

# Is honey as sweet by another name?

May 21 2020, by David Bradley

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Can direct advertising work for leading brands in an emerging market such as India. The question is answered with respect to the marketing of honey in the *International Journal of Comparative Management*.

R.K. Srivastava of the University of Mumbai and his team have

measured the impact of direct comparative advertisements in eastern culture for honey, a low-involvement product (compared to something like a readymeal). The study used the Elaboration Likelihood Model to explain why Patanjali [brand](#) honey has been so much more successful than others and how [religious belief](#) and gender affect buying behavior.

The paper explains that when a product or a brand is contrasted with another brand in an advertisement to show the other brand to be inferior, this is commonly referred to as comparative advertising. Of course, the advertisers tread a thin line between promoting their product as superior and defaming the rival manufacturers. Nevertheless, comparative advertising in the US has been shown to be more effective than standard advertisements in generating attention, message processing, [brand awareness](#), favorable sponsor brand attitudes, and purchase intentions.

Of course, it is important for companies to know whether that relative success might apply in other markets, where gender, religion, class, and other factors may still play a potent role in nudging consumers to a particular brand and not another. Fundamentally, if comparative advertising is shown to be effective, then it might open market inroads for challenger brands in a marketplace essentially monopolized by the bigger players.

Having demonstrated that gender and religion can affect perception of honey brands, the team hopes to now extend their study to other demographic factors such as income, ethnicity, education, occupation, [body weight](#), health condition, and habits and to other commodities.

**More information:** R.K. Srivastava. Will direct comparative advertising works for a leading brand A study of the honey market, *International Journal of Comparative Management* (2020). [DOI: 10.1504/IJCM.2020.107338](#)

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