

Reflection on Emotional Appeals in Anti-Smoking Public Service Announcements from the Perspective of “For Self-Interest Behavior”: Taking the Ones with Advertising Creativity of Children Involvement as an Example

Yongwei Feng

College of Literature and Communication, Chongqing University of Education, Chongqing 400065, China.

Abstract: Public service advertisements promoting cigarette bans are closely related to the psychology and means of making the claim. The article examines cigarette ban public service advertisements in which children are creative elements from the perspective of the audience's "For Self-Benefit" behavior mechanism. By interviewing the attitudes and behaviors of those who have viewed the advertisement, the article provides some insights and lessons for creating cigarette ban public service advertisement in China.

Keywords: Cigarette Ban Public Service Advertising; Emotional Appeal; "For Self-Interest" Behavior

Introduction

Public Service Advertising, also known as Public Service Advertising, is advertising published by the media in the public interest and not for profit^[1]. By disseminating the concept of public goods, the organization intends to promote the formation of people's behaviour and, consequently, the development of certain public utilities. Non-commercial, public goods and direct non-human communication are the three main features of public goods advertising. The term “non-smoking public service advertisement” refers to advertisements promoting non-smoking. Its target audience is not only smokers but also victims of second-hand smoke and others in society. The advertisement of smoking bans using children as creative elements refers to how smoking adversely affects children's health, psychology and behavior. Advertisements aimed at educating smokers about the harmful effects of second-hand smoke and how children are primary speculators in advertisements to persuade smokers to pay attention to their health draw attention to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

1. The intrinsic link between the mechanism of “self-serving” behavior and smoking-free public service advertisements

A "self-serving" behavior mechanism suggests that individual humans have "self-serving" instinctive needs, so that any individual's behavior is initially "self-serving"; at the same time, individuals who cannot fully meet their own needs need other people to help them. Cooperation based on mutual benefit and guided by reciprocity has become the fundamental driving force and source of the formation and continuous development of the “self-serving altruism” mechanism. Smoking-free public service advertisements usually include claims of harm caused by smoking to one's own body and harm caused by second-hand smoke, i.e., the impact of smoking on others. Due to the mutually beneficial and cooperative nature of human behavior, the mechanism of "self-serving" behavior manifests a distinct social affinity. In Fukuyama's view, people engage in social cooperation in their interests in two main

ways: first, by choosing relatives, and second, by reciprocating. This above explanation explains why smoking-free public service advertisements mirror large numbers of relatives (children, wives, the elderly) of smokers in or illustrate the health, psychological and other injuries caused by smoking to relatives. At the same time, "mutual altruism" and "emigration effect", as the characteristic manifestation of the social affinity of his behavior for his benefit, well-explained emigration thinking, identity exchange and other emigration advertising creativity is favored by many cigarette ban public service advertisements.

2. Overview of the study on emotional claims and smoking-free public service advertisements

Advertisements have two main types of appeals: emotional and rational. Rational claims focus on the product or service's functionality, including perceptions of convenience, economy, environmental benefits, etc., and persuade consumers through practical and logical representations.^[5] Emotional appeals satisfy consumer emotional resonance by conveying feelings of safety, fear, guilt, and love.^[6] There is a difference between positive and negative emotional appeals, including sexual, humorous, warm, etc., and fear, shame, anger, guilt, etc. Public service advertisements often use emotional appeals instead of rational appeals, which can enhance the interest and acceptability of public service advertisements themselves by exploiting the intrinsic contagion of the advertisement's subject matter. This influences the public's emotions and feelings, resonates with them, and allows the public to accept the concept of public service advertisement conveyance in the divergence.

Recent analysis of cigarette ban public service advertisements reveals a preference for positive emotional appeals for affection and warmth as opposed to negative emotional appeals for fear and shame.

2.1 Altruism and empathy interactions: mostly positive feelings

The contents of the smoking ban public service advertisement based on positive affection and warm appeals are mainly based on the harm of second-hand smoke, choosing the physical, psychological and behavioral harm of relatives around them, including children, partners and parents who inhale second-hand smoke for a long time. An emotional effect is achieved by drawing the attention of smokers to the dangers of smoking.

2.2 Interaction with empathy for oneself: fear and shame, predominantly negative emotions

As a public service advertisement, a negative emotional fear and shame appeal is made to ban smoking, focusing mainly on the health hazards of smoking, health hazards to others, and disease and death information. Consequently, the smoking suppression effect is achieved by drawing smokers' attention to second-hand smoke and the impact it has on health and behavior, as well as the guilt and shame that smokers feel.

