



Impact of Television on Children

KEYWORDS

Advertising, children, Influence, television.

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ABSTRACT *Children have become much more interested watching TV over many years and it has become a primary action to some lives. Typically, children begin watching television at an early age of six months, and by the age two or three children become enthusiastic viewers. This has become a problem because many children are watching television and the shows that they are watching (even if they are cartoons) have become violent and addictive. Today all TV ads focused on children to attract consumers and were targeting the child viewer. Children in the 7-15 years age group want to buy products (by the influence of ads). Monitoring of advertisements has become essential. Children that have large amounts of TV time have increased weight problems, decreased academic performance, and decreased socialization skills. Thus the present study aims to find the how TV Advertising influences their children's and how it affects their health.*

INTRODUCTION:

Since the middle of the twentieth century, television has grown from a novelty to a fixture in 90 percent of Indian households. Over time, the character of the medium also changed dramatically. Once offering only three principal broadcast networks, viewers' choices now may extend to more than a hundred channels. Children are consumers of a variety of media, including computers, video games, print media, videotapes, music, and television. Although television is the most commonly used medium, viewing time varies with age. From two to seven years of age, children's viewing time is about two hours per day. Increasing through childhood, it peaks at about three and a half hours per day during middle school before dropping off to about two and a half hours per day during adolescence.

CHILDREN in India now spend about three hours a day in front of the television screen. An average child is estimated to have watched 5,000 hours of television by the time he or she enters first grade and 25,000 hours by the end of high school --- more time than would be spent in a classroom earning a college degree.

Television has become a potent agency of socialization because like the family, school, and peers, it directly provides the child with experiences which shape their attitudes and influence their behaviors. In evaluating television's influence on children, it is important to view this medium as an element in a matrix of influences in a child's social environment.

Television seems to become a growing source of parental anxiety. Parents worry most of all about the amount and kinds of programs their children watch, and definitely these fears are legitimate.

Advertisement and Children:

Advertisements encourage the children to persuade their parents to purchase the products shown in the commercials, whether useful or not. The little ones tend to get adamant, if they are not bought the product.

Children often tend to misinterpret the messages conveyed in commercials. They overlook the positive side and concentrate more on the negatives.

Many advertisements in the present times include dangerous stunts, which can be performed only by experts. Even though the commercials broadcast the statutory warnings with the

ad, the kids often try to imitate the stunts at home, with fatal results.

The flashy advertisements broadcast in television generate impulse shopping in children.

Children, after watching the glitter of commercials, often lose the ability to live a life without materialistic joy.

The kids usually get more attracted towards the costly branded products, such as jeans and accessories. They disregard the inexpensive, but useful, ones that are not shown in the commercials.

Advertisements have an indirect effect on the behavior of children. They might develop temper tantrums, when deprived of the latest toys and clothes that are shown in the commercials.

The personal preferences in clothing, toys, food and luxurious of children are altered by the advertisements, to a great extent.

Junk foods, such as pizzas, burgers and soft drinks, are heavily promoted during children's TV viewing time. This develops a craving for fatty, sugary and fast foods in kids, thereby affecting their health adversely.

Below are findings from some of the more reliable studies.

In last 20 years impact of TV advertisements on children memory and behavior is the major topic of debates in countries open for market competition (Boddewyn, 1984). Till 1988 advertising expense of TV program raised up to \$500 million approximately (Leccese, 1989).

While looking at the children responses to TV advertisement a research experiment revealed that children's food choices specially in snacks are based on their exposure to TV commercials (Gorn and Goldberg, 1982).

Atkin (1981) also confirmed these findings in his experimental study and found that the children with heavy exposure to TV advertisements are more likely to recall those brands while shopping in the market and with their parents. Those children demand advertised food products and toys while moving in market with their parents. Children ranging in between 6 to 11 years of age watch TV commercials 3 hours a day and it is estimated that over the period of a year aver-

age child see about 20,000 advertisements (Adler et al, 1980). Most of the research in consumer behavior and specially on advertisement impact on children has focused two major points : (1) impact of TV commercials in shaping behavior and its positive or negative influence on children life and habits. (2) Role of TV commercials on the development and growth mental as well as physical of the children's (Donohue, Meyer and Henke, 1978).

