

# Understanding Advertisements: Forming Awareness towards Accomplishing Sustainable Development Goals

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## ARTICLE INFO

### DOI:

10.61081/vjr/15v1i105

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### Keywords

Audio Visual  
Ads, Awareness,  
Sustainable  
Development  
Goal, Focus Group  
Discussions.

### How to cite:

Sayak Pal, S., &  
Kayal S. (2025).  
Understanding  
Advertisements:  
Forming  
Awareness towards  
Accomplishing  
Sustainable  
Development Goals.  
Vivekananda  
Journal of Research,  
15(1), 34-50

## ABSTRACT

"Audio-visual advertisements for communicating the SDGs can be seen in recent times. Intellectual ads are mainly for educated people about sustainability. Ads should be entertaining, informative, and most importantly, celebrity promotion might help to inculcate innovative measures to alter the attitude and behaviour of audiences. This study analyses the secondary data on areas like the progress of SDGs, the status of SDGs from the member states, SGD index, and goal-wise score, and social progress index scores, while connecting SDGs with SPI. The study also explores the international ads aiming at SDGs through a direct and indirect approach, and Indian ads that are aiming at SDGs through an indirect approach. The research also adopted FGD in order to understand the audience's perception of the advertisements after exposure and to find out the areas for improvement for Indian audiovisual advertisements. This study suggests that these ads should focus more on sensitivity towards sustainability, especially among the rural audience. The research finds that non-binary representation of gender is not included in the ads. It is also suggested that the promotion through community radio can be a good option; celebrity endorsement and displaying testimonial may work better for promoting goals among people; poverty could have been displayed more prominently; the goals can be communicated through local ambassadors; demonstration of all the goals are also important; multilingual advertisements could be effective; poverty, hunger, gender equality, and health should get more focus; FDS and folk media should be used to transmit these ideas to the rural population; posters, local doctors, local Anganwadi or Asha workers can help in understanding the concepts and goals better.

## INTRODUCTION

The Brundtland Commission in the late nineteenth century defined sustainability as the ability through which development can be made sustainable to match

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the requirements that can benefit all, which primarily endorses the “principle of generalized equity” (Kono, 2014). The earlier understanding of sustainability considered that human needs are essential and basic; however, the resources required to fulfil those needs should be sparsely distributed among all (even among the poor), which compels us to take the path of sustainability (Akenji & Bengtsson, 2014). The report depicts that preliminary areas that need to be sustained are to know what is to be sustained and what is to be developed (NRC, 1999).

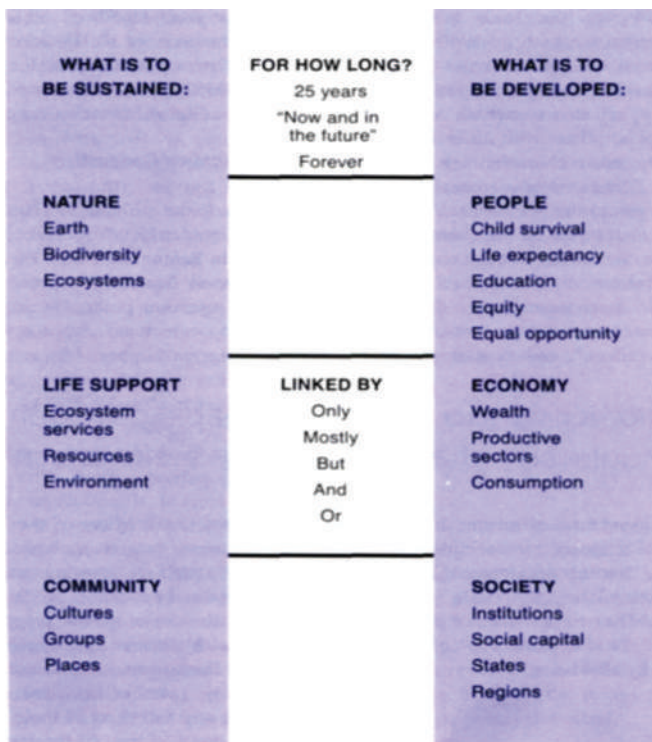


Figure 1: Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999 (Source: Statista, 2022).

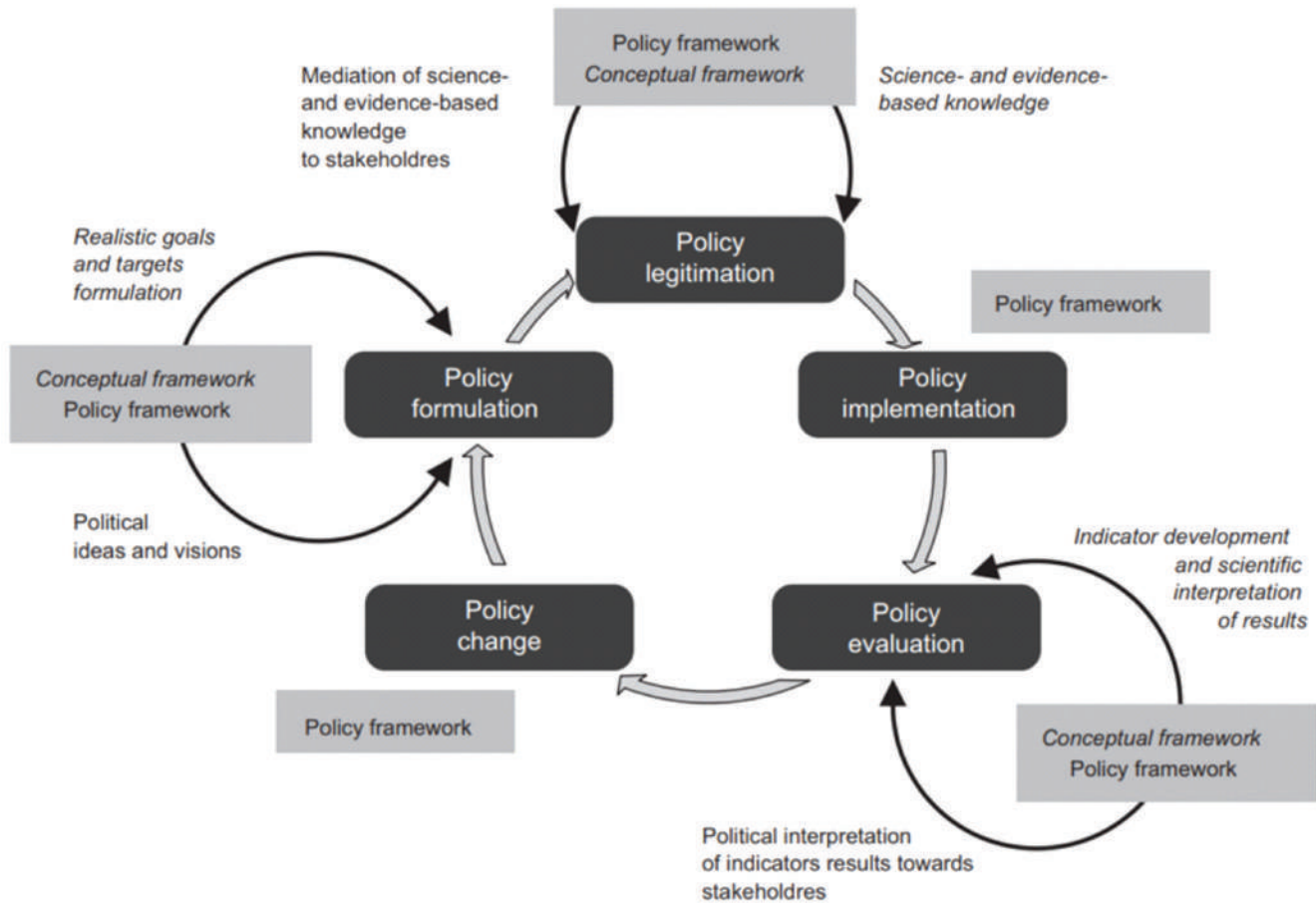
U.S National Research Council through its report in 1999, categorizes sustainability into two categories, ‘what is to be sustained’ consisting of three primary areas, and the sub-categories and ‘what is to be developed’, again with its sub-categories are the reflections of the development that need to find its target areas, connected by ‘For How long’ concerning the estimated time duration that the development would be required.

