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children's television commercials**

Keywords: gender portrayal --- Korea --- Hong Kong --- children advertising

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Abstract

This study examined gender portrayal in a sample of 345 television commercials broadcast in children's programs in Korea and Hong Kong using content analysis. Cultural differences between Korea and Hong Kong suggest hypotheses about the gender portrayal in advertising. Literature suggests that Korean culture differs from Hong Kong culture on the dimension of Masculinity/Femininity proposed by Hofstede. So comparing Korea and Hong Kong children's commercials provides a valid test of theory. Results of the study showed significant differences between the two countries in terms of product profile, presence of central characters, voice-over, setting and reward type. However, contrary to what is expected from the Hofstede's framework, it was found that gender portrayal of central characters from Hong Kong was similar to that of Korea. Possible explanations include the emerging homogeneous youth market using a standardized advertising strategy, and the rising concern of women rights in Korea.

Gender portrayal of Korean and Hong Kong children's television commercials**INTRODUCTION**

Stereotypes in advertising on children's television programs have been a special problem because of their potential impact on gender socialization and, subsequently, children's views of themselves and other people (Bandura, 1986; Bussey and Bandura, 1984; Kolbe, 1990; McNeal, 1992). The possibility that children might acquire negative stereotypes through television viewing, therefore, has aroused concern among parents, educators, and members of the advertising industry.

In the last few decades, social norms for behavior, actual roles occupied by men and women, and media regulatory policies have changed. However, much of the research on gender stereotyping in media is dated and particularly gender stereotyping is one of the neglected areas of advertising ethics research and need further research (Zinkan, 1994).

Gender role portrayal in advertising is well studied in some of western countries including the U.S. and England, understanding gender role portrayal in an international context is limited because there are so few studies. One study (Milner and Collins, 2000) attempted to show that gender role portrayal can be an artifact of the cultures that frame the phenomenon being studied, that is, when feminine values have a dominant influence on a culture, this influence is reflected in the culture's advertisements.

The issue of cross-cultural variation in gender stereotyping in advertising in children has been particularly neglected and few studies have examined such stereotyping in more than one country concurrently. Comparisons of stereotyping across nations could contribute to a better understanding of stereotyping and its relationship with cultural factors (Browne, 1998).

The transfer of international advertising strategies to the Asian market is becoming popular due to rising living standards and the growing similarity of consumer tastes in the

region. It is observed that there are more and more homogeneous cross-cultural groups with similar needs, which can be approached in the same way in Asian countries. People are more educated now and, with the fast development of communications, the cultural gap between Asian countries themselves is getting narrower and narrower. As individual Asian markets become much closer to each other in terms of aspirations and there is more flattening of income, education, opportunity to travel and exposure to other cultures, many multinationals start to view Asian countries as a single regional market. However, Asia is really a series of localized markets with their own characteristics, rather than a region (Tai, 1997).

Asian markets have different economical and cultural settings due to historical effects. The culture, language, advertising rules and regulations are significantly different in some Asian markets, such as Korea and Hong Kong. They have their own unique aspects of history, cultures and consumption patterns, including variations in personal values and interest in feminist issues that could differentially affect advertising content.

Cultural differences between Korea and Hong Kong suggest hypotheses about the gender portrayal in advertising. Literature clearly suggests that Korean culture differs from Hong Kong culture. Among the Hofstede's (1991) framework of cultural dimensions, Korea and Hong Kong differed in two dimensions, namely uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/femininity. Korea is a country of high uncertainty avoidance and femininity, while Hong Kong is a society of low uncertainty avoidance and masculinity. It seems that uncertainty avoidance is not directly related to gender portrayal in advertising, therefore, the objective is to investigate if the difference in the masculinity/femininity dimension will differentially affect the gender portrayal in children's television commercials.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender Stereotyping and Gender Socialization

Gender stereotypes are general beliefs about sex-linked traits (collections and psychological characteristics and behaviors characterizing men and women) and gender roles (activities differentially appropriate for men or women).

