



Family, Community and Consumer Research Use of Stimulus by Advertisers on Food Products for Children

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Abstract

Advertising is a multi-billion dollar industry with one main goal: persuading people to buy products. Advertisers present their products in the most appealing way by using celebrities to endorse a product. This increases children's liking for a product children are targeted just as any other market, and, like adults, are subject to particular techniques used by advertisers to enhance their brands. Thus, to identify the stimulus utilized in advertisements enforcing the purchases made for the child into the family, the present study was undertaken. The unit of enquiry were the mothers and their children, 144 each in number belonging to different families. The data was collected through interview schedule which concerned information on the stimulus utilized in the advertisements targeted on children. Stimulus for the present study were the elements used in the advertisements to attract children such as cartoon characters, celebrity endorsements, emotional appeals etc. The findings revealed that majority of children liked the advertisement of "Health Drink A" because of the qualitative aspects. Similarly the advertisement of "Milk Product A" appealed because of the qualitative aspects used in the advertisement. The advertisements for biscuits also appealed to the children because of the "Qualitative aspect" used as a stimulus in the advertisement. Amongst the advertisements related to chocolates i.e. "Choc I" and "Choc D" was found to induce demand for purchase because of "Qualitative aspects". "Qualitative aspects" was the stimulus which influenced the demand for the purchase of most of the products. The findings of the study will help the parents and school authorities to create awareness amongst the children for avoiding the negative persuasion of advertisements.

Keywords: Advertisements, demand, stimulus, children..

Introduction

The basic task of marketing is the delivery of product(s) to the family as consumers so that their needs are fulfilled and organizational objectives are also achieved. In audio-visual forms such as the Television, cinema screen. Virtually any medium can be used for advertising but one of the most effective forms of advertisement is television advertisement which is generally considered the most effective mass-market advertising format. Advertising is a multi-billion dollar industry with one main goal: persuading people to buy products¹. Advertising to children avoids any appeal to the rational, emphasizing instead that ads are for entertainment and "enjoyable for their own sake" as opposed to providing any real consumer information². The most common persuasive strategy employed in advertising to children is to associate the product with fun and happiness, rather than to provide any factual product-related information. Advertising is essential a form of communication and its basic responsibility is to deliver desired information to the targeted audience³. Hence, children in the age category 8-10 years have a positive attitude towards advertisements⁴. There are concerns about the way that products are presented to children. Advertisers naturally want to present their products in the most appealing way, and this might mean, for example, using celebrities to endorse a

product. This can increase children's liking for a product children are targeted just as any other market, and, like adults, are subject to particular techniques used by advertisers to enhance their brands. Thus, to identify the use of stimulus in advertisements related to food products the present study was undertaken^{5,6}.

Objective: To identify the stimulus utilized in advertisements enforcing the purchases made for the child into the family.

Delimitations of the study: i. The present research was limited to children belonging to the analytical stage with the age group of 7 to 11 years only. ii. The study was limited to the television advertisement for selected products telecasted for the children for last the months i.e. August 2010 to January 2011. iii. The advertisements in the study were limited to those which are telecasted on selected cartoon channels like Pogo, cartoon network, Nickelodeon, Hungama, Disney channel.

Methodology

The research design of the present study was descriptive in nature. The unit of enquiry was the mothers and their children, 144 each in number belonging to different families. The sample were selected through systematic random sampling

from Gujarat Refinery English Medium School of Vadodara. The data were collected through interview method by the researcher. For the present study, the data was collected through interview schedule which concerned information on the stimulus utilized in the advertisements targeted on children.

Stimulus for the present study were the elements used in the advertisements to attract children such as cartoon characters, celebrity endorsements, emotional appeals etc.

Results and Discussion

Results: Stimulus in the advertisement which induces demand/request for the product

Health drinks: The data in table 1 revealed that according to majority of children, advertisement of “Health drink C” appealed to them because of the qualitative aspects. An in depth study revealed that among the qualitative aspect, “Desire to become intelligent” induced demand for its purchase. The jingles/music did not appeal the children. Advertisement of “Health drink C” was also found to be appealing to the children because of the presence of “Child role model”. “Presence of celebrities” in the advertisement of “Health drink A” induced demand for its purchase.

Milk products: As depicted in table 2 among the two advertisements of milk products, “Milk Product A” appealed

because of the qualitative aspects used in the advertisement. Presence of “Humor” was also found to be effective for inducing demand for “Milk Product A” as compared to “Milk Product B”. Advertisement of “Milk Product B” did not have much appealing stimulus.

Biscuits: Amongst the six advertisement of biscuits “Biscuit A” appealed to majority of the children because of the “Qualitative aspect” present in the advertisement. An in depth study of the findings revealed that “Good taste” was the most appealing stimulus in its advertisement. 87.02 per cent of children found “Qualitative aspect” appealing in the advertisement of “Biscuit B”. Similarly “Desire to become intelligent” was found to be the most effective stimulus. “Emotions” was found to be an effective stimulus for “Biscuit F”. An in depth probe revealed that “Curiosity” induced demand for “Biscuit F” (table 3).