The term was first coined during the ‘World Charter for Nature’ and elaborated at the Earth Summit in 1992. During this time, two contrasting paradigms were reconciled at the primary level, that is,

economic viability and economic progress, with the use of environmental resources judiciously. In the year 1995, social development was added as the ‘third pillar towards achieving sustainable development, while it was wholeheartedly embraced in the document published by the UN as “Rio +20: The future we want,” quoted by the United Nations. The OWG continues to work through the goals formed and targeted every fifteen years, starting from the MDGs and SDGs backed up by the UN (Hák *et al.*, 2016). The partnered organizations, whose support was innumerable, continue to carry on the promotion in favour of the SDGs. The World Bank fund aimed at SDGs was one such major partnership that aims to implement the SDGs to maximize sustainability by 2030 (Gunawan *et al.* 2020). The fund regulates its activities based on three core objectives: construct and strengthen the SDGs-related awareness and capacity across the institutions and actors, invigorate the progress of the analytics to aid in solving the SDG-related challenges, and encourage multi-stakeholder partnership among the World Bank Group as well as with external stakeholders. The partnership brought in not only the UN agencies but also the areas of academia, private entities, public-sector entities, and other development actors under one roof to attain sustainability (WBG, 2019).

In 2016, T Hak, S Janousková, and B. Moldan, in their article, proposed a conceptual framework to illustrate the policy cycle from the perspective of SDGs implementation and monitoring. From the MDGs to SDGs, there have been many indicators which are already been developed, and many more have been added to the list. The framework segregated the policy cycle into five stages, ‘policy formulation’ (identifying issues, followed by setting up goals as well as objectives and operationalization of facilities), ‘policy legitimization’ (validation of the policy with the goals and objectives), ‘policy evaluation’ (interpretation and evaluation mapping) and ‘policy change’ (implementation of required changes) (figure 2). The circular framework represents constant changes and implementation of policies and goals that are aligned with the indicators apt for sustainable development implementation.

After the tenure of the MDGs, where the developing nations quickly climbed up to a higher



**Figure 2:** A conceptual framework for the policy cycle is proposed for Sustainable Development Goals implementation (Source: Hák, et al., 2016).

scale of sustainability, the SDGs were necessary to promote sustainable development across all nations. The triple bottom line approach to implement sustainability for environmental, social, and economic development through the SDGs became a staple dose of change that varied across societies. Although MGDs were targeted at poor countries, while rich nations were required to pitch in with their assistance through technology and finances, SDGs were developed to cater to the development and spreading of knowledge of sustainability across all countries. The fourth line of development that connects these three bottom lines is the quality of governance from the local to global level, ensuring the fulfilment of the SDGs (Sachs, 2012).

The member states (193 countries) under the United Nations are basically a widely accepted blueprint aimed at global peace and prosperity. The seventeen goals (UN report, 2023) are actually

a call to action for not only the poor nations but also all the nations across the globe. The SDGs are outcomes reflecting the decades of contributions from countries themselves. DSDG under the UNDESA continuously delivers the necessary sustenance to the substantive issues, as well as encourages them in order to attain the required SDGs and related issues (UN, 2022). The seventeen SDGs are firmly divided into three consecutive layers that are interconnected and escalate sustainable developments from the bottom line to the top. The base level is 'biosphere', which has four SDGs related to implementing sustainable development in the environment, followed by 'society', which includes eight goals related to social development, and the top 'economy', which has four goals to support sustainable economic development. The concept of the SDGs wedding cake is to promote sustainable development through developing the environment, followed by societal development,



Figure 3: MDGs, SDGs, and SDGs Weeding cake (Source: UN, 2022; Resilience Center, 2016).

and lastly developing the economy through societal development, while the seventeenth goal, 'Partnerships for the Global', connects all three levels to encourage global partnership (Sara, 2020).

### 1. Review of Literature

SDGs set the frameworks for sustainable development planning and programming for all three levels (regional, national, and global) for a tenure of fifteen years (till 2030). The goals, targets, and indicators are built over the experience and achievements acquired from the MGDs that also lasted for 15-years (2000- 20) (Chams & García-Blandon, 2019). Both MDGs and SDGs are targeted toward sustainable development, covering environmental, social, and economic development to trigger systematic changes with improved goals, targets, and indicators expanding their focus from poor countries to covering all the nations across the globe (Allen *et al.*, 2018; Kruk *et al.*, 2018).

The performance of the SDGs is measured every year through different scales to keep track of all the goals and their performance. As of 2022, the SDGs have been achieved (Figure 4) for a few regions and goals (0.044 percent), challenges remain (0.176 percent), significant challenges remain (0.323

percent), and major challenges remain (0.455 percent) (Cambridge, 2022; Singh & Pandey, 2023).

India, with its global ranking of 121, stands with a score of 60.32 (regional average of 65.90), has varied performances over different SDGs (Figure 5) (Glavič, 2021). For example, the nation outperforms in 'climate actions' and 'responsible consumption and production' with a greater score, while 'gender equality' and 'reduce inequalities' demand more actions to be taken in favour of improving sustainable development (Cambridge, 2022).

The Social Progress Index covering all 168 nations is based on different parameters, which are further divided into twelve components and fifty-three unique indicators (Figure 6). In 2021, SPI calculated the scores for twelve components for more than 99.97% of the world's population where four of them are on the higher side 'nutrition and basic medical care' (84.92); 'shelter' (80.63); followed by 'water and sanitation' (69.99); 'personal safety' (61.20); 'personal rights' (60.16); 'health and wellness' (60.18); 'environmental equality' (55.27) and the lowest score came for 'inclusiveness' (42.22) (Michael, 2021; SPI, 2022).

The study aims to understand the existing research that is done on sustainability and the relevant as well

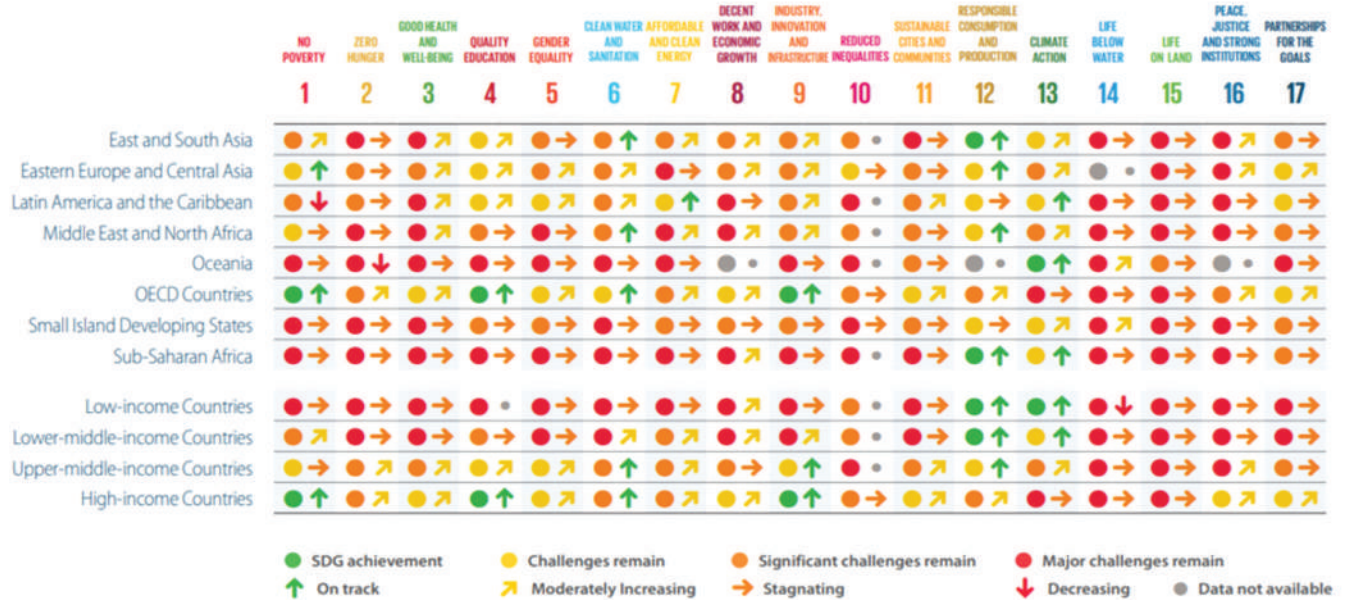


Figure 4: SDG dashboards for 2022 identified by region and various income groups (levels and trends) (Source: Cambridge, 2022).