Several theories have been developed to account for gender differences in a variety of traits (see Feingold, 1994, for an overview). The cultural explanation (House, 1981) maintains that a permanent gender identity is established through the socialization processes people undergo in childhood (e.g., Chodorow, 1978; Stoller, 1964). This perspective contends that being of the same or the opposite sex as their mothers leads to different patterns of development for girls and boys, such as feminine emphasis on relationships and masculine emphasis on justice identified by Gilligan (1982). Dawson (1992) described gender socialization theory as building on the work of Freud, Piaget, and others to assert that gender identity is not susceptible to outside influences in adulthood. Conversely, the structural explanation (House, 1981) holds that social group differences arise from common positions in social structures such as organizations and families (e.g., the stereotypical male executive and female secretary, or breadwinning father and homemaking mother). Social role theory (Eagly, 1987) is an influential structural account of gender differences. This theory proposes that men and women behave according to the stereotypes associated with the social roles they occupy. In general, women are seen as more communal (“friendly, unselfish, concerned with others, and emotionally expressive”), whereas men are more agentic (“independent, masterful, assertive, and instrumentally competent”; Eagly and Wood, 1991, p.309). The social role perspective is more flexible than the cultural/socialization perspective, because it acknowledges that people occupy multiple roles and may change behaviors accordingly (Franke, Crown and Spake, 1997).

Culture and Gender Stereotyping

Culture is the “collective mental programming” that distinguishes one society from another (Hofstede 1983, p.76). Values -- judgments of good or bad, right or wrong -- are an important element of culture. In the past two decades, one of the major frameworks for understanding culture has been Hofstede’s (1980; 1983) typology of cultural dimensions. This typology provides a rationale for cross-cultural differences in advertising (e.g., Albers-Miller and Gelb 1996; de Mooji 1998; Taylor, Miracle and Wilson, 1997). Hofstede’s original work described four cultural dimensions: individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/femininity and later included long-term/short-term orientation (Hofstede, 1991). Among the five cultural dimensions, the masculinity/femininity dimension distinguishes between cultures that emphasize stereotypical “masculine” traits, such as assertiveness, dominance and material success, and cultures that emphasize “feminine” traits, such as a concern for relationships and the quality of life. Within cultures, men have more masculine values on average and women have more feminine values, with the differences between the sexes being greater in masculine countries than in feminine countries (Hofstede 1991). Femininity is distinct from both feminism and collectivism (Hofstede, 1998). Feminism involves gender roles at work and in the home, and maybe a social force in masculine as well as feminine cultures. Collectivism deals with group ties, whereas femininity applies to relationship enhancement regardless of group membership (Moon and Franke, 2000).

Masculinity stands for a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material success. Its opposites, Femininity, stands for a preference for relationships, modesty, caring for the weak, and the quality of life. The fundamental issue addressed by this dimension is the way in which a society allocates social (as opposed to biological) roles to the sexes.

Some societies strive for maximum social differentiation between the sexes. The norm is that men are given the more outgoing, assertive roles and women the caring, nurturing roles. Other societies strive for minimal social differentiation between the sexes. This means that some women can take assertive roles if they want but especially that some men can take relationship-oriented, modest, caring roles if they want to. The minimum-social-differentiation societies in comparison with their opposite, the maximum-social-differentiation societies, will permeate their institutions with a care, quality-of-life oriented mentality. Such societies become “welfare societies” in which caring for all members, even the weakest, is an important goal for men as well as women (Hofstede, 1983).

de Mooij (1998) notes that this dimension “...discriminates between cultures particularly with respect to values related to winning, success, and status, which are much used in advertising appeals....for advertising and branding, this dimension can be used to distinguish important cultural differences with respect to values and motivations like achievement, accomplishment, and success” (p.82).

Milner and Collins (1998) suggest that gender of a nation may be superior to gender of the depicted character in predicting gender role portrayals in television advertisements, therefore proposed this dimension as likely to discriminate among countries in regard to gender role portrayal in television advertising.

Intercultural Studies on Gender Stereotyping

The relatively few studies that have compared levels of stereotyping in the commercials of the countries investigated here have yielded inconsistent results. Edgar and McPhee (1974) found more traditional roles portrayed in the Australian ads than in the American ads. Peck (1979) examined children commercials in Australia and he found the level of stereotyping was similar to that observed in the United States. Mazzella et al. (1992) found systematic

differences between portrayals of men and women on Australian television and the differences were similar to those found in studies in the U.S. and England.

