



## THE PORTRAYAL OF CHILDREN IN ADVERTISEMENTS

<sup>1</sup>\*Yashas B.M., <sup>1</sup>Gaurav Marothi, <sup>1</sup>NimishValecha and <sup>2</sup>Prof. Abhishek Venkteshwar

<sup>1</sup>Student- BBA Entrepreneurship, Jain (Deemed to Be University) – Center for Management Studies

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor and Course Facilitator-BBA, Jain (Deemed to Be University) – Center for Management Studies

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### ABSTRACT

This article studies the changing image of children in magazines from 1905 to 1990. Drawing on Goffman's Gender Advertisements, the author examines the portrayals of children in advertising to determine the extent to which, and in what way, the relationship between children and adults has changed. The data suggest that a real shift in the relationship between adults and children has occurred but that it occurred in different linear and cyclical patterns that must be both recognized and examined in relationship to each other and be understood in social and cultural contexts. The research suggests the need for a rigorous methodology for analyzing visual data. The competitive environment of advertising allows various role portrayal of children and women in advertising. Women have been portrayed as an object of sexual desire, docile housewife, submissive roles, the epitome of beauty, etc. Children being vulnerable and susceptible to be duped are sold dreams in unrealistic ways. The objective of this is to investigate the situations that make the portrayal of women and children unethical. This paper attempts to identify the differences prevalent in the mindset of three categories of participants, students, teachers and working professionals.

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## INTRODUCTION

A content analysis was conducted to examine the portrayal of beauty types and occupational roles of female figures in magazine advertisements. A systematic random sample of 215 advertisements from a popular lifestyle magazine in Hong Kong was analyzed. Results provide evidence of gender role stereotypes. Two thirds of the advertisements adopted classic/feminine beauty type. The other two common beauty types were sex kitten and casual. Over-representation of Caucasian models was found as one-third of the female figures were Caucasian and other minorities. Caucasian models were more likely to be portrayed in trendy beauty type. Over half of the advertisements portrayed females in decorative roles and thirty percent portrayed females as celebrities. Recreational roles and professional roles were featured less frequently. Advertisements for products target females were more gender stereotyped than advertisements for products target males and females.

\*Corresponding author: Yashas B.M.,

Student- BBA Entrepreneurship, Jain (Deemed to Be University) – Center for Management Studies.

The lack of variety in beauty types and occupational roles among female figures were discussed.

### Review of Literature

Bhati, A., & Eikenberry, A. M. (2016) Stated that, This paper focuses on the portrayal of children in fundraising campaigns by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working in India and answers the following questions: How do children feel about their portrayal in the images of funding campaigns? How do photographers or managers/directors affiliated with NGOs view their portrayal of destitute children? The study draws on data from analysis of images, focus groups with children, and interviews with photographers and campaign managers from NGOs working in different parts of India. Findings suggest that children like to be portrayed as happy and in a "good light", telling the whole story about their lives but that also generates awareness about hardships they face, such as child labor; NGOs face a challenge in representing beneficiaries in a good light while also showing "need" to donors; and children interviewed were unaware of the purpose of the images as a fundraising and marketing tool, raising ethical concerns.

Ref:-Bhati, A., & Eikenberry, A. M. (2016). Faces of the needy: the portrayal of destitute children in the fundraising

campaigns of NGOs in India. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 21(1), 31-42.

Ali, A., Kumar, D., Hafeez, M. H., & Ghufuran, B. (2012) stated that, this study aims to observe the gender role portrayal in food and non-food television advertisement in Pakistan, in order to find out gender discrimination (if any) and association of gender with different content variables. Content analysis of selected TV commercials was used to fulfill the purpose of this study. Services of two independent coders (business graduates) were utilized to code content variables for a sample of 103 commercials (54 food and 49 non-food commercials). Based on the extant literature, seven content variables were selected for this study including: main product user, voiceover, primary character, end comment, soundtrack level, activity level and aggression level. The gender role portrayals in both food and non-food commercials have been compared and discussed. There exists gender discrimination in Pakistani television advertisement, where males dominate more. The reason behind this phenomenon is expected to lie in social and cultural values. This male dominance is higher in food advertisement as compared to non-food advertisement. Results also favor the association of male character with the relatively higher activity and aggression levels in television commercials. The findings of this study are supportive for key players in advertising industry like advertisers and advertising agencies, for self-regulation of their advertising campaigns with respect to gender role. However, more important implication for them is to know about the forces of traditional cultural values and preferences of target audience, for effective planning of the commercials and forecasting their impact. Such knowledge can provide them a better base to assess the need for self-regulation of their advertising campaigns, guiding them towards making more successful commercials. This study reflects the true picture of gender discrimination in Pakistani television advertisement. It has been concluded using a well defined methodology, provides original data for Pakistan and can be considered a good reference for further analysis.

