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Child Actor in TV Commercials – Effects on College Students

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Abstract: The advertising communication field is in a state of flux. Depending on the kind of product being endorsed advertisers use different advertising appeals by hiring various experts, celebrities, models, and common man etc., to communicate their messages. Everyday consumers are exposed to large number of ads thus provides a challenge to the advertisers to adopt a strategy that achieves to perceive the mindsets of the audience. Brands are promoted in the market space by using Child endorsement as a potent advertising strategy. This paper focuses on the use of Child actor in TV Commercials and its effect on College students. The paper concludes that the most compelling way of attracting customers' attention is child endorsements compared to any other spokes person featured advertisement.

Key Words: Advertising, child endorsement, attitude formation, message and appeal.

I. Introduction: In today's competitive world, influencing consumers is very crucial for the advertisers. Promotional strategy, a powerful mass communication tool is gaining momentum. The success of advertisement depends on how consumers perceive the messages and thus the creativity in ad appeals, proper selection of endorser plays a key role. Among various elements, the spokespersons used in advertisements have a significant impact on the viewers. Advertisers need to choose a spokesperson who can enhance the advertising effectiveness and thereby boost sales and profits.

Advertising: According to The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), the body that represents advertising agencies, advertising is: "The means of providing the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects at the lowest possible cost."

II. Review of Literature

Harding (1991): According to Harding, the concept of advertising must first be explained to understand how consumers make choices. Persuasive and elusive manner of educating consumers about the various products or services that businesses have to offer is through advertising. He opined that, the main goal of advertising is to generate the sale of products by informing consumers related to the brands by emphasizing on the claims being made through different advertising mediums. These mediums can be television commercials, print ads, billboards, posters, flyers and more recently, product placements on television shows.

Muehling et al. (1993): “Over a number of years ago, several constructs and models have been discussed in the advertising and marketing literature, consumers make brand or product judgments when exposed to advertisements”.

Karachan & Mcneal (2003): Researchers conducted a study to find Children’s response to television advertising in China. Results show that, Chinese children do not pay high attention to television commercials. Attention generally drops with age, indicating a lack of interest in television commercials among older children. Results of the study revealed that, animated commercials were liked by younger children while funny commercials and public service announcements by older children. A strong link between liking of commercials and liking of brands was perceived by older children.

George (2003): According to George, young children are exposed to thousands of commercials each year in India and thus there is a great concern about children as viewers of advertisements. Hence it is hence significant to understand and analyze how children perceive the advertisements and how their purchase behavior is affected.

Story and French (2004): The researchers look at the food advertising and marketing channels used to target youngsters and teenagers in the US, the effect of food advertising and marketing on consuming behavior, and existing law and policies in U.S.A. Researchers observed that out of the various channels like kid’s clubs, product placements in school advertising and TV advertising, the maximum popularity was for television advertising. The youngsters uncovered to advertising and marketing will select marketed food merchandise at drastically better quotes than children who have been not exposed to advertising and marketing.

Dotson and Hyatt (2005): The researchers in their research investigated the position of 3 factors, i.e. media, peers and parents – particularly television, in eliciting a response for marketed products among children. The researchers through their research amply describe the influence of parents , primary reference groups and peers, the secondary reference groups, which includes, as intervening variables in evoking a children’ response . The results of the study also indicated that impact of various factors vary according to the Child’s age, Gender, amount of money available to children for spending, the amount of time exposed to television.

III. Methodology of the study:

3.1 Research Objective: To study the effects of child actor in TV commercial on college students.

3.2 Sample Size: 200

A total of 200 student respondents aged 20-25 years of various colleges in the city of Hyderabad participated in the study. 32% (64) were Female, and 68% (136) were Male.

3.3 Sampling Method: Simple random sampling method was used.

3.4 Sample Units: Students aged between 20-25 years. All of the respondents were students from various educational institutions offering education at UG and PG level.

3.5 Research Instrument: Structured Non-disguised Questionnaire was used.

3.6 Sources of data: Internet, websites of companies, personal interviews, and journals were the main source of obtaining information about advertisements.

3.7 Scope and Limitations of the study: The study focuses on utilization of child actor in TV Commercial in the low involvement product category. The study is restricted to Hyderabad and Secunderabad city only. Perception of customer may have a limitation of personal bias.

IV. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Demographics: Major factors considered in the analysis were age, gender, educational qualification, marital status and income.

Table 4.1 Age

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-22 years	143	71.5	71.5
23-25 years	57	28.5	100
Total	200	100	

It is evident from the table 4.1 that 71.5% respondents are between 20-22 years and 28.5% are between 23-25 years.

Table 4.2 Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	64	32	32
Male	136	68	100
Total	200	100	

From the table 4.2 it is evident that 32% respondents are female and 68% are male.

Table 4.3 Watch TV

Watch TV	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	200	100	

It is evident from table 4.3 that 100% people watch TV

Table4.4 Media Type

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Television	134	67.0	67.0	67.0
News Paper	66	33.0	33.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 depicts that 67% respondents watch advertisements in television, 33% in newspaper

Table4.5 Type of Commercial

Type of Commercial	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Animated	1	0.5	0.5
Having Endorser	21	10.5	11.0
Creative Ads	178	89.0	100
Total	200	100	

Table 4.5 depicts that 89% respondents prefer creative ads, 10.5% prefer ads having endorser and 0.5% prefer animated ads.

Table 4.6 Attitude towards the Endorser

Attitude towards the Endorser	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Dissatisfied	1	0.5	0.5
Neutral	76	38.0	38.5
Satisfied	88	44.0	82.5
Highly satisfied	35	17.5	100
Total	200	100	

It is evident from the table 4.6 that 44% respondents are satisfied with the endorser endorsing the product, 38% have neutral opinion, 17.5% are highly satisfied and 0.5% is dissatisfied with the endorser endorsing the product.

Table 4.7 Satisfaction towards TV Advertisement

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Television	149	74.5	74.5	74.5
News Paper	35	17.5	17.5	92.0
Others	16	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

It is evident from the table 4.7 that 74.5% respondents are satisfied towards TV ads, 17.5% with news paper and 8% with others.

V. Findings of the study:

1. It is found that 71.5% respondents are between 20-22 years and 28.5% are between 23-25 years.
2. It is found that 32% respondents are female and 68% are male.
3. It is found that 100% people watch TV.
4. 67% respondents watch advertisements in television, 33% in newspaper.
5. It is found that 89% respondents prefer creative ads, 10.5% prefer ads having endorser and 0.5% prefers animated ads.
6. It is found that 44% respondents are satisfied with the endorser endorsing the product.
7. It is found that 74.5% respondents are satisfied towards TV ads, 17.5% with news paper and 8% with others.

VI. Scope for further study: The study was conducted for low involvement products. It can be conducted for high involvement products. It is conducted for college students at U.G and P.G. It can be conducted for other consumers.

VII. Conclusions: In the modern families it can be observed that kids are playing crucial role in the buying decision making, and advertisers feature kids more often as endorsers in advertisements.

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