Gilly (1988) placed the issue of gender role advertising in the forefront of cross-cultural research in her study of gender role portrayals on television commercials in Australia, Mexico, and the United States. She found no significant gender differences for several variables including product advertised, employment status, use as a spokesperson, credibility, and activity level in Australian ads, but did find gender differences in American and Mexican ads. The results of this study indicate that Australian advertisements show somewhat fewer gender role differences and Mexican advertisements show slightly more gender role differences than U.S. advertisements. In this study she provided a list of roles such as spouse, parent and housewife that define the character in terms of relationship to others and independent roles – that is non-relationship ones – are worker, celebrity and interviewer.

Milner, Fodness and Speece (1993) did apply Hofstede's concepts to provide a post-hoc explanation for Gilly's findings by suggesting that the results are ordered as Hofstede's taxonomy would predict: Australian (#35), the United States (#36), and Mexico (#45). These nations are on the masculine end of Hofstede's spectrum, which may explain why the results among the countries Gilly studied were not dramatically different. When Milner and Collins (1998) compared Gilly's data with data from Turkey, a feminine country, they found that, in contrast to the United States, Australia and Mexico, Turkish advertisements are less likely to feature productivity themes and are more likely to feature relationship themes and portray minimal differences between male and female gender roles.

Wiles, Wiles and Tjernlund (1995) used Hofstede's taxonomy with mixed results in their examination of gender role portrayals in magazine advertisements published in a masculine country (United States) and two feminine countries (Sweden and The Netherlands). All three countries tend to show men rather than women in working roles; however, the authors found

that these differences were less often encountered in Sweden and The Netherlands than in the United States.

In Browne's study (1998), the results are generally similar to those of previous studies and indicate substantial gender stereotyping. Boys appeared in greater numbers, assumed more dominant roles, and were more active and aggressive than girls. Gender role reinforcement was observed at the level of body language and facial expression; girls were portrayed as shyer, giggly, unlikely to assert control, and less instrumental. Despite similarities in gender stereotyping between countries, Australian commercials tended to contain more nearly equal male-to-female proportions, more often depicted both boys and girls in the same advertisement, and less frequently portrayed girls as shy or giggly and boys as directive. Moreover, male characters had significantly more active interactions with objects in the American commercials than they did in Australian commercials in comparison with female characters. Those results might reflect country-related variations in ideals of male and female behavior or indicate actual differences in efforts at counterstereotyping.

Milner and Collins (2000) presented the first major systematic examination of television advertisements from a range of countries that Hofstede designed as masculine and feminine - two masculine countries (Japan and United States) and two feminine countries (Sweden and Russia). They found that a country's gender as ranked on Hofstede's Masculinity continuum can be linked to depictions of relationships for both male and female characters. The findings support Hofstede's claim that feminine societies exemplify a cultural preference for relationships for both genders, thus, the study shows that feminine values are revealed in a culture's advertisements in a manner that allows cross-cultural gender role portrayals of relationships to be predicted. However, the depiction of employment as a proxy for the masculine value of productivity was not as definitive. Also, the findings for the hypothesis of fewer sex differences in feminine countries than in masculine countries were inconclusive.

The lack of significant differences for the advice, help, credibility and spokesperson attributes suggests that these variables may have limited utility for cross-cultural research.

HYPOTHESES

The current study attempts to answer a broad research question ‘How does the gender portrayal differ in children’s commercials in Korea and Hong Kong?’

In previous research, Hofstede’s Masculinity Index provides a framework for gender role depictions. The first essential element in Hofstede’s masculinity dimension is the preference for masculine or feminine values in a culture: for whereas masculine societies strive for material success, achievement and productivity, feminine societies value relationships. Research shows that themes related to these values appear in advertisements (Albers-Miller, 1996; Albers-Miller and Gelb, 1996; Milner and Collins, 1998), thus, commercials in feminine countries are predicted to feature more relationship themes for male and female characters whereas commercials in masculine countries are predicted to feature productivity themes prominently for both sexes. The second element is gender differentiation. Masculine countries are more likely to embrace sharp distinction between the roles of men and women, whereas feminine ones are not, thus, it can be predicted there will be more significant sex-role differences between male and female characters in masculine countries than in feminine countries (Milner and Collins, 2000). Therefore, the following three hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Characters in commercials are more likely to be portrayed in relationships with others in Korea (feminine society) than in Hong Kong (masculine society).

H2: Characters are more likely to be portrayed in work situations in Hong Kong than in Korea.

H3: There will be more sex-role differences between male and female characters in Hong Kong than in Korea.