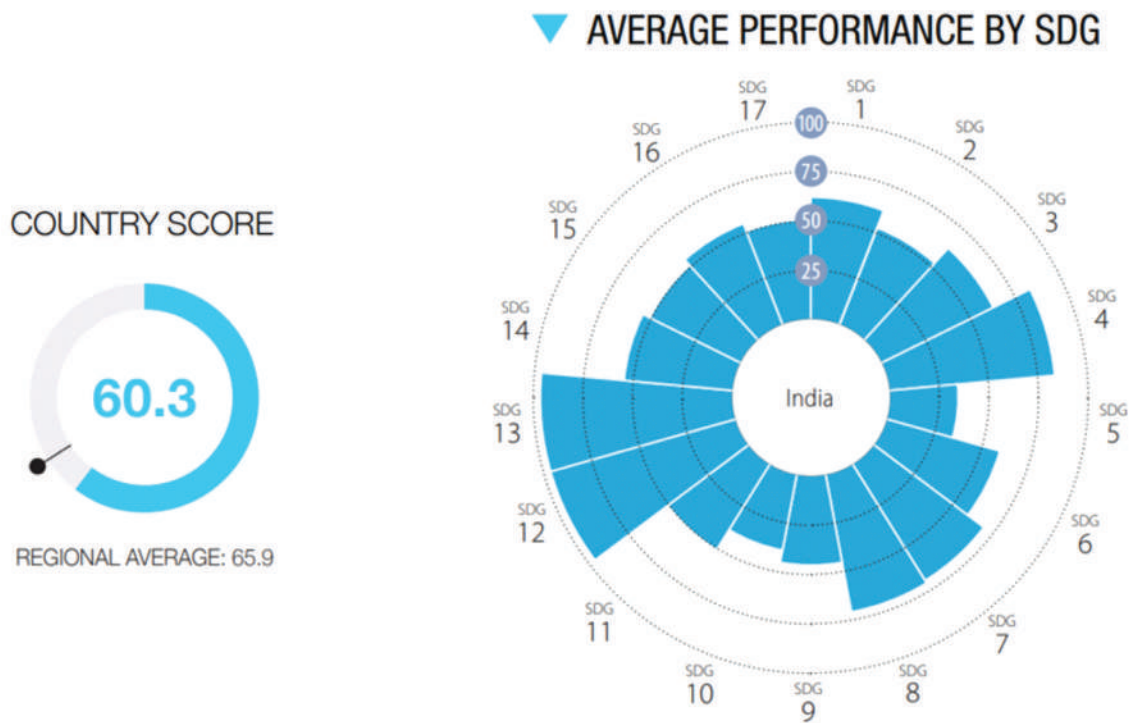


Figure 5: SDG score and performance of India, 2022 (Source: sdgindex.org).

as related fields (Kessy & Msalale, 2020; Gasper et al., 2019). While the role of audio-visual advertisements is undeniable in communicating the message even across the low-educated population, the study takes different routes to understand the impact of audio-visual advertisements in covering the

SDGs as well as the perception of the same on the audience (Jalleta et al. 2023). The research focuses on advertisers on the prominence and significance of concept inclusion within their campaigns, as well as the difference between the indirect and direct approaches in information dissemination.



Figure 6: SPIF (Source: 2021 SPI Executive Summary, (SPI, 2022)).

## 1.1 Gap in the existing literature on SDG and advertising

From the review of literature, it was observed that authors like (Cambridge, 2022) and (T Hák et al., 2016) have mainly argued about sustainable goals and their limitations. There are studies by other researchers that are found to address the various parameters of sustainability as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. The audiovisual advertisements that depict the idea of sustainability or address one or more sustainable development goals, especially from the Indian context, were not spotted. Focus group discussion is an in-depth way of collecting qualitative data from the audience and providing an elaborate understanding of the audience’s perception. There were no studies found to apply focus group discussion to find out the relevance of the advertisements and perception of the audience on the audiovisual advertisements covering sustainable development goals in their message dissemination.

### 1.1. Research Methodology

The study adopts a narrative analysis, which helps in constructing meaning through narrative with the help of the audience’s experience to understand the phenomenon of audiovisual advertising attaining the SDGs. Narrative analysis is a qualitative method that often helps to know the

softer, latent, and hidden metaphorical meanings in semi-structured audio-visual narratives (Berger, 2019). The narrative reviews have been considered to understand the various factors, promulgators, and tools used for the research, which has been done (both for international and Indian advertisements covering the Sustainable Development Goals), to understand the contribution of audiovisual advertisement in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals. The research is exploratory in nature, which further describes how different audio-visual advertisements (which further segregate into direct and indirect approaches) have been able to cater to and act as a social change catalyst in order to persuade people toward the SDGs.

In support of the narrative analysis, focus group discussions have also been conducted with the following groups:

Group 1 (controlled group)- The participants were students in the age group between 18 and 23.

Group 2 (controlled group)- The participants were academicians with an age group between 24-40.

The referral sampling method has been adopted for the study. There were a total of 14 samples; 11 were students (PG students 6 and UG students 5), among them, 9 were girls and 2 were boys. Students have been chosen after mapping out their understanding of the SDGs from 25 students.

Apart from that, there are 3 faculty members (Assistant Professor of the School of Media and Communication) who were also part of the Focus group discussions.

### 1.1.1. Research Questions

- Q1. How do advertisements incorporate the idea of SDGs?
- Q2. Which SDGs are used most in Indian advertisements and why?
- Q3. What are the methods to achieve the SDGs in India?

### 1.1.2. Objectives

Following objective of the study has been formed, which is based on the research questions;

- To understand the audiovisual advertisements, which act as a social agent or catalyst for achieving the SDGs.
- To identify the areas of development required for Indian audiovisual advertisements to help in achieving the SDGs effectively.

This research has been grounded in the theory of post-positivism and focuses on a deductive approach. In addition to this, a deductive research approach has helped to consider the opinions and ideas presented by different styles across different books, journals, and literature (Azungah, 2018). Indeed, though the present exploration has tried to explain the role of review in a new script, which is under the Covid-19 epidemic, the use of a deductive exploration approach has helped to determine the role of journals with respect to health communication. Also, the literature helped assess the issues associated with political communication and its influence on health communication in journals and other news media.

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The progress of the SDGs, once they were circulated in 2015 with the aim of maximizing sustainability by 2030, is regularly monitored. A total of 169 targets and indicators are distributed across the seventeen goals (Figure 7), with 598 events, 456 publications, and 20,436 actions all in favour of improving sustainability and spreading awareness across the member states. The details

of the SDGs' achievements are listed in the yearly reports generated by the UN after the completion of each cycle.

