Abstract

This study; 'Illustrations in Modern Advertising Sphere in Sri Lanka', attempts to understand how illustrations are used in contemporary in Sri Lankan advertisements as an art form. Illustrations are very important component of Visual Communication that are abundantly used in both printed and electronic media including modern social media. The question addressed in this study is that how animated and still illustrations have been used in Sri Lankan advertisements and what are the barriers it faced in the local context. I was identified that the arrival of television, computer, digital technology, internet, smart phone, etc., has directly impacted on changing the path of illustrations that were used in advertisements. This study, particularly considered posters, newspapers, printed-ads, and labels under the printed media category and TV commercials under electronic media. Principles of visual elements, communication methods, advertising strategies and theory of formal analysis were considered for the methodology of the study. A sample of randomly selected printed and electronic advertisements were analyzed in this study. Moreover, surveys, interviews, and studies of previous researchers relating to the topic were considered. This study reveals that the arrival of the computer, digital technology, new software, illustration-supported tools have made a great impact on Sri Lankan advertising appeared in printed and electronic media. Also, it was found that use of animated illustrations is a significant development of contemporary advertising propaganda. At present, televisions, computers, and mobile phones have changed the traditional use of illustrations by bringing digital ads to the hand of the viewer. Although the illustrations and the illustration-artist have a high value in the global advertising industry, Sri Lanka has still not achieved that position in the local context due to several issues. Among those issues are absence of systematic education to promote illustration art, lack of well-trained artists, negative attitudes towards the illustration artists, de-evaluate of the profession of illustration artists in adverting industry, etc. This study suggests that the integration of this specific subject into the Sri Lankan education system in order to develop illustration art as a professional practice.