

EFFECT OF MESSAGE APPEALS IN MATRIMONIAL PRINT MEDIA ADVERTS ON MARRIAGE PRACTICES OF KENYAN ASIANS

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Abstract: *Marriage practices of Asians, specifically of the Indian origin, historically comprised of child-marriages in the medieval times. The Hindus also adopted the usage of priests who hunted spouses for marriage-seekers. Arranged marriage and love marriage too followed soon after. Matrimonial adverts consist of a brief biography of a spouse seeker followed by the anticipated qualities of his/her potential partners. The Kenyan Asian community is a microcosm predominantly comprised of immigrants from India and Pakistan hence their cultural practices stem from their ancestral countries. In Kenya, 'matrimonial' sections appear in the Saturday editions of some dailies and weekly publications. This gives Kenyan Asians an avenue to find marriage partners using print media as opposed to resorting to other traditional ways of spouse-hunting including importing from 'motherland' India or online platforms. This study examined the effect of message appeals in matrimonial print media adverts on marriage practices of Kenyan Asians. The study reviewed literature based on matrimonial adverts from India as well as other relevant works of scholars to determine the knowledge gap. The target population of this study was drawn from Nairobi, with a sample size of 26 respondents who were purposively picked from each different community including Ismaili, Sikh, catchy, et cetera. The instruments shaping the qualitative research design included online interviews and content analysis. The data analysis was conducted by summarizing content analysis of the newspapers and interviews that were coded and analyzed using SPSS version 25. The descriptive data was used to understand the characteristics of the respondents which was then followed by a correlation analysis used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The research found that the print media had an effect on Kenyan Asians' marriage practices, and with their culture permitting, they would place matrimonial adverts when looking for a spouse to marry. The researcher recommended that a further study be done especially exploring not just print media but matrimonial adverts that are on online sites and how it affects marriage practices of Kenyan Asians.*

Keywords: *Matrimonial Print Media, Message Appeals, Marriage Practices*

Background of the Study

Kenyan Asians are part of the 40 million population of Kenya; who have acquired citizenship either by birth or by migrating and settling in the country. The history of Kenyan Asians dates back to the pre-colonial times when individuals whose families (or they themselves) had come to the region during the twentieth century from what are today Indian and Pakistan (Omenya, 2015). These individuals, though worked together practiced

different cultures, predominantly differentiated by religion. As Omenya (2015) notes, they were divided by religion and caste. The main religious grouping were Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christians. Herzig (2006) in Omenya (2015) observes that during the last decades, the Asians in Kenya have passed through several stages of migration, which can be taken exemplarily for different approaches...they established themselves as middleman minority or a trading diaspora. Later, with increasing globalization, Kenya Asians became a transnational community in addition to the diaspora. Older forms have not disappeared but decreased while new forms have emerged. They have over the years assimilated with the local culture, and evidently acquired some cultural the traits of local citizens vis-à-vis modernization.

According to the 2009 Census, there are more than 46,000 Kenyan Asians and an additional 35,000 Indians without Kenyan citizenship living in Kenya. This consists members from all communities including the Hindu, the Sikh, the Muslims and Goans differentiated based on their faiths as Hindu, Sikh, Muslims and Christians. Within the larger bodies, there are sub-sects that exist. For example, in the Hindu framework, there are Gujarati-speaking groups, the Hindi-speaking groups and the Punjabi-speaking groups. The Gujarati-speaking Hindus include the Oshwals, the Kutchhis, the Patels et cetera. The Hindi-speaking groups include the Arya Samaj while the Punjabi-speaking Hindus are referred to as Hindu-Punjabi. The Sikhs also speak Punjabi, though they do not worship idols. They follow the teachings of their guru, Sri Guru Gobind Singh. The Muslims among the Kenyan Asian include the Gujarati-speaking and the Punjabi-speaking groups. Further, they are divided into two Islamic sects – Sunni and Shia. Some Kutchhi-speaking Muslims are Bhadala, Memon, Luhar to name a few. The Ismailis and Bohra communities are largely Gujarati-speaking Muslims of Shia sect. The Punjabi-speaking Muslims belong to the Sunni Islamic faith.

Matrimonial Adverts: In the West, matrimonial adverts in the print media can be traced back to the 19th century, where in publications like the Morning Post (1811), Catholic Telegraph (1854) and Kent and Sussex Courier (1892), published messages by interested candidates seeking a partner for marriage were listed under a 'Matrimony' section. Matrimonial adverts in Indian dailies are a popular way to seek prospective partners (Pandey, 2004). The structure of these adverts is like those of the classified adverts consisting of a short biography of the potential candidate looking for a spouse with preferences for a prospective partner (Kamboj, 2013). Notwithstanding the language, several other socio-cultural factors are weaved within the messages of the matrimonial adverts. Some of these being traditions of the mate-selection processes, attitudes toward sexual relationships and gender roles affect the composition of these solicitations, as reflected by research which primarily considers such advertising in the US (Ramasubramaniam, 2009).