The SDGs were raised to promote sustainable development practices in 2015, and after seven years (2022), the nations are at various standpoints, illuminating different stages of development spread across seventeen categories (Figure 8). Among 193 countries, the goals of 'climate actions' were been achieved by the highest number of countries (64 nations) while not a single nation could meet challenges remain for a large number of countries (more than 45 nations) in the area of 'quality education', 'climate action', 'Sustainable cities and communities', and 'No poverty'. Significant challenges in achieving SDGs remain a major issue for countries (more than 75 nations) in the area of 'Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure', 'Partnerships for the global', 'Clean water & sanitation', and 'Gender equality'. Lastly, for a considerable number of countries (more than 100 nations), the SDGs still remain major challenges, like in the areas of 'Zero hunger' and 'Good health & wellbeing'.

India 121 among the 196 countries with a score of 60.32 out of 100. The performance of India in achieving seventeen different SDGs from the year of implementation (2015) till 2021 has seen some areas with progressive and spontaneous developments, while some areas are required to get immediate and drastic improvements (Figure 9). For example, many indicators that are seen on the higher side of development require a lot more actions to be implemented.

The report 'Social Progress Index Executive Summary' brings out many aspects of social progress and their changes every year in a consolidated report format. The data covering 168 nations (Figure 10) put forward the differences in the values (progress) between the countries under various indicators mentioned below.

SPI aims to measure the social and environmental requirements of the people across 168 nations, and it is likely to match some of the SDGs identified in 2015. The similarities (Figure 11) are usually connecting the SPI with the SDGs in a single stream; however, a few of the linkages are found to be connecting the SPI with multiple SDGs, while in

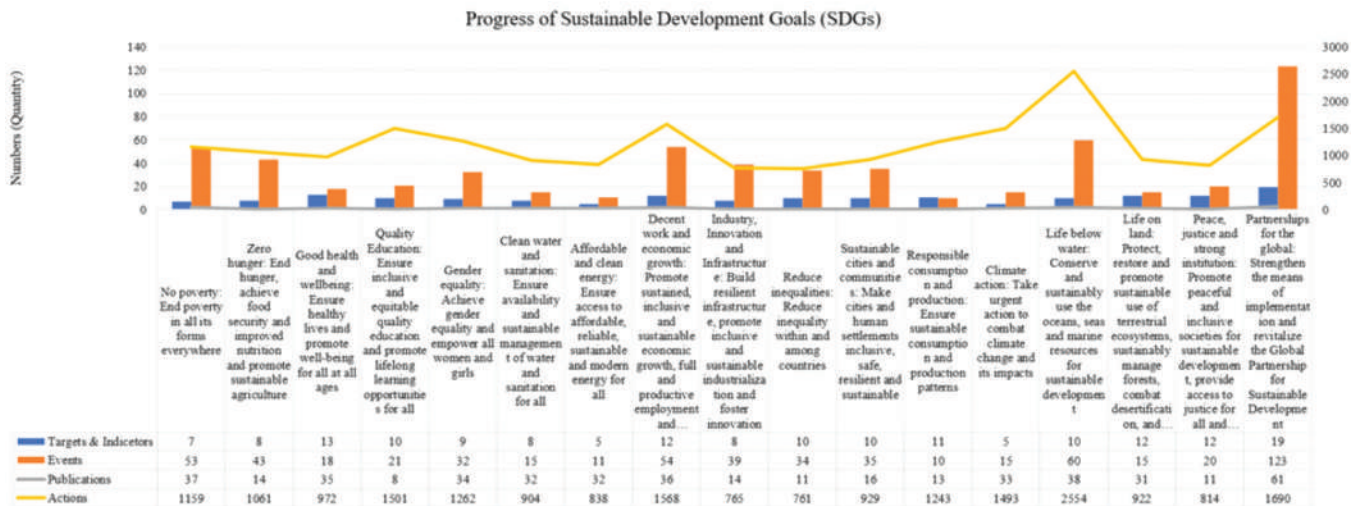


Figure 7: Progress of SDGs (Target & Indicators, Events, publications, and Actions) (Source: The United Nations, www.un.org).

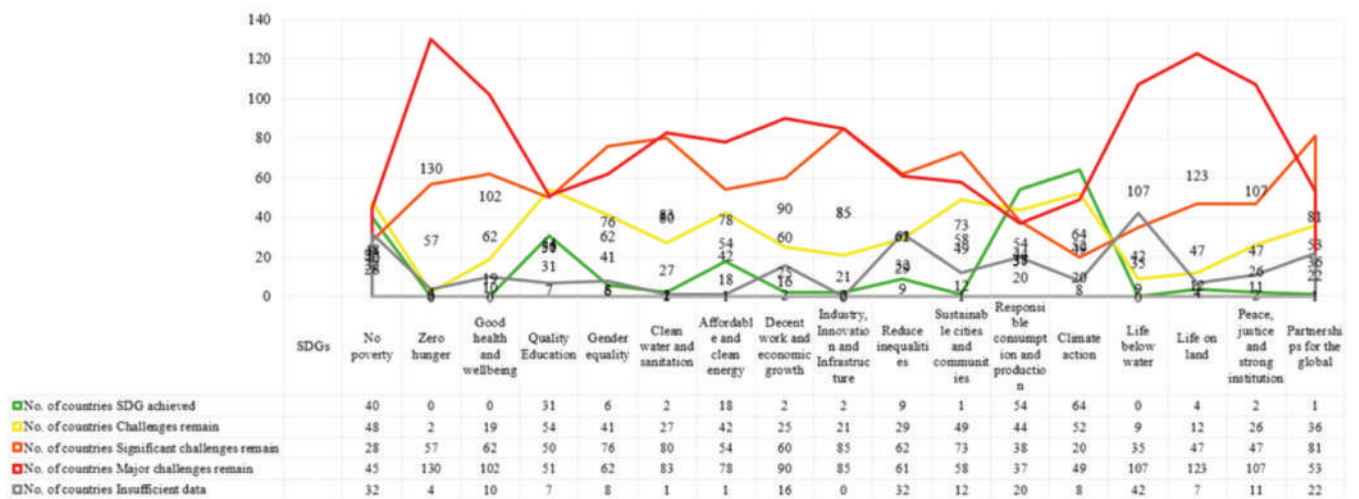


Figure 8: SDGs status for the member state, 2022 (Source: Sustainable Development Report 2022, UN).

one case, two of the indexes of social progress are connecting with one SDG.

## 1.2. International advertisements aiming at SDGs: direct approach

Henkel, The Power of Sustainability, was a direct promotion of sustainable ways of living that evoke our love and affection towards the planet. The ad urges the people to protect valuable resources and to some extent the planet with ideas and innovations like ‘creating smarter packaging’; ‘choosing ingredients with higher environmental and social standards’; ‘enabling circular economy’; ‘switching to low carbon transportation’; ‘building state of the art factories that uses less and greener power’; ‘exploring and manufacturing sustainable

technology’ and ‘using products reduce the water and energy wastage’. The commercial by Henkel, a Germany-based chemical and consumer goods company, also encourages people to protect their environment by moving into sustainable living every day.