Chocolates: As per the findings in table 4, advertisement of “Choc D” and “Choc A” was found to induce demand for purchase because of “Qualitative aspects”. An in depth probe revealed that “Feeling of superiority” amongst the qualitative aspect was found to be dominating among the stimulus for influencing its demand. Slightly less than one third (30.91 per cent) of the children “Choc C” because of presence of “Humor” in its advertisement. The in depth study of the findings revealed that presence of “Fun” induced demand amongst the children for its purchase.

Table-1

Distribution of the children according to the stimulus in the advertisement of health drinks which induces demand/request for the product

Health drinks	Stimulus in the advertisements															
	Qualitative aspects		Humor		Emotions		Celebrities		Jingles/m usic		Free gifts		Recomm ended by doctor		Child role model	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
A (n=144)	114	79.17	5	3.47	5	3.47	50	34.72	–	–	1	0.69	–	–	23	15.97
B (n=142)	108	76.05	14	9.85	7	4.92	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	20	14.08
C (n=144)	130	90.28	13	9.03	6	4.17	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	52	36.11
D (n=142)	105	73.94	28	19.71	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	25	17.60

Table-2

Distribution of the children according to the stimulus in the advertisement of milk products which induces demand/request for the product

Milk products	Stimulus in the advertisements															
	Qualitative aspects		Humor		Emotions		Celebr ities		Jingles/m usic		Free gifts		Recommended by doctor		Child role model	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
A (n=90)	60	66.66	18	20	2	2.22	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	7.77
B (n=31)	13	41.93	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Table-3
Distribution of the children according to the stimulus in the advertisement of biscuits which induces demand/request for the product

Biscuits	Respondents (n=144)															
	Qualitative aspects		Humor		Emotions		Celebrities		Jingles/music		Free gifts		Recommended by doctor		Child role model	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Biscuit A (n=140)	125	89.28	6	4.28	43	30.71	-	-	-	-	2	1.42	-	-	24	17.14
Biscuit B (n=131)	114	10.68	24	18.32	10	7.63	8	6.10	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	25.95
Biscuit c (n=135)	114	84.44	-	-	10	7.40	20	14.81	2	1.48	-	-	-	-	22	16.79
Biscuit D (n=38)	29	76.31	-	-	10	26.31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	26.31
Biscuit E (n=126)	101	80.15	14	11.11	33	26.19	1	0.79	-	-	2	1.58	-	-	42	33.33
Biscuit F (n=115)	92	80.00	6	5.21	84	73.04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	4.34

Table-4
Distribution of the children according to the stimulus in the advertisement of chocolates which induces demand/request for the product

Chocolates	Respondents (n=144)															
	Qualitative aspects		Humor		Emotions		Celebrities		Jingles/music		Free gifts		Recommended by doctor		Child role model	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Choc A (n=110)	61	55.45	42	38.18	18	16.36	1	0.90	-	-	-	-	15	13.63	24	21.81
Choc B (n=113)	33	29.20	75	66.37	3	2.65	63	55.75	-	-	-	-	26	23.00	34	30.08
Choc C (n=139)	48	34.53	63	45.32	11	7.91	54	38.84	-	-	-	-	10	7.19	22	15.82
Choc D (n=120)	71	59.16	11	9.16	12	10.00	5	4.16	2	1.66	-	-	35	29.16	10	8.33
Choc E (n=136)	60	44.11	34	25	46	33.82	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2.20	42	30.88
Choc F (n=124)	40	32.25	66	53.22	40	32.25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	4.03
Choc G (n=129)	24	18.60	73	56.58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1.55
Choc H (n=144)	65	45.14	68	47.22	72	50.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Choc I (n=139)	38	27.33	13	9.35	97	69.78	73	52.51	1	0.71	51	36.69	-	-	-	-
Choc J (n=132)	58	43.93	15	11.38	34	25.75	66	50.00	22	16.66	2	1.51	-	-	1	0.75
Choc K (n=129)	37	28.68	9	6.97	56	43.41	7	5.42	-	-	3	2.32	-	-	47	36.4
Choc L (n=123)	65	52.84	58	47.15	14	11.38	8	6.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	26.82
Choc M (n=93)	38	40.86	29	31.18	5	5.37	3	3.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	27.95
Choc N (n=112)	27	16.07	9	8.03	67	59.82	2	1.78	2	1.78	60	53.57	-	-	3	2.67

Conclusion

Majority of children liked the advertisement of “Health Drink A” because of the qualitative aspects. Similarly the advertisement of “Milk Product A” appealed because of the qualitative aspects used in the advertisement. The advertisements for biscuits also appealed to the children because of the “Qualitative aspect” used as a stimulus in the advertisement. Amongst the advertisements related to chocolates i.e. “Choc I” and “Choc D” was found to induce demand for purchase because of “Qualitative aspects”. “Qualitative aspects” was the stimulus which influenced the demand for the purchase of most of the products.

Note: The names of the products advertised on television in the research paper are not revealed due to the legal implications. The Health Drinks researched included Bournvita, Boost, Horlicks and Complan. The chocolates covered Candyman, Alpenlibe Mangofillz, Alpenlibe, Boomer, Cadbury double shots, Centerfruit, Centerfresh, Five star, Gems surprise, Kitkat, Nestle chocolate éclairs, Big babool, Mahalacto and Kinderjoy. The milk product included Hatsun Butter and Amul Butter. Britannia cake, Britannia Tiger, Parle G, Yummiez, Sunfeast cookies and Horlicks Creams were presented under biscuit category.

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