In Kenya, newspapers publish adverts as part of their content. It is common to find a 'Matrimonial' section in the dailies like The Daily Nation and The Star. The Saturday newspapers also feature 'personal' columns which include 'dating' or 'hooking up' advertisements for those searching a lover or a prospective mate through the contacts provided. There is a knowledge gap on the usage of the matrimonial print media adverts especially for the purposes of marriage. Although this phenomenon has been studied in-depth around the world.

Statement of the Problem

Matrimonial print media adverts are published in different parts of the world and it is a common socio-cultural practice to resort to matrimonial print media adverts when looking for a spouse to marry. Marriage practices have also undergone a significant change over the years. Pal (2010) explains that these tremendous changes in marriage practices is due to the changing trends of the Indian society. It varies from arranged to love marriage, arranged-love to love-arranged, inter-caste to inter-religion, court-marriage and sometime living together. The media plays a crucial role in the marriage practices of societies. Titzmann (2011) emphasizes the significance

of medialization stating that the media permeate very intimate and personal domains, thus becoming part of social change. The local newspapers in Kenya publish matrimonial print media adverts some times daily as well as every weekend. These adverts range from people looking for short-term physical relationships to long-term commitments such as marriage. This study therefore the effect of message appeals in matrimonial print media adverts on marriage practices of Kenyan Asians. It is because Dey (2016) insists using newspapers as a medium for finding a life partner is indeed a widely prevalent practice (adopted in India) in recent times. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to bridge the knowledge gap on media and marriage practices of Kenyan Asians. It was imperative to determine whether message appeals on matrimonial print media adverts have any effect on Kenyan Asian community's marriage practices; if yes – then what kind of effects? If no, then why not? This was done through an extensive content analysis of leading print media in Kenya and through interviews with members of the Kenyan Asian community in Nairobi.

Objective of the study

To explore the effect of message appeals in matrimonial print media adverts on marriage practices of Kenyan Asians.

Literature Review

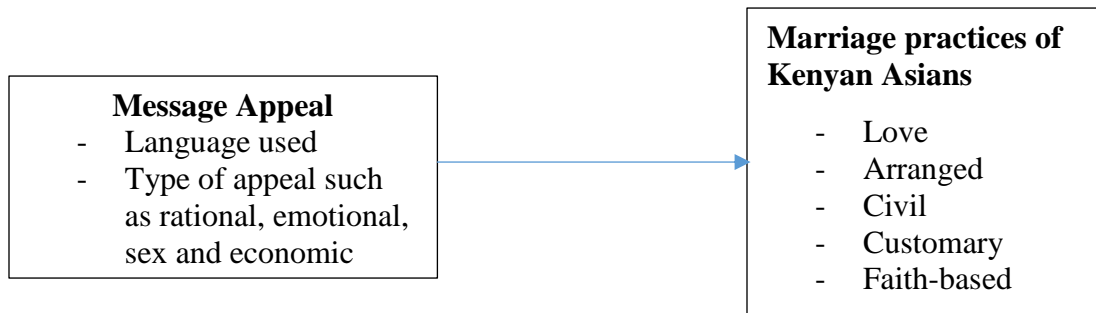
The study was informed by social judgment theory as well as the framing theory. The effect of message appeal on matrimonial print media advert was determined through the underpinning variables of the social judgment theory.

Social Judgment Theory: Pioneered by Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif (1967), the Social Judgment Theory emphasizes that people evaluate issues based on where they stand on the topic (Perloff, 2010). The basic information for predicting a person's reaction to a communication is where he places its position and the communicator relative to himself. The way that person appraises a communication and perceives its position relative to his own stand affects his reaction to it and what he will do as a result (Sherif and Sherif, 1967). It is so named because it emphasizes people's objective judgments about social issues, articulates several core concepts which include latitude of acceptance, rejection and non-commitment; assimilation and contrast, and finally, ego involvement (Perloff, 2010). This implies that a matrimonial print media advert elicits a response based on the ego involvement of the consumer exposed to it. Thus, whether the consumer of the message will accept, reject or remain indifferent to the message in the advert relies solely on his latitudes of acceptance, rejection and non-commitment vis-à-vis his ego involvement.