Climate action starts at home, a one-minute and eighteen-second advertisement that illustrates the possible avenues that can lead us towards a lifestyle that resonates with prosperity, and at the same time promotes a healthy and progressive lifestyle that does not contradict nature in any way. The commercial points out a number of areas where sustainability can be chipped in without disturbing the daily activities like ‘powering home with solar power’; ‘using low-flow shower and tap’;

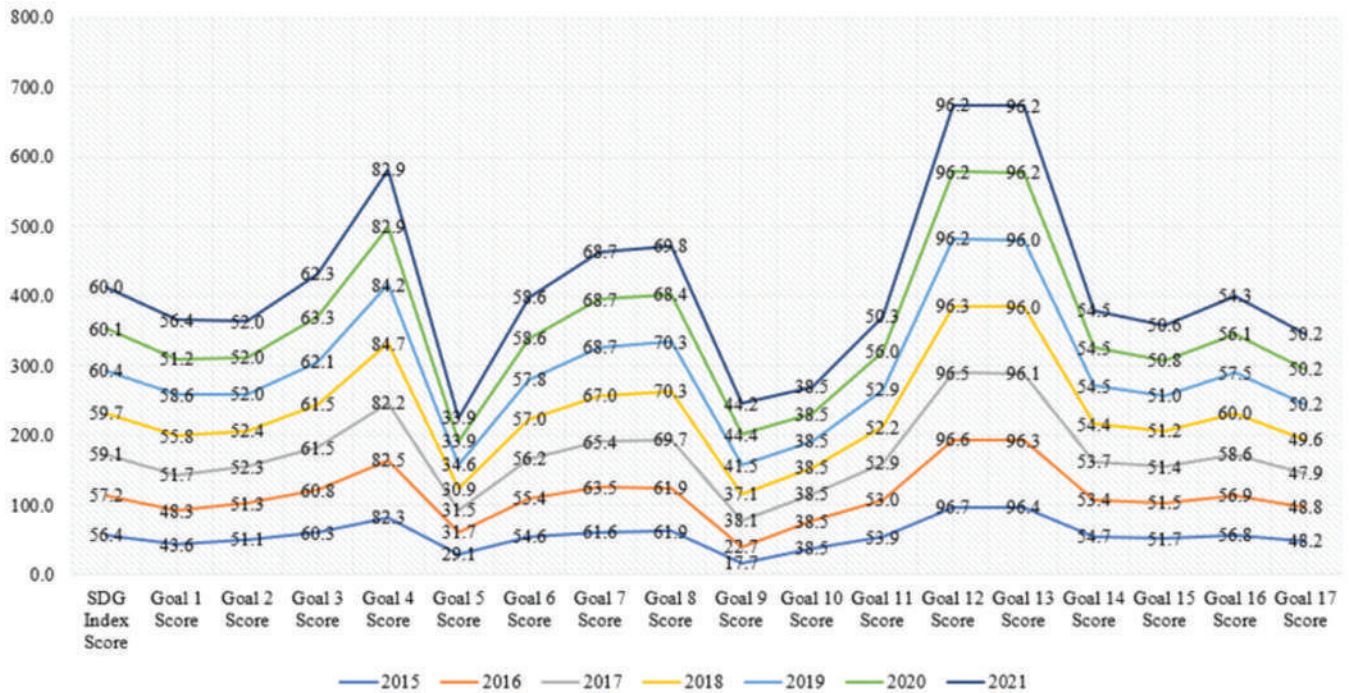


Figure 9: SDGs Index for and goal-wise score for India from 2015 to 2021 (Source: Sustainable Development Report 2022, UN).

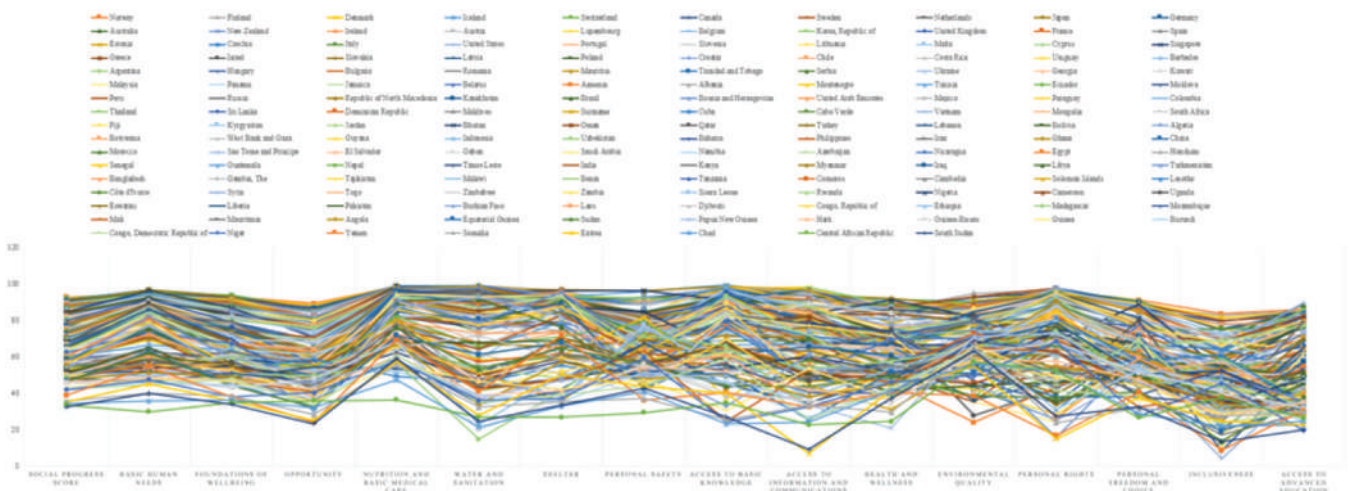


Figure 10: Social Progress Index scores in fifteen indicators for 168 nations (Source: Social Progress Index Executive Summary, (SPI, 2022).

'air drying laundries'; 'reusing leftover food'; 'using environment-friendly accessories (bag)'; 'using cycle instead of car'; 'availing public transportation rather than personal transportation'; 'recycling trash'; 'consuming fresh and organic products'; 'reusing products'; 'growing organic food for individual usage'; 'using pressure cooker for energy saving'; 'consuming more greens'; 'using green power for cars'; 'using natural ways to cool down temperature rather than using air conditioner' and 'using LEDs for lesser power consumption'.

### 1.2.1. International advertisements aiming at SDGs: indirect approach

Every product is carbon neutral by 2030, which strikes a very pertinent concern on balancing the emission and absorption of carbon in the atmosphere. The commercial bluntly presents the steps that have been taken by the brand toward sustainability and the opportunities yet to be explored for further growth. The advertisement has a series of statements claiming the plan and

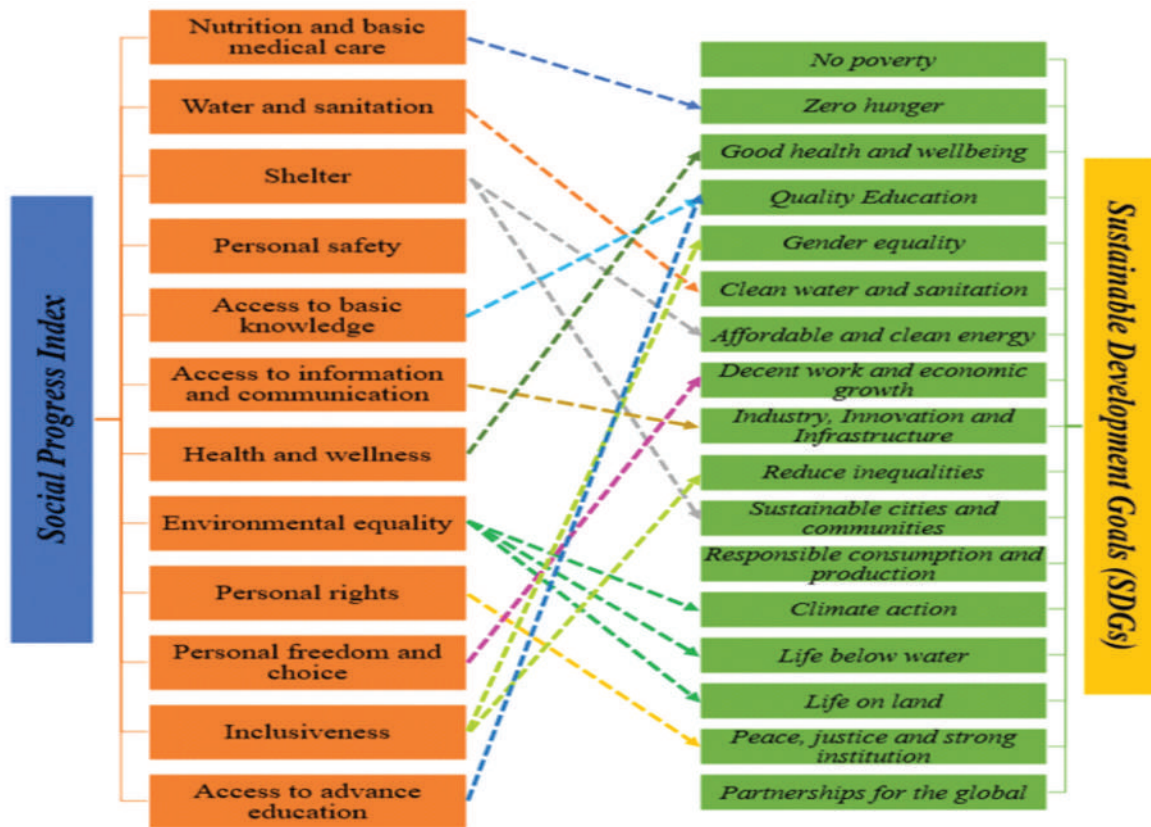


Figure 11: Connecting SPI in line with SDG.