METHOD

Sample

The Korean sample was obtained from the commercials of children's programming broadcast on the three major television channels (KBS2, MBC, SBS) in June 2001. Children programs were mainly shown during weekday afternoons (from 4:00 to 7:00p.m.) and on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The programs included local and imported cartoon series and local dramas and variety shows. Korean children spend substantial time in television viewing and elementary school children watch television for 2 hours and 37 minutes everyday (Kim, 2000). The Hong Kong sample was obtained from taping of commercials of forty hours of children's programming broadcast on the two free-to-air Chinese-language terrestrial channels (i.e. TVB-Jade, and ATV-home) in Hong Kong during three weeks in June, July and August 2001. Cable TV was excluded as its advertising volume was still low. Children's programs were mainly shown on Saturday and Sunday mornings, and weekday afternoons. These programs included imported cartoon series and local children variety shows. According to the AC Nielsen's weekly TV rating report (AC Nielsen, 2001), children aged 4 to 14 comprised a substantial portion of viewers during the selected program hours.

Duplicated commercials were not included in order to eliminate the bias from broadcast frequency of commercials. Public services announcements, station identification and promotional messages were excluded. Commercials for products that the prime purchasers and users were adults were also eliminated from the analysis. These included real estate, financial services, electrical appliances, cosmetics, and automobile commercials.

Coding

There were two levels of analysis of gender portrayal: the first level was based on individual commercial, and the second level was based on the central figure within each commercial. A central character refers to a child, adult, or cartoon human character

appearing the longest time or talking the most in the ad. There could be none or more than one. In the current study, at most two central characters were coded. For each commercial, seven variables including product category, product user, sex of the voice-over, music, presence of central characters, setting and reward were coded. For each central character, seven variables including character type, sex, age, role, employment status, activity, and whether he or she was a spokesperson were coded. The description of variables is shown in Table 1.

Roles can also be recoded into two categories, relationship (i.e. friends, son/daughter, brother/sister, parent, teacher, student) or independent (i.e., celebrity, narrator and others) according to Gilly (1988) and Milner and Collins (2000).

A sample of 345 television commercials, 198 from Korea and 147 from Hong Kong, was coded by two pairs of trained coders. The Korean sample was coded by two Korean female graduate assistants. They coded all commercials and characters together. Cases in which the coders did not come to agreements were dropped. The Hong Kong sample was coded independently by a Chinese female and a Chinese male university graduate. The inter-coder reliability for each variable was determined as the percentage of agreement between the pair of judges. Discrepancies among coders were settled by the decision of the authors. The intercoder reliability is shown in Table 1. All variables in the Korean sample and the Hong Kong sample achieved a satisfactory level of reliability suggested by Kassirjian (1977).

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

FINDINGS

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the commercials by society. The Korean sample contained mostly commercials of snack food, drinks and toys. The Hong Kong sample contained mostly commercials of snack food, toys, medicine and personal goods. Result of

the Chi-square test ($df=8$, $p<0.001$) indicated that there was significant difference in product profiles of the two samples. Product user had no significant difference between the two samples. Most of the advertised products in both societies were used by both males and females. There was significant difference in the presence of central characters between the two samples (Chi-square statistics=12.2, $df=3$, $p<0.0001$). The Hong Kong sample contained a higher proportion of commercials without central character than the Korean sample. The two samples had no significant difference in the type of music used. Most of the commercials in both societies used upbeat music background. There was significant difference in the sex of the voice-over between the two samples (Chi-square statistics=13.0, $df=3$, $p<0.005$). While male voice-over was most frequently used in both samples, the Korean sample had a higher proportion of female voice-overs than the Hong Kong sample. There was significant difference in the setting between the two samples (Chi-square statistics=11.7, $df=5$, $p<0.05$). Fantasy or animation settings were the most frequently used settings in both samples. The Korean sample had a higher proportion of other indoor commercials. There was also significant difference in the reward between the two samples (Chi-square statistics=60.7, $df=5$, $p<0.0001$). Pleasure was the most frequently used reward in both samples. The Korean sample had a higher proportion of commercials using the social-enhancement reward while the Hong Kong sample had a higher proportion of commercials using the practical reward.

[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Altogether 372 central characters, 225 from Korea and 147 from Hong Kong, were coded. There was no significant difference in the distribution of sex of the central characters between two samples (Chi-square statistics=1.3, $df=1$, N.S.).