Framing Theory: The concept of framing can be applied to advertising, as like in news and political communication. Advertising is a comprehensive structure made up of a number of concepts and the relation among these concepts. For example, humor appeal, sex appeal, and fear appeal are the different concepts that create structure for an advertisement. The various elements of these appeals relate to the overall concept of the ad and the advertising appeal itself, thus creating a frame for the advertisement and the product/brand (Gayatri, 2008). Accordingly, the feasibility of the framing theory extends beyond its application in news and politics to find relevance in the field of advertising. Framing study of advertising appeals might help in better understanding of the way in which advertisers frame a particular product/brand message and the consumer's reaction to the message and its comprehensibility (Gayatri, 2008). In the case of matrimonial print media adverts, the messages are framed according to the needs and preferences of the advertiser targeting a specific consumer that matches ditto the qualities stated therein. This tactical aim of seeking a precise match by the advertiser of the matrimonial print media adverts, therefore finds framing theory's relevance to the study. To

elaborate further, when considering a variable such as the message strategy of a matrimonial print media advert, the message can be framed in a way to attract only a desired response by the advertiser.

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Review of variables

Message Appeals of matrimonial print media adverts: An advertising appeal is a message element designed to promote a behavioral response by the receiver (Hovland *et al.*, 1965). For the purposes of study, there are two sub-factors this research will examine: language used and types of appeals. Language used is significant when drafting the message of a matrimonial print media advert as it adds to the message appeal. The advertisements are written in SMS (short message service) language as it costs heavy if full words are used. For example, B’FUL (beautiful), H’some (handsome), REQ (required) et cetera. (Kamboj T., 2013). Further, the language of matrimonial adverts aims at precise, clear, glamorous and catchy communication. In matrimonial advertising, getting the message across is of prime importance, and the advertiser cannot afford to be lax or uncritical (Yasmeen. 2015). Thus, the form of the sentence structure complete with the choice of words and kind of language contributes to the message appeal as it determines whether a person reading the advert will be attracted to the message and be persuaded to take action upon reading the matrimonial print media adverts.

Elaborating on the appeals, there are various kinds of appeals incorporated in matrimonial print media adverts so that they are effective and persuasive. Beyond its look, other forms of appeal that matrimonial print media adverts possess which enhance the overall appeal when a reader gets engaged to them include the rational appeal, emotional appeal and sex appeal. For instance, the matrimonial advertisements carry information regarding economic status of family (middle class, upper class, high profile family, highly sophisticated family et cetera) which clearly states the economic conditions of the family (Kamboj T., 2013). This highlights an economic appeal factor of the message. Similarly, sex appeal punctuates matrimonial adverts through the use of phrases such as hot, sexy and attractive.

These words encourage a reader looking for similar interests to approach the advertiser. For the emotional appeal, this is exemplified through contents such as ‘Single mother looking for love’ or ‘divorced and lonely’ et cetera. These type of words elicit a sympathy towards the advertiser, hence triggers off an emotional connection. The rational appeal factor is witnessed in matrimonial adverts wherein the advertiser places specific requirements and doesn’t include emotional elements. These are advertisers who mean serious business. For instance, in the matrimonial advert placed in January 2016 in The Asian Weekly, the Kenyan Asian lady highlighted her own background as having born and brought up in Kenya, and requested for a groom who is also preferably settled in Kenya. She further requested for a picture-bio data to be e-mailed. This

type of rationality is emphasized to enable only serious candidates to respond and apply for the requested 'position.'

Marriage Practices of Kenyan Asians: The history of Kenyan Asians dates back to the pre-colonial times when individuals whose families (or they themselves) had come to the region during the twentieth century from what are today India and Pakistan (Omenya, 2015). These individuals, though worked together practiced different cultures, predominantly differentiated by religion. As Omenya (2015) notes, they were divided by religion and caste. The main religious groupings were Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christians. Herzig (2006) in Omenya (2015) observes that during the last decades, the Asians in Kenya have passed through several stages of migration, which can be taken exemplarily for different approaches...they established themselves as middleman minority or a trading diaspora. Later, with increasing globalization, the Kenya Asians became a transnational community in addition to the diaspora. Older forms have not disappeared but decreased while new forms have emerged. Today, Kenyan Asians have established their place in the society making strides in the economic and social strata. Their cultural practices may differ, specifically, marriages.