mission of the brand towards sustainability like 'making every Apple product carbon neutral by 2030'; 'making all their products a hundred percent recycled or renewable'; 'inventing ways to extract materials from the old Apple products for reuse'; 'harvesting trees to supplement the requirement of paper for packaging their products'; 'strengthening and encouraging the use of renewable energy for production even among their partners'; 'going zero waste' and 'aiming to make the electricity consumption of Apple products a hundred percent renewable by 2030'.

Sustainability | Parallel Lives, the campaign is specifically targeting one of the vital SDGs from the list of seventeen. The one-minute campaign shows the vitality of preserving the ocean's life (life underwater) from pollutants like plastics or polythene. The commercial narrates the life of a fish in the ocean from its birth and the birth of a plastic bag in a factory. Both the fish and the bag travel through the places and end up almost meeting one another in the ocean, and choking the fish when a hand picks up the plastic out of

the water, and an HP laptop comes into view with the tagline 'so far, over fifty HP products contain ocean-bound plastic'.

Let's create a world that runs entirely on green energy, a campaign by Ørsted, a Denmark-based multinational power company that is also the largest in the entire country, specializing in offshore wind farming. The ad started with stunning visuals from different human establishments and a voiceover breaking the concept of home that we call our own shelter (homes in cities, villages, or countries) does not actually define our real home as the entire world is our home which we are sharing with countless other animals, trees and all kinds of living organisms. The home (earth) has provided us with everything and treated us warmly; however, our actions caused damage to our home, like increasing global temperature, melting of polar ice, drought, and many more, which require our attention to change our treatment towards the earth. Ørsted drew its current name in November 2017 as it changed its energy production from black to green to avoid the exploitation of natural

resources. The commercial primarily focuses on the SDGs aimed at preserving the environment with statements like ‘no more production of oil and gas’; ‘prohibiting all the usage of coals’; ‘Focusing entirely on green energy’; ‘building largest offshore wind operation’; ‘enriching civilizations from powers generated from the sea’; ‘helping the world to run entirely on green energy’ and ‘encouraging people to take positive actions towards sustainability’.

### 1.2.2. Indian advertisements aiming at SDGs: indirect approach

Let’s raise a generation of equals is a wonderful campaign that was launched by Flipkart in 2018 and praises the fifth goal of the SDGs, ‘gender equality’. The two-minute commercial begins with a series of quotes like ‘dolls (toys) are not meant for male children for playing, but rather they are meant for female children; it also specifies that crying is a typical trait of a girl’ and ‘OMG! It’s a girl who represents the stereotypical perception of society. The commercial then splits into two parts on the same screen and shows the representation of boys

and girls in similar situations where a boy can cry the same as a girl, a girl can like cars the same way a boy, pink can be the favourite colour of both, both a boy and girl can have a passion for sports, a boy can learn the household works like a girl is taught, both a boy and a girl can have the same aspiration, both of them can dream to become a ballet dancer or to become a superhero. The commercial then urges the parents to harness the children, not based on their gender, as they can win or lose against each other, which is not important, as they are here to be raised as a generation of equals.

ITC Water story was a campaign by ITC Limited and a part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, where they volunteered to improve the sewage water treatment for 43 districts across 16 states. In 2019, almost seventy percent of India’s livelihood remained dependent on rainfall, and a year with low rainfall could cause suffering to over 800 million people across the nation. The commercial illustrates the brief interviews of the villagers who are into agriculture and other rural professions requiring water resources, expressing

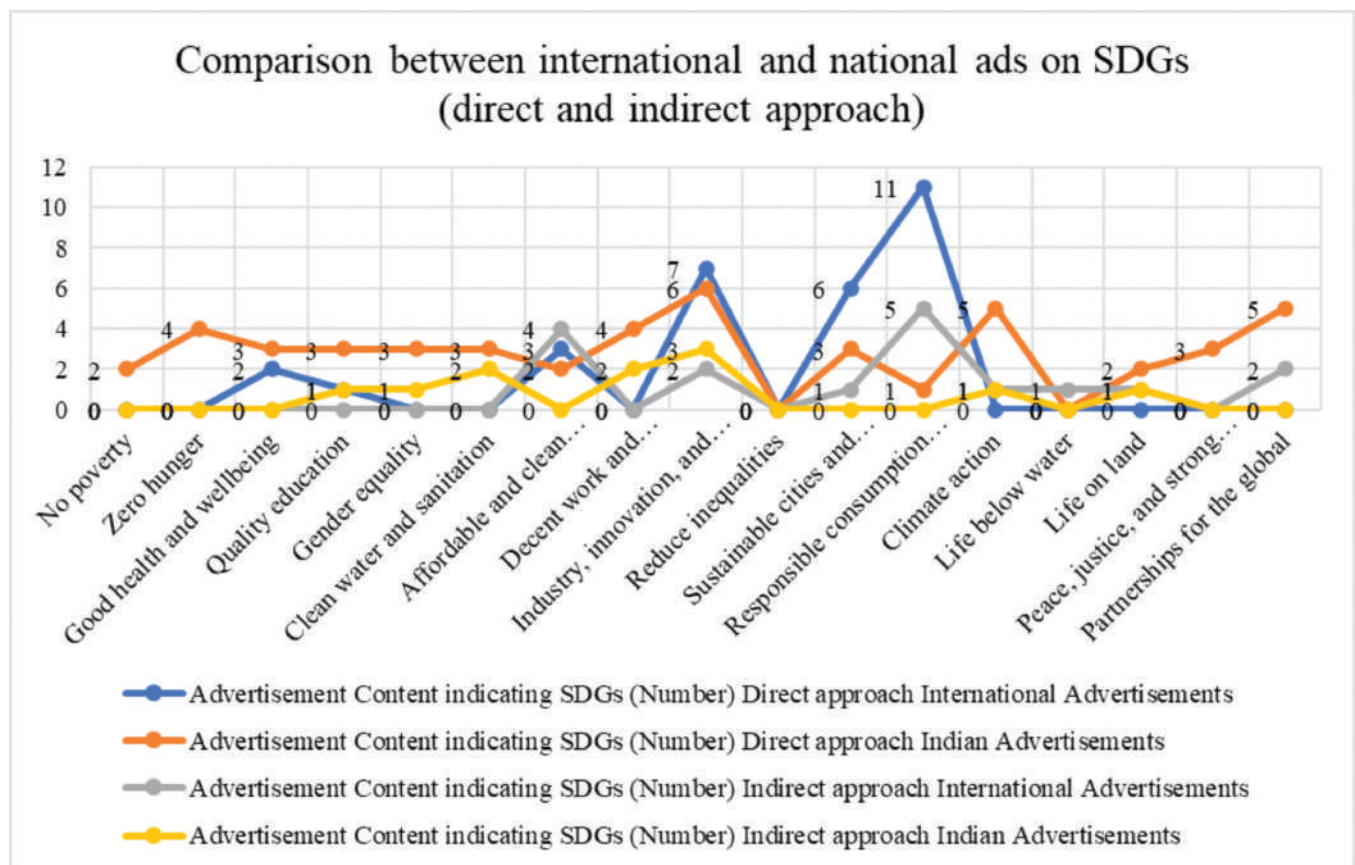


Figure 12: Comparison between selected international and national advertisements on Sustainable Development Goals (direct and indirect approach).

their struggles to get enough water to sustain and continue their livelihoods. ITC came up with solutions to solve irrigation-related problems in rural India as an outcome of a survey conducted in 2001. ITC took the challenge of improving 'water reservation', 'distribution', and 'usage' for multiple villages to help them in 'irrigation', 'domestic water usage', 'sustaining ecological balances', and 'improving the economy' through those initiatives.