There was significant difference in the role portrayal between the two samples (Chi-square statistics=48.2, $df=8$, $p<0.0001$). Friend was the role most frequently used in both samples. The Korean sample of central characters had a higher proportion of celebrity roles. The

Hong Kong sample had a higher proportion of brother/sister roles and narrator roles. The brother/sister roles were not used in the Korean sample. Sixty-one percent of the central characters were portrayed in relationship roles in both samples. The distribution of recoded role showed no significant difference between the Korean sample and the Hong Kong sample. Characters in commercials were as equally likely to be portrayed in relationship with others in Hong Kong (masculine society) and in Korea (feminine society). As a result, H1 was rejected.

Central characters in both samples were mostly shown in non-working roles. There was no significant difference in the employment status of the central characters in Korea and Hong Kong. As a result, H2 was rejected.

[INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Altogether there were 189 male central characters (109 from Korea and 80 from Hong Kong) and 183 female central characters (116 from Korea and 67 from Hong Kong). Table 4 shows the characteristics of the male and female characters for the Korean and the Hong Kong samples. Chi-square statistics and significant levels are reported for each table when it is significant at 0.05 level.

Chi-square tests indicated that there was no significant difference in the roles, recoded roles, employment and presenting as spokesperson of male and female central characters in both samples. There was significant difference in the activities of male and female characters in the Korean sample, but not in the Hong Kong sample. Korean male characters were more likely to be active while Korean female characters were more likely to be inactive. The Hong Kong sample did not showed a greater sex-role difference between male and female central characters. As a result, H3 was rejected.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this study is to examine the influence of a culture's masculinity/femininity dimension on the gender portrayal in children's television commercials. All the three hypotheses were rejected by the results reported. Contrary to what is expected, Hong Kong (masculine society) did not exhibit less relationship roles and more sex-roles differences between male and female characters.

Milner and Collins (2000) found strong evidence that supports the notion that a country's "gender" as ranked on Hofstede's Masculinity continuum, can be linked to depictions of relationships for both male and female characters in adults' commercials. Our study of children's commercials however shows that a country's "gender" failed to predict the gender role portrayals of relationships. Although literature suggests that Korea culture differs clearly from Hong Kong culture, it was not reflected in the gender portrayal in children's television commercials.

One explanation for the deviation is the standardization of advertising strategy in the Asian Market. It is observed that more and more homogeneous cross-cultural groups with similar needs, which can be approached in the same way in Asian countries. Especially younger generations become much closer to each other in terms of aspirations and needs. Their usage of international or global brands encourages multinationals to view Asian countries as a single regional market. The multinationals tend to create a unified message that can appeal to a broad diversity of Asian consumers in order to maintain a uniform image (Tai, 1997). Korea and Hong Kong are in the same region and many international advertisers are increasingly adopting similar executions with regionalization of advertising strategy. This may explain the lack of difference in gender portrayals in advertising in both countries.

Another explanation is the heavy use of celebrity endorsement in children's commercials in Korea. One of the characteristics of Korean advertising is (over)use of celebrity.

Celebrities not only behave as endorsers, but also appear as product model or spokesperson. Celebrity appearances in television commercials include famous actors, singers, sports stars, comedians, or so-called entertainers. This phenomenon is not limited to adult advertising. Large numbers of celebrity also appear as model or spokesperson in children advertising and the result of this study confirmed this fact.

Many of the celebrity in entertainment world are young aspiring models and many of these young people start their careers by appearing in advertising, where they gain a lot of exposure and become well known and popular among the public (one informal recent survey said the most favorite occupation of Korean youngsters is entertainer). In many cases, they are regarded as celebrities, but not much authoritative. Rather they are called 'Big model' that get paid much more than professional models.

One might argue that current portrayals mirror social norms and reflect the interests of target market, but changes in actual roles occupied by men and women in both countries make that argument increasingly less compelling (Browne, 1998). Korean society is changing apparently in terms of women's issues and rights. It has more interest groups for women and more women's participation in workplace and social groups. In addition, sex discrimination and sexual harassment issues covered in mass media and court system may help explain those changes. Therefore, relatively recent attention to women's issues in Korea may create greater sensitivity to the issue of stereotyping in advertising, thus, commercials on Korean television contain lower levels of stereotyping.