When it comes to marriages, Kenyan Asians follow the guidelines stipulated in the Marriage Act (2014) of Kenya which recognizes customary marriage as per rituals based in accordance with various religions such as Hindu, Muslim and Christians. The Marriage Act (2014) defines marriage as voluntary union of a man and a woman whether in a monogamous or polygamous union and registered in accordance with this (Marriage) Act. It recognizes marriages such as Christian marriage, Civil marriage – which is conducted before a Registrar in the place named by the Registrar, Marriage Under Customary Law which is celebrated in accordance with the customs of the communities of one or both of the parties to the intended marriage, Hindu marriage which applies to individuals who profess to the Hindu faith and Marriage under Islamic law.

Research Methodology

This research adopted the qualitative research design. The target population of this study included members of the various Kenyan Asian communities. There are several communities of Kenyan Asians including Sikhs, Oshwals, Lohanas, Punjabi Muslims, Arya Samaj, Ismailis, Kutchhi Leva Samaj, Patel Samaj, Muslim Bhadala and the Goan community. Another target population was the print media, specifically newspapers, in Kenya. These included The Daily Nation, The Nairobiian and The Star newspapers. These newspapers were purposively selected to inform the study based on various studies including Yasmeeen (2015) and Kamboj (2013). A content analysis of Kenya's newspapers carrying matrimonial/personal adverts was done. Data collection was also done using online interviews (Google Forms) to yield the best possible results. A correlation analysis was conducted to measure the relationship between variables.

Results and Discussions

Message appeals in matrimonial print media adverts and marriage practices

The Nairobiian Newspaper: Advertising message appeals are the hooks advertisers use in ads to persuade interested parties. Generally, appeals fall under two basic categories: rational and emotional. While some ads use elements of both, there is a wider array of emotional appeals because connecting with emotions often carries more impact in attracting attention. Advertising appeals aim to influence the way consumers view themselves. In the message appeals, the researcher wanted to determine the type of language used in the advert, whether it was an SMS language, Sheng or good constructed English. In the type of appeal, the researcher wanted to determine the number of matrimonial ads that were rational, emotional, sex, and economic aspects

and many more. Table 1 is an illustration of the type of message appeal as extracted from the Nairobi newspaper.

Table 1 Message Appeal of the Nairobi

Dates(Weeks)	Language			Type of appeal			
	SMS lang	Sheng	Good English	Rational (serious, same status, prof, cons keep off)	Emotional (god-fearing, loving, HIV+ or -)	Sex (eg hot, sexy lady)	Economic (eg financially independent, rich)
Jan 13–19, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	2	0
Jan 20–26, 2017	0	0	6	6	0	0	1
Jan 27–Feb 2, 2017	0	0	5	5	1	2	0
Feb 3–9, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
Feb 10–16, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	1
Feb 17–23, 2017	0	0	5	5	0	2	0
Feb 24–Mar 2, 2017	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
Mar 17–23, 2017	0	0	5	5	2	1	2
Mar 24–30, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
Mar 31–April 6, 2017	0	0	3	3	1	0	0
April 21–27, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	3	0
April 28–May 4, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
May 19–25, 2017	0	0	5	5	1	2	1
May 26–June 1, 2017	0	0	3	3	0	0	0
June 2–8, 2017	0	0	3	3	1	0	0
June 9–15, 2017	0	0	3	3	1	0	1
June 16–22, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	2	0
June 23–29, 2017	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
July 7–13, 2017	0	0	5	5	0	1	0
July 14–20, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	1
July 28–Aug 3, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
Aug 4–10, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	1	1
Aug 11–17, 2017	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
Aug 18–24, 2017	0	0	5	5	2	0	0
Sept 8–14, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
Sept 15–21, 2017	0	0	7	7	1	0	0
Sept 22–28, 2017	0	0	4	4	0	0	1
Oct 20–26, 2017	0	0	5	5	0	1	0
Oct 27–Nov 2, 2017	0	0	4	4	2	0	0
Nov 3–9, 2017	0	0	6	6	0	0	0
Nov 17–23, 2017	0	0	6	6	0	3	0
Nov 24–30, 2017	0	0	6	6	2	0	1

The findings from table 1 indicated a wide variety of the language used in an ad in a bid to appeal the feelings of the intended audience. The language used had colloquial expressions, the other ads used a simple language, others used a well elaborated and simple language and some were humorous but all were good constructed English. Colloquial expression refers to a style of writing that conveys the effect of informal spoken language as distinct from formal or literary English. When used in an ad, it indicates that the ad may be having some hidden meaning so as to attract some particular audience. It is different from a simple language in a sense that the desired audience needs a deeper interpretation of the language. In addition, the phrase that uses colloquial language tends to create attraction to the reader from a distance because it has a deeper meaning than the literal. Language used in an ad has a powerful influence over the desired audience and their behavior. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is therefore vitally

important. The target audience, of course, also puts its own meaning into certain words. Different people sometimes interpret language in different ways.

