

An Empirical Study on Message Source Attributes Reflected by Children in Television Advertising; An Audience Perspective

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Television advertising plays a key role in the marketing warfare in communicating marketer's distinctive strategy. Message source is one critical constituent that determines the success of television advertising. The message source should be selected with due concern to communicate the intended advertising message. The message source is based on different source attributes such as credibility and attractiveness within which aspects of knowledgeability, trustworthiness, similarity, likeability and favourability are embedded. Despite the available literature reviews falls short to indicate what source attributes are reflected by children, there is a mounting tendency of appearing children directly or indirectly as the message source in television advertising. Thus, the study is carried out to identify the message source attributes reflected by children when appeared as a message source in television advertising in Sri Lanka as perceived by the television audience. The sample was limited to television audience in Colombo district with a sample size of 240. Fifteen closed ended questions were administered by a survey based on two aspects of credibility and three aspects of attractiveness. Major statistical tools used to analyse gathered data were the mean values and the percentage analysis. According to the empirical results, respondents have rejected the aspects of knowledgeability and trustworthiness on credibility and similarity on attractiveness reflected by children as a message source. They have accepted the likeability and familiarity on attractiveness as the message source attributes reflected by children. In conclusion, likeability on attractiveness is the most perceived message source attribute reflected by children in television advertising.

Key Words: Children; Television advertising; Message source; Source attributes

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