Despite similarities in gender stereotyping between countries, Korean commercials tended to contain more nearly equal proportions in male-to-female proportions, Hong Kong commercials tended to show more equal male-to-female proportions in activity. Those results might reflect country-related variations in ideals of male and female behavior or indicate actual differences in efforts at counter-stereotyping. Differences in levels of interest in the

content of children's television, advertising codes of ethics pertaining to children's programming, and women's movement activity are possible explanations that warrant further research attention.

Previous research showed that the depiction of employment as a proxy for the masculine value of productivity was not definitive and the hypothesis of fewer sex differences in feminine countries than in masculine countries were inconclusive (Milner and Collins, 2000). In the current study, a majority of central characters were not in employed condition in both samples. As children are not familiar with work, advertisers seldom feature employers and employees in the commercials. This was consistent with previous studies that both sexes are not featured in employment settings at all (see Dominick and Rauch, 1972; Gilly, 1988; Schneider and Schneider, 1979; Wiles, Wiles and Tjernlund, 1995). The rationale is offered by Andren et al. (1978) that advertising would seldom refer to working life because consumers identify life with leisure and not work. The lack of significant difference for the spokesperson attribute suggests that this variable may have limited utility for cross-cultural research.

In conclusion, the concept of "gender of nations" needs further examination. The idea that countries have a sex-role identity at an aggregate level is put to question. The application of Hofstede to marketing and advertising research is a recent innovation and is subject to trial and error. The current study can be repeated for adults' commercials to see if the set of hypotheses are supported. If so, it will suggest that advertising creative strategies for adults' commercials and children's commercials will be very different in the same country.

Table 1. Description of variables and intercoder reliability

For characteristics of commercials

Variable	values	Reliability* Korea	Reliability* HK
Product category	toys, character toys, snack/food, drinks, fast food, entertainment, medicine and personal goods, educational tools and services, others	1.00	0.97
Product user, who is the product advertised used by primarily	male, female, both	1.00	0.98
voice-over, a voice (or voices) from an unseen source. Excluding jingles.	male, female, both, none	0.96	0.87
Music	None, upbeat, soft, unidentified	0.96	0.87
Presence of central characters	Yes, no	0.94	0.95
Setting	Home, store, other indoor, outdoor, fantasy or animation, unidentified	0.96	0.90
Reward	Self-enhancement, social-enhancement, practical, pleasure, others, none	0.92	0.86

*coding reliability refers to the percentage of agreement between two coders

For characteristics of central characters (up to two for each commercial)

Variable	values	Reliability Korea	Reliability HK
Character type	Child, cartoon child, adult, cartoon adult	1.00	0.99
Sex	male, female	1.00	1.00
Age	Under 13, 13-19, 20-35, 36- 49, 50 and above	0.98	0.99
Role	Friend, son/daughter, brother/sister, parent, teacher, student, celebrity, narrator, other who are not related to anyone	0.93	0.90
Employment, character in a work situation or appears to be employed	Yes, no	1.00	1.00
Activity	Inactive, active, aggressive, dependent, caring and sharing, others	0.95	0.88
Spokesperson	Yes, no	0.89	0.91

*coding reliability refers to the percentage of agreement between two coders

Table 2. Characteristics of the commercials by society (N=345)

Characteristics	Korea (N=198)		Hong Kong (N=147)		Chi-square statistics	p
	F	%	F	%		
<i>Product category</i>					32.7	0.001
Snack food	75	37.9	50	34.0		
Drink	38	19.2	14	9.5		
Toys and character toys	31	15.7	21	14.3		
Fast food	18	9.1	7	4.8		
Entertainment	15	7.6	11	7.5		
Education tools and services	14	7.1	13	8.8		
Medicine and personal goods	3	1.5	18	12.2		
Others	4	2.0	13	8.8		
<i>Product user</i>					3.1	N.S.
Male	12	6.1	15	10.2		
Female	14	7.1	6	4.1		
Both	172	86.9	126	85.7		
<i>Voice-over</i>					13.0	0.005
Male	82	41.4	81	55.1		
Female	72	36.4	29	19.7		
Both	16	8.1	9	6.1		
None	28	14.1	28	19.0		
<i>Music</i>					5.8	N.S.
None	20	10.1	23	15.6		
Upbeat	132	66.7	83	56.5		
Soft	43	21.7	35	23.8		
Unidentified	3	1.5	6	4.1		
<i>Presence of central characters</i>					12.2	0.0001
Yes	162	81.8	96	65.3		
No	36	18.2	51	34.7		
<i>Setting</i>					11.7	0.05
Fantasy or animation	57	28.8	40	27.2		
Outdoor	44	22.2	27	18.4		
Other indoor	37	18.7	17	11.6		
Home	30	15.2	28	19.0		
Store/restaurant	13	6.6	7	4.8		
unidentified	17	8.6	28	19.0		
<i>Reward</i>					60.7	0.0001
None	54	27.3	25	17.0		
Pleasure	77	38.9	56	38.1		
Social-enhancement	38	19.2	5	3.4		
Self-enhancement	22	11.1	20	13.6		
Practical	5	2.5	40	27.2		
Others	2	1.0	1	0.7		