P&G Shiksha | Munni was a campaign conceptualized by Procter & Gamble Corporation (P&G) in 2021 that is a part of their CSR initiatives. The commercial starts with a little girl, Munni, along with her elder sister, peeking through a window at their friend Kia's home. Kia, on the other hand, is trying to attend her online classes but is losing continuity because of the poor internet connection. The two sisters were enjoying the hassles of the parents who were worried about their daughter's education, then suddenly the internet connection got stabilized, and Kia could attend her online class. Munni suddenly got upset knowing that she could not afford to go to school, as there are no schools for underprivileged children in their village. The P&G Shiksha then came to help them with their education and build a school for underprivileged children who desire to go to school without having an appropriate opportunity. The Advertisement appeals to consumers to buy their products to help them extend their support in building schools, providing basic and essential educational infrastructure and technologies for underprivileged students across the nation.

Selected commercials on SDGs are divided into two distinctive categories, 'direct approach' where the SDGs are mapped directly to the content of the advertisements and can be easily identified, and 'indirect approach' where the advertisement has been built up based on a single SDG or covering a few SDGs discreetly. The commercials are also segregated based on the 'international advertisements' and 'Indian advertisements'. Among the four categories (Figure 12), International advertisements (direct approach) cover the maximum number of SDGs, followed by Indian advertisements (direct approach), International advertisements (indirect approach), and Indian advertisements (indirect approach). Among the six international and six national advertisements,

"Industry, innovation, and infrastructure" has been covered the maximum times, followed by the occurrence of the rest of the SDGs, which are five or below.

The focus group discussions (FGD) were an extension of this research to understand the perspectives of the participants once they were exposed to the chosen advertisements on sustainable development. The analysis of the FGD was based on four primary questions 'their understanding of sustainable development', 'the number of SDGs they can recollect from the advertisements', 'whether the audio-visual advertisements are an effective way to make people aware of the goals or not' and 'their suggestion on the audio-visual ads and towards communicating the SDGs through any other mode'.

Participants from both the focused groups were asked to explain their understanding of sustainability, and the recorded answers were transcribed, analysed, and coded. The keywords that appeared repeatedly (Table 1) like 'natural resources and 'recycling' with six times in total followed by 'waste management', 'managing water shortages', 'awareness', 'gender equality', 'love your home', 'reuse', 'bio-degradable' and 'stop pollution' while others appeared only once. The second question was about the number of SDGs they could recollect from the advertisements, and 'responsible consumption and production' was mentioned ten times in total, 'no poverty', 'economic growth', and 'quality education', while most of the other SDGs were mentioned one or two times by the participants. The third question was based on their opinion on the effectiveness of audio-visual advertisements in generating awareness about the SDGs, and the majority of the participants favoured the audio-visual ads if they are direct in approach, while a few of the participants denied the importance of audio-visual ads in awareness generation. The fourth question was more of a suggestion that demanded their opinion on the alternatives that could help in disseminating the SDGs among people as well as on the improvement of the audio-visual commercials and the prominent suggestions came as 'ads should be both entertaining as well as informative', 'can include celebrity', 'banner ads might be useful', 'promoting through common people would be

**Table 1: Questions and responses from groups 1 and 2 (controlled).**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>FGD- Students (Keywords with no. of frequencies) - Group 1</b>	<b>FGD-Academicians (Keywords with no. of frequencies) - Group 2</b>
<i>Understanding of sustainable development</i>	Green energy (1), reduce (2), reuse (3), recycling (3), sustain life (1), renewable energy (2), bio-degradable (3), restricting plastic (1), carbon emission (1), Safe living (1), saving earth (1), stop pollution (2), grow greenery (1), sustain forest (1), waste management (1), ecological development (1), preserve nature (1), save underwater life (1), SDGs (1), MDGs (1).	Natural resources (6), recycling (3), solar energy (1), waste management (5), natural gas (1), awareness (4), stop deforestation (1), stop soil erosion (1), reduce global warming (2), love your home (3), gender equality (4), technological advantages (1), improve education (2), managing water shortages (4), non-binary (1), misogyny (1), air pollution (1),
<i>Number of SDGs they can recollect from the advertisements</i>	Agricultural development economic growth (4), industrial development (2), clean water clean water and sanitation (5), environment SDG 13, 14, 15 (2), air pollution (2), renewable energy (1), climate change climate action (2), poverty No poverty (5), life underwater (5), recycle (3), reproduce (1), reuse (3), natural resources SDG 14, 15 (1), cutting down trees life on land (1), land erosion climate action (1), wildlife life on land (1), education quality education (1), ecosystem SDG 14, 15 (1), equality gender equality (1).	Natural resources SDG 14, 15 (1), gender equality gender equality (2), education quality education (3), Goal 17 partnerships for the goals (2), water (1), renewable energy (3), recycle (1), environment SDG 13, 14, 15 (1), poverty No poverty (1), CSR responsible consumption and production (1).
<b>Questions</b>	<b>FGD- Students (Statements from the participants) - Group 1</b>	<b>FGD-Academicians (Statements from the participants) - Group 2</b>
<i>Whether the audio-visual advertisements are an effective way to make people aware of the goals or not</i>	Yes, yes but indirect ads are not effective, Not effective	Audio-visual ads are not fit for rural audiences, working people will hardly have time for these ads, people will watch them if they have leisure, Overall, these ads are important, Indian audio-visual indirect ads are very dramatic, some of these audio-visual ads are contradictory, direct ads might be effective for the educated group but indirect ads are powerful for the less educated population, indirectly you need to send the message directly, Indirect audio-visual ads should not become an element of entertainment, audio-visual ads not effective, direct ads might actually be useful,
<i>Their suggestion on the audio-visual ads and towards communicating the SGDs through any other mode</i>	Intellectual ads are for educated people, ads should be entertaining and informative, celebrity promotion might help, should stress more on sensitivity towards sustainability, digital ads are good for urban people, gender equality can be shown more prominently, awareness programs from the government can be beneficial, educated people can take the initiative to spread the awareness, hardcore research is required across different geographical areas to identify their needs and level of perceptions, banner ads might be helpful, common people should also promote these among themselves, entertaining ads based on the values will be useful, the individual mindset that needs to be changed, changes in individual habit is required to implement these goals.	Non-binaries should be included, promotion through community radio can be a good option, Audio ads can be a good option, Celebrity endorsement and testimony work for promoting goals among people, Poverty could have been displayed more prominently, the goals can be communicated through local ambassadors, demonstration of goals are also important, Inclusion of LGBTQ people is important, could be multilingual, poverty, hunger, gender equality, and health should get more focus, FDS and folk media to transmit these ideas to the rural population, Posters, Local doctors, local Anganwadi or Asha workers will be able to make them understand about the concepts and goals better.

more effective', 'awareness programs from the government should be useful', non-binaries should be included', 'promoting through community radio, local ambassadors, local doctors, Anganwadi or Asha workers could be more effective'.

