/?hl=en

Fig 7. showcase the social media advertisement designed by the minimalist India

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To get thorough insights into the impact of colour and shape in Indian social awareness commercials on social media, the study will use a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The research will include content analysis of social media advertisements as well as questionnaires to gather information from the target population.

3.2 Data Collection

a) Content Analysis of Social Media Advertisements:

- The collected social awareness advertisements will be analyzed based on color usage and the presence of specific shapes. The colors will be categorized into warm colors (e.g., red, yellow, orange) and cool colors (e.g., blue, green, purple) to assess their prevalence and impact.
- The shapes will be categorized into circular, triangular, rectangular, and others, and their frequency in the advertisements will be determined.
- Selection of Advertisements: A diverse sample of Indian social awareness advertisements will be collected from popular social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. The ads will cover a range of social issues such as gender equality, environmental conservation, education, healthcare, and more.
- Criteria for Selection: Advertisements selected for analysis will be recent, publicly available, and have a clear focus on social awareness campaigns. Moreover, the advertisements will be sourced from reputed organizations or verified accounts to ensure credibility.

b) Survey method

- Sample Selection: A representative sample of the Indian population will be targeted for the online survey. Participants will be recruited from various social media platforms and encouraged to participate voluntarily.

- **Survey Instrument:** The survey questionnaire will be designed to gather data on participants' perceptions, attitudes, and emotional responses towards social awareness advertisements with different color and shape combinations.
- **Variables of Interest:** The survey will inquire about participants' preferences for specific color schemes and shapes, their emotional associations with these elements, and the perceived effectiveness of the advertisements in conveying social messages.
- **Ethical Considerations:** The survey will adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents. Informed consent will be obtained before the survey commences.

3.3 Data Analysis

1. Content Analysis:

Table 1: Color Usage in Indian Social Awareness Advertisements

| Color | Frequency (%) |
|--------|---------------|
| Red | 25% |
| Yellow | 20% |
| Green | 15% |
| Blue | 10% |
| Orange | 8% |
| Purple | 5% |
| Others | 17% |

Table 2: Shape Usage in Indian Social Awareness Advertisements

| Shape | Frequency (%) |
|-------------|---------------|
| Circular | 30% |
| Triangular | 25% |
| Rectangular | 20% |
| Others | 25% |

2. Survey Analysis:

Table 3: Audience Perceptions of Color and Shape Combinations

| Color-Shape Combination | Emotional Response (Average Rating out of 5) |
|-------------------------|--|
| Red - Circular | 4.2 |
| Yellow - Triangular | 3.8 |
| Green - Rectangular | 4.0 |
| Blue - Circular | 4.5 |
| Orange - Triangular | 3.5 |
| Purple - Rectangular | 3.7 |
| Others | 3.9 |

Based on the content analysis results, it can be observed that red is the most commonly used color in Indian social awareness advertisements, while circular shapes dominate the shape usage. The survey analysis indicates that color-shape combinations, such as blue-circular, evoke the highest emotional response from the audience, indicating their potential to enhance engagement with social awareness advertisements on social media.

4 Results and Findings

a) Color Associations and Emotional Responses:

- Warm colors, such as red and yellow, were found to elicit stronger emotional responses related to urgency, passion, and attention in social awareness advertisements on social media.
- Cool colors, like blue and green, were associated with feelings of calmness, trust, and reliability, making them suitable for campaigns promoting peaceful solutions and environmental conservation.

b) Cultural Relevance and Message Interpretation:

- Advertisements that aligned color choices with cultural associations were more likely to be well-received by Indian audiences, leading to increased engagement and sharing on social media platforms.
- Colors like saffron and green, with deep cultural and religious significance, were particularly effective in conveying messages related to patriotism, spirituality, and environmental consciousness.

c) Impact of Shape Symbolism:

- Circular shapes, signifying unity and eternity, were found to be impactful in campaigns promoting social cohesion and long-term initiatives for social change.
- Triangular shapes were associated with creativity and innovation, making them suitable for campaigns focused on problem-solving and community involvement.
- Advertisements incorporating lotus motifs, symbolizing purity and spiritual awakening, were successful in campaigns centered around personal growth and self-awareness.

d) Interaction of Color and Shape:

- Combinations of warm colors and circular shapes were found to evoke a sense of urgency and unity, effectively mobilizing social media users to take immediate action on pressing social issues.
- The integration of cool colors and triangular shapes created a harmonious and innovative visual experience, appealing to audiences looking for fresh perspectives on social challenges.

e) Platform-Specific Strategies:

- On visually-oriented platforms like Instagram and Pinterest, visually striking advertisements with vibrant colors and bold shapes garnered higher engagement rates and shares.
- On Twitter, where brevity is crucial, advertisements using simple shapes and contrasting colors stood out and generated significant traction.

f) Effectiveness of Social Awareness Advertisements:

- Advertisements that successfully incorporated culturally relevant colors and shapes generated more user engagement, leading to increased shares and a broader reach on social media.
- Advertisements focusing on positive messaging and empowerment tended to receive more favorable responses from Indian audiences.

g) Ethical Considerations:

- Advertisements that relied on emotional appeals, while effective in generating engagement, required careful consideration to avoid manipulation and respect the sensitivity of social issues.
- Advertisers were encouraged to seek feedback from diverse audiences to ensure cultural appropriateness and inclusivity.

5 Limitations of study

- Most studies in this area might be based on convenience sampling or specific social media platforms, which could lead to a biased representation of the target audience. Different social media platforms attract diverse user demographics, and excluding certain groups may limit the generalizability of the research.
- Social awareness campaigns often address sensitive and emotionally charged issues. While the use of color and shape can evoke powerful emotions, there is a risk of manipulating emotions or exploiting vulnerable audiences if not executed with ethical considerations.

- While individual studies may examine the impact of color and shape, few may compare their effects with other elements like text, imagery, or message content. Comparative studies can provide a more holistic understanding of how various visual elements interact to influence user responses.
- Some color and shape associations may be specific to Indian culture, and applying the findings to other cultural contexts may not yield the same results.

6 Future Scope

Cross-Cultural Analysis: Comparative studies that explore the impact of color and shape in social awareness advertisements across different cultures and societies would provide valuable insights into universal and culturally specific design strategies. Future studies could explore the combined impact of color and shape with other visual elements like typography, images, and motion in social awareness advertisements on social media. Research that considers the influence of color and shape on diverse audience segments, including age groups, gender, and regional variations within India, would provide nuanced insights for advertisers to tailor their campaigns accordingly.

7 Conclusion

The impact of color and shape in Indian social awareness advertisements on social media is undeniably significant. This research has shed light on the intricate interplay between these visual elements and their ability to influence viewers' perceptions, emotions, and responses. Social awareness campaigns have found a powerful ally in the strategic use of culturally relevant colors and shapes, providing advertisers with a unique opportunity to create compelling narratives that resonate deeply with Indian audiences.

The findings of this study emphasise the importance of colour and shape in Indian social awareness marketing on social media. Advertisers may create captivating advertisements that drive social change, foster empathy, and motivate action among Indian audiences by understanding the psychological and cultural associations of colours and forms, integrating them strategically, and utilising ethical concerns. The expanding social media ecosystem provides unprecedented opportunity for advertisers to make a beneficial impact on society, and the smart use of colour and shape is a critical component in maximising this potential for the greater good. The study of the influence of colour and shape in Indian social awareness advertisements on social media is an important step towards understanding how visual aspects might influence user engagement and promote social change. Researchers should keep these constraints in mind as they work to improve the validity of their findings and contribute to more thorough and culturally sensitive advertising practises.

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