The matrimonial ads from the Nairobiian also used a simple language in their advertisement. The advertisers in the Nairobiian decided to use a simple language in some of their Matrimonial ads so as to ensure that the desired audience gets the meaning of the ad. Their aim was to attract the customers to take much consideration to the message advertised and at the end the advertisers will get what they desired. Most of this simple language was well elaborated so as the reader may not have a problem to understand the content. For the Nairobiian to achieve the goal of popularizing their product and reach their target audience, they decided to use an attractive language that was convincing enough and humorous. This is because normally, simple, short phrased sentences provide enough information to attract the reader.

In a bid to increase the message appeal, the researcher also looked at the message and considered if it was rational, sex, emotional or economic. The study found that the advertisers in the Nairobiian Newspaper applied a mix of the four characteristics in attracting the audience. Most messages were rational to indicate that more emphasis was placed on providing factual information and specific details about matrimonial facts. Rational message Appeal therefore was used as an advertising strategy that ads use to attract people to buy a product, pay for a service, donate to a cause, or otherwise be persuaded. The Rational Appeal persuades audiences to act on something by appealing to their sense of reason or logic. In other words, the Rational Appeal effectively makes something make sense or seem obvious in such a way that it really can't be argued.

The findings from table 1 also indicated that the message in the ads contained some element of sex oriented advertisement. A good matrimonial ad must contain information related to sex. This is because; matrimony entails the aspect of the husband and the wife. The findings show that sexy words were used in the matrimonial ads which included, smart lady, Sexy and beautiful among others. On the other hand, the research found that the study used emotional message appeals which included God fearing, loving and intelligent among others. Emotion plays a role in how the audience reacts to the matrimonial ad. Every ad, including the most rational, will elicit an emotional response. That response is also personal. The audience will bring their own perceptions of the perceived advertisement.

The Daily Nation Newspaper: There so many techniques used in creating effective advertising messages in a bid to catch the eyes of the audience. By paying attention to your would-be customers, what they need, and how you can benefit them, the advertiser creates an advertising message that speaks directly to them and provides them with the motivation to buy their products and service, as well as establishing their brand within their minds. The daily nation therefore adopts techniques in their message that appeals to the audience and creates a notion that matrimony is not just a wife and husband but what makes and creates an appealing environment between the couples. In framing their message therefore, the daily nation ensured that the message is clear to the minds of the audience as shown in table 2.

Table 2 Message Appeal of the Daily Nation Newspaper

Dates(Weeks)	Language			Type of appeal			
	SMS lang	Sheng	Good English	Rational (serious, same status, prof, cons keep off)	Emotional (god-fearing, loving, HIV+ or -)	Sex (eg hot, sexy lady)	Economic (eg financially independent, rich)
January 16, 2016	0	0	8	6	8	7	6
September 2, 2017	0	0	11	8	11	10	8

June 4, 2016	0	0	14	11	14	10	9
November 4, 2017	0	0	10	9	10	8	6
August 5, 2017	0	0	10	9	10	8	4
October 7, 2017	0	0	17	14	17	13	10
January 9, 2016	0	0	12	10	12	8	4
September 9, 2017	0	0	10	8	10	7	8
June 11, 2016	0	0	13	9	13	10	12
November 12, 2016	0	0	13	7	13	9	12
August 13, 2016	0	0	12	12	12	10	10
May 14, 2016	0	0	17	14	17	13	14
July 15, 2017	0	0	14	10	14	12	10
July 16, 2016	0	0	13	10	13	10	11
December 16, 2017	0	0	16	14	16	14	11
December 17, 2016	0	0	13	10	13	11	10
June 18, 2016	0	0	18	14	18	14	13
January 21, 2017	0	0	17	15	17	15	15
July 22, 2017	0	0	11	8	11	10	9
October 22, 2016	0	0	11	9	11	9	7
June 24, 2017	0	0	11	8	11	9	8
March 25, 2017	0	0	15	12	15	12	13
June 25, 2016	0	0	14	14	14	10	9
November 25, 2017	0	0	8	6	8	6	4
February 27, 2016	0	0	14	10	14	10	9
August 27, 2016	0	0	12	9	12	10	6
July 29, 2017	0	0	11	9	11	8	9
April 30, 2016	0	0	20	15	20	16	17
September 30, 2017	0	0	17	14	17	12	14