## DISCUSSION

Sustainability and its impact cannot be defined unless it is properly measured, and the defined indicators are set to reflect the continuous development in those sectors. Multiple initiatives have been taken with the indicators that propose two major observations. One is the long list of items that are targeted to be sustained and developed, and the time period to be considered. Two of the perspectives that help in achieving sustainability are the values (beliefs and behaviour) that support sustainable development and the practices that ensure the implementation of goals in favour of sustainability (Kates W Robert, 2005). Back in 2000, another set of eight goals was enacted by the UN to fight against the challenges and establish sustainable development through are known as MDG's (Millenium Development Goal) which had the life span about fifteen years and were targeted to address five global concerns aiming at hunger, poverty, diseases, gender equality, unmet schooling, and environmental degradation to be minimized by 2015. Developing nations have achieved substantial progress toward the goals set by the MDGs, while a few phenomenal cases of progressive development became legendary examples for other nations, like the economic growth of the Republic of China, which reduced the rate of poverty by half within ten years from 1990 for developing nations. The progress and achievement of MDGs, especially in reducing the percentage of hunger, poverty, and disease, laid the pathway for the UN to bring in SDGs for the next fifteen years, doubling the goals with 169 targets and 232 indicators (Sachs, 2012).

Even Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care was an exceptional campaign that practically has no dialogue but stunning visuals and sound effects carefully running throughout the two-minute commercial. The ad starts with the videos of the forest, field, ocean, monkeys, and a child whose eyes resemble the fresh green and blue earth. This perhaps denotes the initial days of Earth

and its natural habitat and the humans who came afterward. The next series of visuals shows the crucks of human civilization taking tolls on the natural reserves and the pollutants that are contaminating the environment, over usage of natural resources, skyscrapers and artificial monuments destabilizing environmental topographies, deforestation, loss of natural habitat, and overpopulation. The final part of the commercial hosts the short video series depicts the possible ways of restricting further damages and preserving as well as prolonging the usage of natural resources with 'using LED to save energy while reducing energy wastage'; 'using sustainable energy resources (wind and solar energy)'; 'increasing green harvesting'; 'switching to low heat consumption'; 'reducing water wastage'; 'increasing waste recycling'; 'improving education' and 'developing sustainable technology'.

Economic wealth and the quality of life of the citizen are not always equally proportional to each other; there have been cases where the quality of life of people does not match the economic stature of the nation (Brinded, 2016). Similarly, increasing economic growth doesn't guarantee the happiness of the people, for example, an article in 'The Economist' explained a vis-à-vis case study where, in India, the GDP growth for the past ten years has increased at around eighty percent, with a constant falling percentage of average happiness for the population. On the other side, Venezuela was considered to be one of the happiest states, but with the economic downfall and eventually, the nation lost that stature (Economist, 2021). The importance of social progress became extremely prevalent since the financial crisis hit in 2008, and the expectation from businesses grew in sustaining the environment and improving lives, ultimately leading to sustainable development. It was expected that an increase in income would invite improvement in literacy, sanitation, clean water supply, and basic education; however, over the years, the growing GDP failed to address the issues of growing concern (Michael Green, 2021).

### 1.3. Indian advertisements aiming at SDGs: direct approach

Intertwining the role and practice of rural India in achieving the carbon footprint, a commercial from 'Infosys Limited' based on SDGs illustrates the harsh

reality of pollution that acts as a barrier to achieving sustainability. The audio-visual advertisement started with a quotation: "You do not have to wait for climate variations, because everyone can be seen now, because it is a contemporary occurrence as of now". The series of visuals with supported audio depicts various stretches of pollution and their impacts on the environment and society. The commercial then shifted its focus to 'Infosys Limited' and the yearly emission of CO<sub>2</sub> generated by the various processes across the verticals. The following scene depicted a bunch of Infosys professionals having a conversation over SDGs (various SDGs presented in an office meeting) and the contribution of the organization towards developing sustainability like 'carbon neutral program'; 'reducing firewood usage'; 'better utilization of cattle dung'; 'carbon offset program'; 'setting up bio-gas units'; 'generating clean cooking gas from cuttle dung'; 'producing manure to be used as organic fertilizer'; 'distributing improved cooking stoves'; 'helping women in pursuing other occupations'; 'addressing issues of health'; 'improving education'; 'reducing pollutions'; 'saving forest'; 'empowering women'; 'reducing pollutants like CO<sub>2</sub>'; and 'aiming to become carbon neutral by March 2020'.

Digital India for Sustainable Development Goals came up with a commercial in 2017 under the 'Digital India' umbrella (Bengtsson *et al.* 2018). The audio-visual advertisement started with the quote "a vision without a goal is incomplete, a goal without commitment is not a mission," illustrating the vision of Digital India leading to sustainable development. Transforming lives of one-sixth of the world population (population of India compared to the world's population) through 'enhancement of digital infrastructure services'; 'digital empowerment'; 'end poverty'; 'end hunger'; 'improve health'; 'provide quality education'; 'create a cleaner and safer environment'; encouraging collaboration with governments and between industries'; 'supporting through common service centre's'; 'providing essential services to citizens'; 'improving agriculture'; 'improving public distribution'; 'aiming food security'; 'lead and share knowledge'; and 'sharing experience and capabilities with the world' were the primary agendas being covered under the Digital India initiative to achieve sustainability.

In attaining SDGs, India as a country was transformed the progress into a message by the 'United Nations in India' that resonates with the tradition and heritage of India "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family). The commercial brings forth and highlights the developments in India transform his vision "sabkasaath sabkavikas" (collective efforts, inclusive goals) into action through 'booming economy'; 'reducing the number of people who are living in poverty'; 'increasing the production capacity of sustainable energy'; 'empowering women'; 'supporting social security system'; 'offering job guarantees'; 'better cleanliness'; 'construction of toilets'; 'supporting healthcare'; 'ensuring food security'; 'improving food distribution'; 'saving girl child'; 'self-government for women at village level'; 'Space technology development'; 'improved foreign policy development' and 'developing international alliance'.

## CONCLUSION

The data on the progress of SDGs over seventeen goals with 169 targets and indicators (Figure 7) in 2022 is clearly favouring 'partnership for the global' to the maximum with 1690 number of actions, 61 publications, 123 events, followed by the goals 'life below water', 'decent work and economic growth' as well as 'no poverty' appears on the higher side. On the global parameter, the number of countries that achieved sustainability across the seventeen goals is still much lower (Figure 8) than the countries with significant and major challenges that remain to be addressed. To know India's attainment of SDGs according to the United Nations report shows a significant improvement (Figure 9) is required for 'gender equality' and 'industry, innovation and infrastructure', while the nation showed significant improvements. The Research also connects the SDGs with the Social Progress Index (SPX) (Figure 11), proving that improving the SDGs would eventually help in improving social progress as well.

The advertisements with direct and indirect approaches are chosen on both international and national (Indian) levels for this research to compare and study the impact of the ads on the viewers. The elaborate description of the advertisements and the exposure of the advertisements to the focus group participants prove that the audiovisual advertisements are a crucial social agent or catalyst

for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. While advertisements with a direct approach are prominently displaying the SDGs through their campaigns, advertisements with an indirect approach present the idea mostly through storytelling. The international advertisements taking the route of a direct approach are actually covering the maximum number of SDGs through their campaigns, while Indian ads with an indirect approach are carrying the lowest number of SDGs through their campaigns. The focus group discussions have carried the study even further to understand the perspectives of viewers (selected audiences) on the selected campaigns aligned with the objectives. The outcome from both the FGDs shows an inclination toward the 'natural resources and recycling' that denotes the base level of the SDGs wedding cake, 'biosphere' development, which is also the primary level of development required to achieve sustainability. A maximum number of participants could recall the 'responsible consumption and production' through the advertisements, which are also one of the most developed areas of SDGs from an Indian perspective, signifying the constant development in the area. When asked about their preference, the majority of participants referred to the advertisements that are direct in nature and criticised the Indian ads, which are indirect in nature, to be over-dramatic. The suggestion from the participants indicates a number of alternatives that can help in disseminating the SDGs to the people, like 'celebrity endorsement', 'government awareness programs', 'word of mouth', and 'promotion through community radio, local ambassadors, local doctors, Anganwadi or Asha workers. Therefore, a direct approach, along with the inclusion of the above-mentioned areas, may support India in achieving the SDGs effectively.

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