Chapter 20
Childhood Representation on Television Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Advertisements sell a lifestyle, a feeling, and a behavior as well as a product to the viewer. Competition in the market is so intense that they feel as much as the rational utility of the product, and they become marketable. For this reason, the child has been turned into a consumable object. When the ways in which children are represented in the media are examined, it is often the case that the opinions expressed by the children are used to make adults laugh, or the use of children's miserable photographs and descriptions of emotional exploitation of children is popularized, if there is no contribution from the child's self-esteem or adult's respect for the child. In this study, the representation of childhood, which is turned into a consumption object in the media, is explained in detail. In the content of the study, the advertisement was briefly defined, the concept of child and childhood clarified, and then how the child was represented in television commercials in Turkey was shown.

INTRODUCTION

Roles in reference to representation of childhood and child are differentiated within the society day by day. Advertisements lead individuals to consume easily by the help of used elements in regard to child and childhood. The medium is television; the message is child and childhood; audience is adult individuals in advertisements which include elements related to child and childhood. When it is considered in the scope of communication process, it is seen that the concept of childhood and children are used as a message in advertisements which target adults. Therefore, the concept of childhood and children are used as a "cute" component.

The aim of the study as a research topic is to reveal the representation of the child. Within this framework, firstly, the concept of the child and childhood is explained; then the state of the child in the face of television commercials is dealt. The population of the study is awarded ads of 2016 Effie Turkey Advertising Effectiveness Competition organized annually by Turkish Association of Advertising

Agencies and Turkish Advertisers Association. In this study 58 advertisements which have ability to represent the childhood are dealt and analyzed by eliminating others from 423 ads of sixty five brands in thirty six categories in Effie Turkey Advertising Effectiveness Competition in 2016. For this reason, distribution and content of ads in itself is significant. It is thought that there are two different purposes for advertised products which are not used by children or used by children with their families in ads which include child characters. The first one is innocent and reliable natures of children and; the second one is to target maintenance of family ideology which creates and maintenance consumption society is required for maintenance of capitalist system and for this purpose, children take place in this kind of commercials as an integrative actor of the family. It is seen that, children are used as the message of the ads by using cute ones in ads. All these states are interpreted and suggestions are provided in conclusions part of the study.

The Concept of Advertising: Description and Functions

There are several descriptions with regard to the concept of advertising in related literature. Advertising can be described as placement of informative and activator messages paid for by companies, government institutions or non-profit organizations in reference to their organizations, services, ideas and products into one of the mass media (Tayfur, 2013:6). According to another description of advertising, it is paid announcement to the public in order to enable any product to be rent or purchased or make any idea common or create any desirable influence (Tikveş, 2005:195).

Advertising is generally planned and non-personal communication way via particular communication methods and tools in order to promote ideas, services and products of any identified sponsor by paying the fee (Peltekoğlu, 2007:39).

In marketing terms, advertising is promotion of the services, products, institutions or ideas in the mass media by purchasing time and space and using non-personal methods (Tikveş, 2005:6).

Advertising has four different functions: informing, persuading, supporting and reminding. Informing function includes giving information about target product, offering new advices to use, informing the consumers about price changes, explaining utilizations forms of the product and creating the company image (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004:495). Persuasion function is composed of changing the customer perception, developing brand preferences or persuading consumers to try the product or service (Baybars, 1999:725). Supporting function aims at relieving customers after purchasing against their possible problems (Baybars, 1999:726-727). Reminding function aims at enabling consumers not to forget current service or product (Baybars, 1999:726).

TV commercials are highly effective tools in comparison with other communication tools in terms of accessing to the large mass. Creating competitive environment, addressing to the large mass and selectivity characteristics are one of the features of television (Barokaş, 1994:36). Television has a power to influence different and large masses in communication process which is composed of the source, message, channel and receiver (Bostancı, 2007:61-62).

The aim of the ads is to give a specific message to the audience. Given that advertising is a costly business, the emphasis is usually on the economic aspects of advertising, while the cultural character is backwards. In addition to economic dominance in advertising, every second is carefully crafted to give messages that are influenced culturally. For this reason television commercials can be considered as one of the areas where cultural messages are used intensively, effectively and frequently. Advertisements are also one of the most important factors for sustaining consumption culture in the society. The continuity

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