Research Design

The aim of the research is to study the impact of TV advertising on impressionable minds of the children & its effects on their attitude & health. This paper deals with various factors like nature of the children, their likes & dislikes, the parent's role in decision making & the influence of advertising on the buying habits of the kids. The data collection was done using convenience sampling method in the form of questionnaire. Analysis of data has been done using quantitative methods such as Arithmetic mean. This paper not only concentrates on the findings but also suggests corrective measures to be taken up to minimize the after effects of the advertising world which will be always on the upsurge. The number of children exposed now to the ad world will surely increase as newly found segment will be heavily dosed for surviving in this competitive market. So this research paper aims at taking precautionary steps in the ethical front of the advertisers and of course on the parental & children's front.

**Data Collection
Primary data**

A questionnaire was prepared for getting the view of parents and their kids on the purchasing

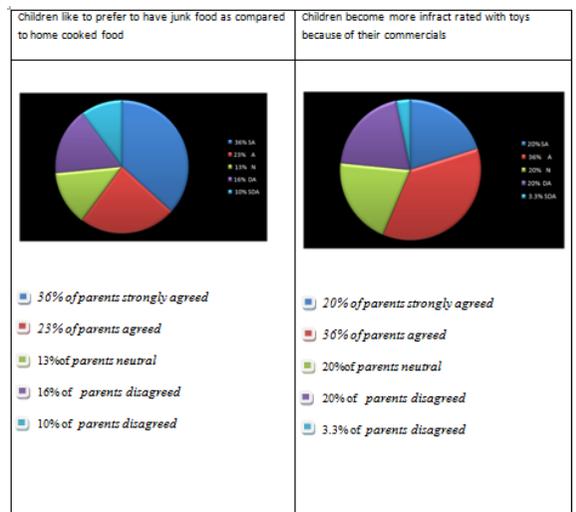
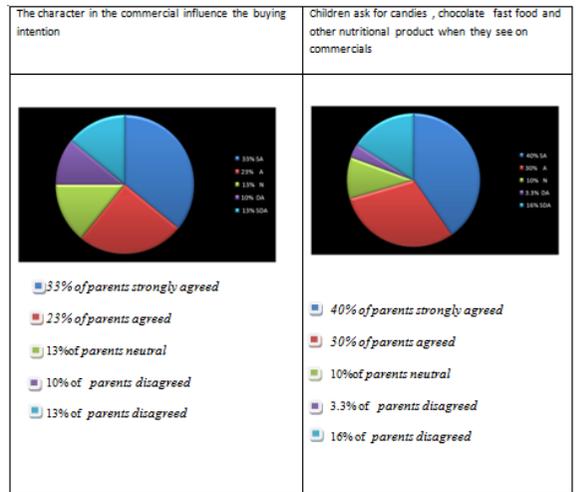
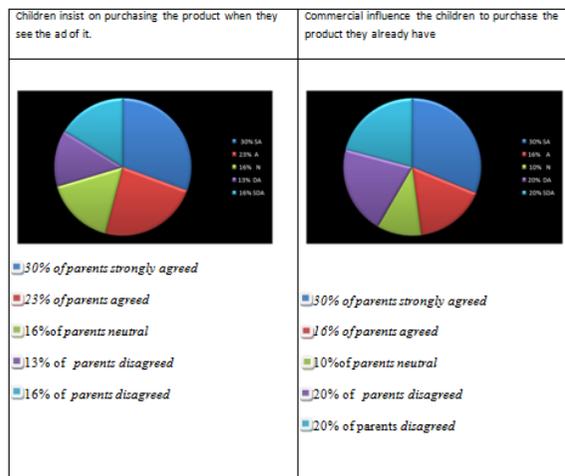
Choices and eating habits of kids. The survey had been carried out in Academic staff college (Pondicherry University) for those who attended the 102nd orientation program where the teachers who are parents were gathered.

Technique

Non Probability Sampling Technique was used & in that Convenience Sampling was done. A

Total of about 30 different people were interviewed with the questionnaire. Hence a convenience sampling technique was decided upon which would enable using personal judgment to conveniently approach the parents who were attending the orientation course.

Analysis of Findings, Tabulation & Presentation



Conclusion

This paper discusses the television advertisement and its impact on child health. The study has revealed a positive co relationship exists between time spent with television and its impact on the buying behavior of a child and its influence on family spending.

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