

Improving Adolescents' Advertising Literacy Through Education: The Perceptions of Secondary Education Teachers

Abstract: Nowadays, children and youngsters are often confronted with new advertising forms such as social media advertising, mobile marketing and advergames. Compared to rather traditional formats, young consumers experience more difficulties to recognize these new advertising formats because of their integrated and interactive character. Scholars have repeatedly stressed the importance of advertising literacy education in which minors learn how to deal critically with advertisements. A number of advertising literacy programmes have already been developed during the past decades, but research about the effectiveness as well as stakeholders' perceptions is limited. Therefore, the objective of this research is to uncover secondary education teachers' perceptions of one existing educational package, namely "*Advertising in new media*". Data for this study were collected not only qualitatively by organizing two focus groups (n = 17), but also quantitatively by sending a survey to teachers who have downloaded the educational material. The results show that teachers emphasize the importance of minors' ability to deal critically with and to recognize advertising. Regarding the content, advertising literacy education is - according to teachers - expected to pay attention to both traditional and new advertising formats, the intent of advertisers, the used persuasive tactics, the influence of advertising, and the values and norms in advertising. Furthermore, based on previous studies of Meeus et al (2014) and Nation et al (2003), teachers give their opinion about a number of design guidelines concerning advertising literacy education (e.g. involving parents and the use of authentic advertisements). Finally, with regard to professional development, teachers indicate that advertising literacy is rarely discussed in teacher training. Consequently, teachers suggest the integration of this topic in preservice teacher training. Considering the suggestions given by teachers, further research should focus on both the adaptation or development of (existing) educational material aimed to enhance minors' advertising literacy and its empirical evaluation.

Keywords: Advertising literacy education, secondary education, teachers' perceptions

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