Ali, A., Kumar, D., Hafeez, M. H., & Ghufuran, B. (2012). Gender role portrayal in television advertisement: Evidence from Pakistan. *Information Management and Business Review*, 4(6), 340-351. Okafor, G. O., Malizu, C. F., & Okon-Bassey, E. N. (2014) tells that, this study employed the content analysis technique to examine the portrayal of children in print media advertisements in some Nigerian magazines. Children images from four monthly published magazines (True Love, New African, Complete Fashion and Ebony) were collected over a period of one year and content analyzed. A series of variables common to similar investigations were used to provide a coding scheme. Out of three hundred and forty-five (345) advertisements in the twelve selected editions of the magazines, fifty (50) advertisements portraying children were purposively chosen and content analyzed for this study. There were two levels of analysis, the individual level which concerns the character of the advertisement and the level that deals with the advertisement as a whole. The study data revealed an underrepresentation of children and accuracy in the portrayal of children in magazine advertisements in Nigeria. It was also discovered that a stereotypical view of female children is present in magazine advert images and this was not only expressed in gender stereotypical traits but also in letterform characteristics. This study therefore recommends an improvement in the portrayal of children in magazine adverts in Nigeria. Okafor, G. O., Malizu, C. F., & Okon-Bassey, E. N.

(2014). *PORTRAYAL OF CHILDREN IN MAGAZINE ADVERTS IN NIGERIA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS*.

Murad, K., Saahar, S., & Halim, A. A. (2015) stated that, It is known to all that children-based products and services are reaching lucrative markets and receive a huge demand from a variety of segmentations. Advertisement through its campaign and promotion strategy is predominantly used by advertisers to portray children as the heart of selling points. The advertisers will seize and manipulate children portrayals in their ads in order to gain awareness from the specific target audience as well as to be accepted by the society. Advertisers should be smart in implementing competent advertising medium, such as the television commercial advertisement, magazine or newspaper advertisement, or outdoor advertisement. Hence, the flow of the message as well as the information is correctly delivered to the intended group. The power of children portrayal in advertisements is the main factor that influenced the consumer's purchasing power in every product category. For instance, children images, visual on nutrition products, are often portrayed as energetic, brilliant, and cute. On the other hand, most of the advertisements picture children as bubbly, exciting, happy, fun, innocent, and pure. With the usage and the mixture of these characters, it creates attention to the readers. This chapter analyzes the content of press advertisements against children portrayals and stereotypes. Children, kids, and babies were made the selling point for products and services with a maximum of manipulation of the physical form and cuteness, which, as was seen, could deceive the consumer's buying power. The focus of this research is to analyze the aspects of children role and stereotype, advertising appeal and persuasion as well as the creative strategy in relaying the issues and messages effectively to the consumers of the products and services of the press advertisements. To achieve the research's objective, the method employed is a quantitative approach with the emphasis on content analysis. Hence, the analysis unit in this study is the advertisement which was gathered from The Star newspaper for 1 week, well defined as a subset of a sampling and representing accurate data measurement for this study. Murad, K., Saahar, S., & Halim, A. A. (2015). Does cuteness sell? A content analytic study of children portrayal in press advertisement. In *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Administrative Science and Technology* (pp. 29-40). Springer, Singapore.

Napoli, J., Murgolo-Poore, M., & Boudville, I. (2003) stated that Since the late 1960s, research into gender stereotypes in advertising has been prolific. The emergence of more magazines that target children and adolescents raises the question of whether the female images portrayed in these publications reinforce prevailing stereotypes of women and portray diversity in ethnicity. This study examines the female images shown by advertisers in the Australian editions of Barbie, Girlfriend and Dolly magazines. Findings indicate there is limited diversity in physical attributes as well as ethnicity of the models portrayed in these publications. Limitations are noted and future research issues are discussed. Napoli, J., Murgolo-Poore, M., & Boudville, I. (2003). Female gender images in adolescent magazine advertising. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 11(1), 60-69. North, E., & Millard, S. (2003) stated in this article reviews how South African marketers portray children in magazine advertisements in two very distinct periods in the country's history, namely before and after the ANC government came into power in

1994. A longitudinal study (over a 17 -year period) was conducted to determine the incidence, and how marketers in the new South Africa depict children of different races in full page magazine advertisements. The relevance of the findings for South African marketers is highlighted and suggestions for further research are proposed. North, E., & Millard, S. (2003). Children and race in South African magazine advertising: Pre- and post-apartheid. *Ecquid Novi*, 24(1), 37-54.

Goldstein, J. (1999) Stated that Psychological research is frequently cited in discussions about children and advertising. This paper reviews some of the issues and some of the research that has a bearing on them. The research is not nearly as substantial, clear, reliable or relevant as is often supposed. There is little evidence that children are especially vulnerable to advertising, or that advertising has a direct effect on their behaviour. Youth fads often precede, rather than follow, advertising. Debates about the age at which children recognise and understand commercials are fruitless. Most discussions omit advertising's appeal and use as entertainment, a way to manage mood, and a source of information on how to satisfy personal needs. Goldstein, J. (1999). Children and advertising—the research. *International Journal of Advertising and Marketing to Children*.