Table 3. Characteristics of the central characters by society (N=372)

Characteristics	Korea (N=225)		Hong Kong (N=147)		Chi-square statistics	p
	F	%	F	%		
<i>Character type</i>					12.1	0.0001
Child (real or cartoon)	74	32.9	75	51.0		
Adult (real or cartoon)	151	67.1	72	49.0		
<i>Sex</i>					1.3	N.S.
Male	109	48.4	80	54.4		
Female	116	51.6	67	45.6		
<i>Age</i>					25.1	0.0001
Under 13	46	20.4	61	41.5		
13-19	32	14.2	27	18.4		
20-35	125	55.6	50	34.0		
36-49	15	6.7	7	4.8		
50 and above	7	3.1	2	1.4		
<i>Role</i>					48.2	0.0001
Friend	61	27.1	42	28.6		
Son/daughter	31	9.3	14	9.5		
Brother/sister	0	0.0	14	9.5		
Parent	33	14.7	14	9.5		
Teacher	5	2.2	2	1.4		
Student	17	7.6	4	2.7		
Celebrity	46	20.4	10	6.8		
Narrator	6	2.7	14	9.5		
Other	36	16.0	33	22.4		
<i>Role (recoded)</i>					0.004	n.s.
<i>Relationship</i>	137	60.9	90	61.2		
<i>Independent</i>	88	39.1	57	38.8		
<i>Employment</i>					0.03	n.s.
Yes	18	8.0	11	7.5		
No	207	92.0	136	92.5		
<i>Activity</i>					29.6	0.0001
Active	73	32.4	22	15.0		
Inactive	119	52.9	114	77.6		
Aggressive	11	4.9	2	1.4		
Dependent	11	4.9	1	0.7		
Caring and sharing	9	4.0	4	2.7		
Others	2	0.9	4	2.7		
<i>Spokesperson</i>					7.0	0.01
Yes	83	36.9	35	23.8		
No	142	63.1	112	76.2		

Table 4 Characteristics of male and female characters by society

Characteristics	Korea		Hong Kong	
	Male (N=109)	Female (N=116)	Male (N=80)	Female (N=67)
<i>Role</i>	%	%	F	%
Friend	27.5	26.7	32.5	23.9
Son/daughter	11.9	6.9	10.0	9.0
Brother/sister	0.0	0.0	8.8	10.4
Parent	10.1	19.0	3.8	16.4
Teacher	2.8	1.7	0.0	3.0
Student	6.4	8.6	2.5	3.0
Celebrity	26.6	14.7	7.5	6.0
Narrator	2.8	2.6	13.8	4.5
Other	11.9	19.8	21.3	23.9
		n.s.		n.s.
<i>Role (recoded)</i>				
Relationship	58.7	62.9	57.5	65.7
Independent	41.3	37.1	42.5	34.3
		n.s.		n.s.
<i>Employment</i>				
Yes	11.0	5.2	7.5	7.5
No	89.0	94.8	92.5	92.5
		n.s.		n.s.
<i>Activity</i>				
Active	42.2	23.3	18.8	10.4
Inactive	46.8	58.6	73.8	82.1
Aggressive	1.8	7.8	1.3	1.5
Dependent	6.4	3.4	1.3	0.0
Caring and sharing	2.8	5.2	0	6.0
Others	0.0	1.7	5.0	0.0
		$\chi^2_{sq}=15.4^*$		n.s.
<i>Spokesperson</i>				
Yes	40.4	33.6	21.3	26.9
No	59.6	66.4	78.8	73.1
		n.s.		n.s.

*p<0.01

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