Message advertising appeals are the persuasive pressures that stimulate a person to buy a product or service by speaking to an individual's needs, interests, or wants. The goal of an ad is to persuade customers, and message advertising appeals provide just the right hook to allow persuasion to occur. Message advertising appeals are designed to create a positive image and mindset about those who use the product or service, and are a major factor of consideration for advertisers. Advertising agencies put a lot of effort into their creative advertising strategies and use various types of message appeals to influence decision making by the desired audience. The finding in table 2 indicated that most of the language used in the advertisement was familiar language that could be well understood by everybody regardless of the degree of the mastery of the English language. The audience does not need lots of thinking and research for them to understand the ad, for example a man looking for a woman. This is a simple, familiar and precise language to understand. The researcher therefore classified it as good English. On the other hand, none of the ads contained SMS language or sheng.

On the message appeal itself, the study found three distinct forms of appeal. These included rational messages, sex messages, emotional messages and even messages with some economic aspects. Some advertisements skip the pulling on the audience's heartstrings methodology and instead, appeal to their rational thought. These appeals rely heavily on facts, statistics, features and benefits in the hopes that simple common sense will sway the desired audience. Rational appeals typically don't engage consumers as intensively as those that appeal to emotions. This explained why the daily nation in most cases used rational messages. These messages have facts in themselves and have not been challenged. The reader of the message that is rational need to believe the message as it is and need not to have further evidence. The daily nation in their matrimonial ads used messages like 'meet a 38 year old Nairobi based business lady, never married, without children, light skinned and cheerful. Looking for a God fearing gentleman, who is single, divorced or widowed with a stable

occupation.’ The statement in itself is self-explanatory with real facts that you need not to question the advertiser. This message is rational and is in itself a fact.

The daily nation on the other hand incorporated messages that contain sexual language and image in their matrimonial ads. Matrimony entails the affection between two people, the male and female in this case who form a couple. Issues regarding sex are the most important parts of their lives. It is always said in advertisements that sex sells. Sex appeal on the other hand lures audiences by appealing to their sexual desires and fantasies. The daily nation used this approach because in their matrimonial ads it was an easy and proven method for attracting attention quickly. Beneath the ads are pictures of a man and a woman, signifying the complete set of man to woman relationship. At itself, this is a sign of love. In most of the adverts, the two are either holding one another or are sited in a way to show a strong relation accompanied with a sharp shooting smiles to indicate the happiness created by a woman who finds the right man. In these ads, the images are in bright colors. Color is powerful because it can change the mood of potential customers. If the way the ad appears improves state of mind of the customers, the relationship with a brand will deepen and the probability of a return will increase. The daily nation and its designers are well aware of that. Equally, the ads are surrounded with the beautiful words ‘Soul Mates – Love is only a phone call away.’ The word soul mate is perfectly decorated to give a signal to the desired audience that love is already here before they could even read the advert itself. The word soul is also in bright red colors with letter o choreographed in form of a heart to perfectly indicate a signal to the audience about love. All these are sex appeals which touches the hearts of the desired audiences.

Message appeal to customer’s emotion was also used by the daily nation as a common technique in ensuring that matrimonial ads reach the desired audience. Even when customers look for rational reasons to uphold the advertisement, the ability for advertisers to tap into underlying emotions can greatly increase the potential response. Different emotional appeals are used to motivate the audience to act in specific ways. That could be the reason why the daily nation has used messages that are so emotional and that can catch the mind of the audience. Apart from the emotional and sex appeals, the advertisers did not forget the fact that economic appeal is also important. In as much as you may be looking for a life time partner, he or she must be of some economic status. That was the reason why most of the adverts included the fact that the advertiser is either employed or in business or financially stable, or he or she is looking for a partner who is of some economic status.

The Star Newspaper: In the star newspaper, the researcher determined the message appeal by examining the language used in the matrimonial ads and the type of appeal by looking at the number of matrimonial ads that had rational messages, emotional messages, sex messages or even economic messages. The findings were discussed in table 3.