3. Acceptance effectiveness analysis of children non-smoking public benefits advisories

I have searched for "smoking-free public service advertisements" on Chinese public service advertising nets, Youku, Tencent and Aichi Video websites, and retrieved 10 smoking-free public service advertisements whose contents and creative elements are children. Two categories of smokers (dads and other adults) were invited to watch advertisements about related topics and data was collected, and interviews were analyzed to determine how self-serving behavioural mechanisms of the audience were generated and how attitudes and behaviours of smokers were influenced and changed by the advertisements.

3.1 Analysis of selected cases of anti-smoking PSAs for children

Among the ten selected anti-smoking PSAs featuring children, the majority appeal to parents, i.e., fathers who smoke, as well as adults (people who smoke in public). The ads are divided into three directions: they first focus on the dangers of second-hand smoke in children, resulting in changes such as coughing, skin and lung respiratory tract; second, the influence and modeling of parents' smoking behavior on children's smoking behavior; third, the active smoking behavior of children causes adults to reflect on the health hazards of smoking. Emotional appeals use positive emotions (warmth and affection) as well as negative emotions (fear and guilt and

shame appeal). In order to illustrate the harm second-hand smoke causes to children, the ad employs a positive emotional appeal, with affection as the emotional resonance, by using scenarios and scenes. To convey the harm of smoking to themselves and others; when the target is adults (people who smoke in public places), the ad uses more negative emotional appeals such as fear, guilt and shame, when targeting adults.

3.2 Analysis of the audience effect of anti-smoking PSAs with children as creative elements

According to the two dimensions of the appeal (positive emotion and negative emotion), four groups were divided for this interview: negative emotion appeal (fear and guilt) and positive emotion appeal (affection) for fathers; negative emotion appeal (fear and guilt) and positive emotion appeal (warmth) for adults.

Target group	Appeal mode	Person number	Subjects' basic conditions
Dad	Negative emotion	①	41 years old, smoker for 20 years, two children, Internet professional, smokes at home
		②	37 years old, smoker for 15 years, two children, self-employed, occasionally smokes at home
		③	30 years old, smoker for 12 years, 1 child, technician, smokes at home
	Positive emotion	④	33 years old, smoker for 5 years, 1 child, the financial professional, occasional smoker at home
		⑤	35 years old, smoker for 9 years, 1 child, real estate professional, smokes at home
		⑥	28 years old, smoker for 3 years, 1 child, advertising professional, smokes at home
Adult	Negative emotions	①	25 years old, smoker for 5 years, media professional, smokes in public places
		②	29 years old, 9 years old, finance professional, smokes in public places
		③	23 years old, smoked for 2 years, Internet professional, smokes in public places
	Positive emotion	④	32 years old, 10 years old, real estate professional, occasionally smokes in public places
		⑤	23 years old, 2 years old, advertising professional, smokes in public places
		⑥	26 years old, smoker for 8 years, educator, occasional smoker in public places

3.2.1 The first group: the subject of the claim is the father

(1) Group A: Appeals - negative emotional appeals (fear, guilt), selected ads ①, ②, ③

Interviewee ①: "The ad ② is more memorable, and it touched me after watching it. In my daughter's eyes, is it that my favorite thing is also cigarettes? I should control smoking at home, not only for my family's health, but also for my children's perception of their father."

Interviewee ②: "ads ② and ③, after watching it makes me a little ashamed, I thought that usually I smoke at home is not the same on the children have these impressions? Especially in ad ③, will my son also learn to socialize with postures such as dispersing cigarettes in kindergarten?"

Interviewee ③: "After watching the ad ②, I was particularly touched. As my birthday is approaching, I think it's ironic if my daughter is like the little girl in the ad who thinks that her father's favorite thing is cigarettes and replaces birthday candles with cigarettes."

(2) Group B: Appeal method - positive emotional appeal (affection, warmth), selected ads ④, ⑤, ⑥, ⑦

Interviewee ④: "I was very touched after watching the advertisement. During the monologue, I was deeply touched by the dangers of secondhand smoke to myself and my family."

Interviewee ⑤: "The ad very moved me. To prevent her father from smoking, the little girl took out all her favourite snacks to replace the cigarettes in his hand. "You should change this habit of smoking at home, so that children do not worry about the health of adults."

Interviewee 6: "The ads ⑤ and ⑥ very moved me. The children are very sensible and realize that smoking is unhealthy from their point of view and try to persuade their father to change. My own frequency of smoking must be controlled and I need to develop the habit of not smoking at home."