Kinsey, J. (1987) stated that the use of children in advertising and advertising's impact on children is examined in this paper. Children have long been perceived as an effective 'vehicle' to create rational and emotional appeals for different target audiences, but research undertaken to evaluate advertising's impact on children has shown that its effect on them is largely negative. Although question-marks hang over the validity of such research, there are moral issues involved in using children in advertising and in advertising's influencing children's behaviour. Research at Strathclyde University would tend to indicate that the impact on children of cigarette advertising is greater than one would imagine it to be. It is suggested here that because present advertising of cigarettes, already limited to non-TV media, has such a great impact on children, all advertising likely to influence children, even if not aimed at them directly, should be more carefully scrutinized. Kinsey, J. (1987). The use of children in advertising and the impact of advertising aimed at children. *International Journal of Advertising*, 6(2), 169-175.

Moore, E. S. (2004) Stated that Concerns about children's ability to fully comprehend and evaluate advertising messages has stimulated substantial research and heated debate among scholars, business leaders, consumer advocates, and public policy makers for more than three decades. During that time, some very fundamental questions about the fairness of marketing to children have been raised, yet many remain unresolved today. With the emergence of increasingly sophisticated advertising media, promotional offers and creative appeals in recent years, new issues have also developed. This paper provides a basis for further examination of some the key questions in this area, and suggests how children's advertising research can be employed to illuminate them.

Moore, E. S. (2004). Children and the changing world of advertising. *Journal of business Ethics*, 52(2), 161-167. Kunkel, D., & Castonguay, J. (2012) Stated that Because television viewing is typically a child's first media experience, and regular viewing begins before 1 year of age (Zimmerman,

Christakis, & Meltzoff, 2007), children inevitably encounter TV advertising messages much sooner than they develop the ability to effectively recognize such content as commercial persuasion. Consequently, television remains an important focus for researchers examining children's developing cognitive abilities and assessing how these skills influence the comprehension and effects of advertising throughout early childhood. In this chapter, we survey the full range of evidence regarding children's exposure to media advertising, the nature of the advertising environment targeted at children, the developmental differences that occur in children's comprehension of advertising, and findings regarding the influence of advertising on children. (PsycInfo Database Record (c) 2020 APA, all rights reserved). Kunkel, D., & Castonguay, J. (2012). Children and advertising: Content, comprehension, and consequences.

Conceptual

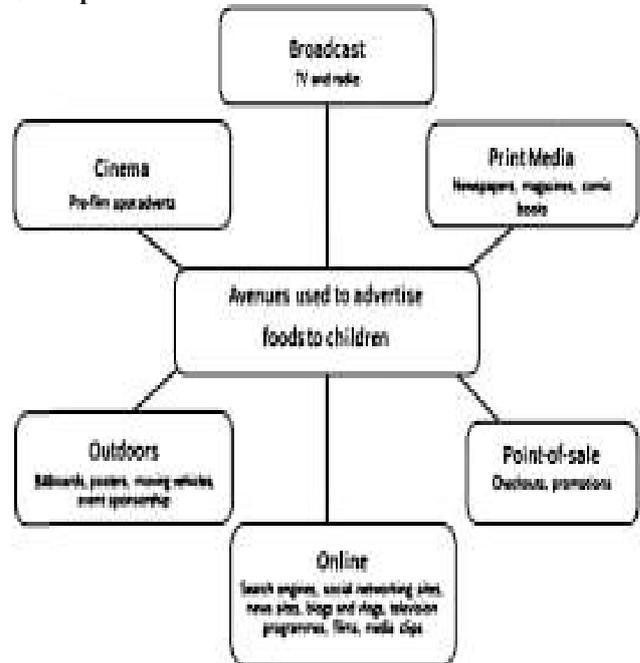
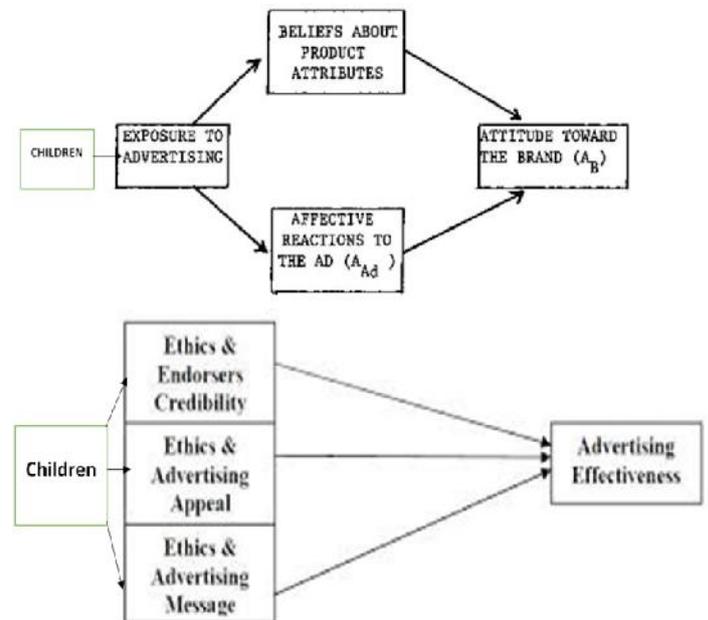


FIGURE 1  
Two Mediators of Advertising Effects on Attitude Toward the Brand



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