Table 3: Message Appeal of the Star newspaper

Dates(Weeks)	Language			Type of appeal			
	SMS Lang	Sheng	Good English	Rational (serious, same status, prof, cons keep off)	Emotional (god-fearing, loving, HIV+ or -)	Sex (e.g. hot, sexy lady)	Economic (e.g. financially independent, rich)
Oct 2, 2017	6	0	8	6	8	7	0
Oct 9, 2017	4	0	14	10	14	8	0
Oct 16, 2017	3	0	10	10	10	9	4
March 1, 2016	4	0	6	6	6	6	0
March 3, 2016	3	0	15	13	15	13	2

March 10, 2016	5	0	6	6	6	6	0
March 17, 2016	3	0	9	5	9	3	0
March 15, 2016	4	0	13	10	13	8	2
July 4, 2017	5	0	5	3	5	3	0
July 11, 2017	2	0	13	10	13	6	4
July 5, 2017	3	0	15	12	15	13	6
July 18, 2017	4	0	11	10	11	9	0
May 10, 2016	2	0	13	12	13	9	0
July 10, 2017	1	0	9	8	9	7	1
May 22, 2017	0	0	6	7	6	5	0
July 24, 2017	5	0	20	14	20	14	8

The findings in table 3 shows the message appeal as received from the star newspaper. The findings indicated that in the star newspaper the language used was good English that could be well understood by majority of the audience. But on the other hand the advertisers used SMS language in most of the adverts but avoided the use of sheng. On the type of appeal, the findings indicated that the star newspaper had a mix of the type of appeal including rational and emotional messages. Most of their messages also had phrases showing some sexual in them to appeal the audience.

Matrimonial Practices

Marriage is a matrimonial agreement or bond, and the house a newlywed couple moves into can be called a matrimonial home. Matrimonial practices therefore governs the rules of marriage like the license that declares two people legally married, or the age a person must be, legally, to get married. The study considered the characteristics of various advertisements in print media and how they affected the matrimonial practices. By doing this, the study began with the features of the ads that the respondents remembered against the size of the advert and the results were summarized in table 4.

Table 4: Cross tabulation of features of advert and size of advert

		What was the size of that advert?			Total
		Small	Classified	Display	
What features of the advert do you remember	Colour	1	8	2	11
	Size	0	5	0	5
	Message descriptions	0	0	7	7
	Layout	1	0	0	1
	Added captions	2	0	0	2
Total		4	13	9	26

In a bid to understand the features of the matrimonial ads, the researcher was more interested with the color of the ad, the size, the message description and the layout. The study was more concern with what feature that attracted the audience against the size of the ad. About 1 respondent remembered the color of the ad which was small in size. 8 respondents remembered the color but the ad was classified while the other 2 respondents remembered the color but the ad was a display. For those who considered size, 5 respondents said the ads were classified. Those who considered the message descriptions, only 7 respondents indicated that the ads were displays. Finally, only one respondent remembered the layout and only 2 remembered added captions. The findings therefore indicated that color of the ad was the most preferred feature of the advert that attracted most respondents. This prompted the researcher to ask the opinion of the respondents on the language used in the matrimonial ads. The findings were summarized in table 5.

Table 5 Language Used in these Matrimonial Adverts

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
It's good	9	34.6	
Makes them seem very desperate!	5	19.2	34.6
Most of the times they lay a lot about themselves.			
Dull, uninviting, not very engaging and usually has bad grammar.	3	11.5	53.8
Very shallow	1	3.8	65.4
Blatantly wanting.	6	23.1	69.2
Polite and appealing	2	7.7	92.3
Total	26	100.0	100.0

Table 5 indicated that majority of the respondents (34.6%) said the language used was good; an indication that they were moved by the language used thus appealing. On the contrary, this was followed by 23.1% of the respondents who indicated that the language was blatantly wanting. About 19.2% of the respondents indicated that the language used had shown them as if they were very desperate and most of the times the language lied a lot about themselves. On the other hand, 11.5% of the respondents were of the opinion that the ads were dull, uninviting, not very engaging and usually had bad grammar. 7.7% of the respondents said that they admired the language because it was polite and appealing while the remaining 3.8% of the respondents said that the language was very shallow. The findings therefore indicated that visual content and design in advertising have a very great impact on the consumer, but it is language that helps people to identify a product and remember it. The target audience, of course, also puts its own meaning into certain words as used in an advertisement. Different people sometimes interpret language in different ways. Both the mass media, when reporting news items and marketing and advertising personnel have to consider the emotive power of the words they use. First, they make a decision about what to communicate and what to withhold. On the same note, the agency therefore must be aware of the fact that they should consider all manner of audiences when trying to adopt an advert. This explains the reasons why different respondents could define the language used in adverts differently. The researcher therefore asked if the matrimonial adverts were appealing to the audience and the findings were summarized in table 6.