3.2.2 The second largest group: the object of the claim is adults

(1) Group A: Appeals - negative emotional appeals (fear, guilt), selected ads ⑧, ⑨

Respondent ①: "This data on second-hand smoke is indeed more touching to read and make me ashamed that some of my usual vices can have such an adverse effect on the health of so many people. I should reduce the frequency of smoking in addition to refraining from smoking in public places."

Interviewee ②: " My behavior will negatively affect other people, especially children and the elderly, as a result of reading these statistics in the ad. If everyone is like this, their family members are also victims. "

Respondent ③: "The facts in the ad feel like they happen every day and every hour, and there are so many chain reactions after smoking in public places by yourself, and these data are also good to teach us, smokers, to pay attention and reflect on our behavior. We still need to develop basic morality and awareness of public affairs as adults."

(2) Group B: Appeal method - positive emotional appeal (affection, warmth), selected ads ⑩

Interviewee ④: "The advertisement idea ⑩ is quite good from the perspective of children smoking, as it evokes empathy and reflect on those who smoke. It is a very memorable ad, and from an emotional and behavioral perspective, it appears to have a lasting effect."

Interviewee ⑤: "This ad is very moving from a child's perspective and remind adults to pay attention to their health, in a way that other anti-smoking PSAs are not. If I smoke in the future, I will think of these kids and the words on the note."

Interviewee ⑥: "It's an experimental ad, it's interesting, it's emotionally vibrating from the perspective of a child caring about a stranger adult, and even though many people will tell you that smoking is bad for your health, this kind reminder from a strange child is very memorable."

4. The combination of the emotional appeal strategy of anti-smoking PSAs with children as creative elements

4.1 According to different appeal objects, the emotional appeal should be skillfully matched with the "self-altruistic" behavior

(1) When the target is the father, the negative emotional appeal should be used to arouse the smoker's guilt

According to human kin selection, the number of genes they shared by relatives determines the degree of altruism displayed by them^[7]. This is also why anti-smoking PSAs prefer using children as creative elements.

(2) The target audience is adults, so the positive emotional appeal should be used to convey warmth

The use of emotion in PSAs is an important factor in triggering pro-social behavior as it is a common psychosocial phenomenon in interpersonal communication [8]. The emotional appeal of warmth can be used to empathize with the third party's concern for physical health when appealing to social adults about the health hazards of smoking.

4.2 According to the different emotional appeal, the selection of materials should be strongly targeted, and the content should be lifelike.

The creation of anti-smoking public service announcements should combine the object of appeal with strong emotional resonance, whether it is a positive or negative appeal.

4.3 Advertisements should focus on artistry and empathy and provoke the public to think and reflect deeply

Despite the fact that the purpose of PSAs is to persuade, good PSAs, especially anti-smoking PSAs should pay more attention to the plot and storytelling of the ads, as well as emotional preconceptions and artistic design of the empathy path.

References

- [1] Garrett J. O'Keefe & Kathaleen Reid (1990), The Uses and Effects of Public Service Advertising, Public Relations Research Annual, 2:1-4, 67-91,
- [2] Zhu FQ. Behavioral Characteristics of the Behavioral Mechanism of "Altruism for Self". Mutually Beneficial Cooperation [J]. Reform and Strategy, 2011, 01(1): 11-17.
- [3] Fukuyama F, The Great Divide: Human Nature and the Reconstruction of Social Order, translated by Liu Qin et al., China Social Science Press, 2002 edition, pp. 218-216.
- [4] Guo WH, Xu YS, Li YJ, What kind of traffic safety advertisement is more effective: Cognitive and Emotional Needs Regulatory Effects [J]. Human Engineering, 2014 (8).
- [5] Terblanche-Smit, M. The impact of fear appeal advertising on disposition formation in HIV/Aids related communication. 2008: 64.
- [6] Haynes, M.O., Thornton, J., & Jones, S.C. (2004). An exploratory study on the effect of positive (warmth appeal) and negative (guilt appeal) print imagery on donation behaviour in animal welfare. University of Wollongong. 2004: 2.
- [7] ChenWY, Liu LQ, The Impact of Situation on Sentiment[J]. Psychological Science Progress, 2016, 24(1):91-100.

The introduction of author:

Introduction:FengYongwei (1986.05-), female, Han nationality, born in Guangan, SiChuan Province, lecturer, Master of Advertising .Unit: College of Literature and Communication, Chongqing University of Education , research direction: New Media Communication.

Fund Project: This research is the result of Chongqing Education Science planning project "Research on construction and Application of Advertising Intelligent Classroom in the Era of Big Data —— Empirical Research based on Intelligent Classroom of Promoting Learning through Competition "" (Project No.: 2019-GX-395).