

## **Playful or dangerous?; A cross-cultural study of discrepancy in Designers' and kids' perception of toy appearances**

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### **Abstract**

A product is an object to be used by users; many are used for different purposes and some of them are manufactured to be used as toys. Each product can be used or the meaning from each product can be deciphered in different ways, designers try to infuse some meaning into some products that the products can be used as toys so that the users can be helped to acquire skill in a Playful time, based on parameters on which they are perceived.

Sometimes the user may not derive the correct meaning that is to be delivered by the toy. But the question is whether both children and designers have similar understanding of the expression behind the toy? Is there a difference in perception of factors by children belonging to different culture? How does a user react to a toy that could possibly carry the idea of a wrong design? The knowledge of design semantics helps designers to create a feature with the product's ability to communicate its meaning. This paper reports a cross-cultural study involving features of toys and their subsequent influence on the user's reaction. In order to conduct an inductive study of the use of toys and the element of meaning involved there, three models samples are used in this context and the reacti

on of 508 children respondent from India and China have been taken into consideration. The study is based on questionnaires and interviews that have been systematically undertaken to understand how the skill of design semantics affects toy design. The study in the course of fragmentation indicates that sometimes features of a toy do not influence children's perception. This lack of ability to encourage children's creativity fails to give any joy and in turn could create a sort of hindrance in its purchase by the user. Firstly the study came up with the outcome that the perceptions of Indian and Chinese children were on similar lines. Secondly, the experiment which was conducted to identify the location of the trigger as a probable good feature of a gun, indicates that when toys are designed, the placement of operating and other details of toy has to be given due attention to in order to avoid bewilderment amongst children.

### **Keywords**

Toy, Product features, Design expression, Meaning, Design semantics.