Table 6: If the matrimonial adverts were appealing

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	6	23.1	
Not to me	2	7.7	23.1
Yes	16	61.5	30.8
It depends on what you are looking for	2	7.7	92.3
Total	26	100.0	100.0

Results from table 6 shows that majority of the respondents (61.5%) were appealed by the matrimonial ads. About 23.1% of the respondents said no while 7.7% of the respondents both said the advert was not appealing to them and the others said that it depended on what the audience was looking for. For those who were never appealed, they indicated various reasons like; the ads were a disappointment to the values of an actual marriage, they were prepared with very few details and dull in color contrasts and even some indicated that they can't relate to them. A cross tabulation was conducted on if the ads had persuaded the audience and the reasons. The findings were summarized in table 7.

Table 7: Cross tabulation on if persuaded by the ads and the reasons

The main aim of the advertising agents is to ensure that the reader is persuaded and moved so that they may eventually become customers. The other aim is to ensure that the information passed can enable the reader refer them to the new customers. In doing this, the advertising agents have to ensure that the ad must be persuasive and should have content as desired. The researcher asked if the respondents had ever been persuaded by these matrimonial adverts and the reasons why, majority of the respondents were not persuaded and cited various reasons including; People who need an advert to gain a partner, are not the type of people they could like to be with as it already shows they are less confident and depend on advertisements for their future, some said they are not appealing because they are marries, the rest indicated that you don't know what type of person you'll attract. There seems to be no vetting process while the rest did not see their seriousness since they are dating someone else.

Correlation Analysis:

Correlation analysis was conducted in order to determine the direction and the strength of the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables. In this study Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the magnitude and the direction of the relationships between the dependent variable and independent variables. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was computed to show the relationship existing between the variables and the results were presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Correlation analysis

		Messageappeals	Marriageprac
Messageappeals	Pearson Correlation	1	.534**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	26	26
Marriageprac	Pearson Correlation	.534**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	26	26

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The values of the correlation coefficient (R) are supposed to be between -1 and +1. A value of 0 implies no relationship, +1 correlation coefficient indicates that the two variables are perfectly correlated in a positive linear sense, that is, both variables increase together while a values of -1 correlation coefficient indicates that two variables are perfectly correlated in a negative linear sense, that is, one variable increases as the other decreases. A positive correlation was identified with a Pearson correlation coefficient of .0534 which was significant at 0.01 levels. The finding indicated that an increase in variables of message appeals will lead to matrimonial ads appeal which will build the marriage practices.

Conclusions

This study sought to determine the effect of message appeals in matrimonial print media adverts on marriage practices of Kenyan Asians. Through a content analysis of three newspapers of Kenya – The Daily Nation, The Nairobiian and The Star newspaper that carry matrimonial adverts, and examining the message appeals of these matrimonial adverts, the study concluded that the print media in Kenya caters adequately for the matrimonial needs of the Kenyan Asians. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in creating matrimonial adverts that are more visible. This can be done through creating of matrimonial adverts using

different fonts and improved design strategies, so that they are easily visible and attract the eye of the spouse seeker.

The study also found that the effect of matrimonial print media adverts on marriage practices of Kenyan Asians bears significance in the message appeals such that some appeals in the current scenario repel prospective seekers of marriage. Sometimes the matrimonial adverts tend to make the advertiser seem 'desperate' therefore, a better way to appeal to the audience is needed. Through interviews with representatives of the Kenyan Asian communities, it was discovered that many Kenyan Asians have varied options of getting married, with love marriage being a common practice. Kenyan Asians seemed hesitant to place an advert in the matrimonial section because it has not been a cultural practice. This comes from many married interviewees. They were married through arranged marriages or love marriages. The print media will soon become a strong platform for Kenyan Asians to seek spouses.

Recommendations

Kenyan Asians have a tremendous belief in the institution of marriage. The marriage practices of this community has evolved over the years from use of pundits and matchmakers to arranged marriages and love marriages. This has also evolved to using the print media to place matrimonial adverts when searching for a spouse in matrimony. Placing matrimonial adverts in the print media is a fairly recent phenomenon in Kenya, although its effects have already been witnessed among Kenyan Asians. A comparative study is recommended to determine how other communities in Kenya relate to matrimonial print media adverts and whether there are any effects of this service provided by the local newspapers.

The researcher noted that apart from reading the daily newspapers such as The Daily Nation, The Star, The Standard and The Nairobiian, the Kenyan Asians also read a publication called The Asian Weekly. The researcher recommends that further research be carried out to determine if the niche publication has matrimonial print media adverts and how its audience relates to the medium that directly targets them for culturally-strong issues such as religious festivals, marriages and social needs.

Finally, the evolution of matrimonial adverts on the global platform is witnessed with the sprouting of various online matrimonial websites such as shaadi.com, matrimony.com et cetera. There is need to study the effects of online personal dating sites and matrimonial sites and how they contribute to the marriage practices of Kenyans.

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