



## Research on the Adverse Effects of Advertising on Children

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the impact of television advertisements on children, with a specific focus on understanding the potential negative effects of TV advertising on young audiences. The study utilizes secondary data analysis. Advertising serves as a form of communication, promoting various products, services, or ideas to audiences. This paper delves into the analysis of the adverse impacts of television advertisements on children. In today's society, television plays a significant role in our daily lives, and the influence of advertisements on children is increasingly concerning. The findings suggest that television not only provides entertainment but also prompts young children to demand certain products. Previously, children were not directly targeted by advertisers, but now they are directly appealing to them. Although advertisements raise children's awareness of various aspects such as entertainment, culture, news, sports, and trends, they also have negative effects on their minds. These adverse effects include misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the messages conveyed, leading to disruptive behaviors, conflicts within families, increased family expenditure, requests for less nutritious products associated with obesity and poor health, and imitation of celebrities. Despite some limited advantages, this paper primarily focuses on the negative effects of TV advertising on children and proposes measures to mitigate these effects and address associated challenges.

**Keywords:** Pessimistic View, Young Exposure, Adverse Effects, Miscommunication, Wrong Appeals, Television.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

(K, 2016) Advertising was first started by Egyptians by papyrus scroll. After that China started the earliest advertisement orally (11th to 17th centuries BC). In the 19th century Thoms J.Barrot from London started advertising for soaps. In the 20th Century advertisement first telecasted in radio's, then 1950 in Commercial Television 1980's in Cable Television in (MTV) in 1990 started on the Internet. Advertisement is an attempt to attract someone to buy a good or service. Advertisement makes the kids aware of the new products, brands. At present there are 1148 T.V. Channels in India.

The children's market is a large and lucrative market for advertisers. While advertisers traditionally favor toys, cereal, and candy to sell to children, an increasing number of other products are also being sold directly to children. These include video games, chewing gum, soft drinks, toothpaste, and candy (Weisskoff 1985). Companies like H.J. Heinz, PepsiCo, and General Foods have specifically targeted children as an important element in their marketing strategy (Fortune 1987). In addition, many companies provide support services for businesses that market products to children. Marketing to children is big business in today's world.

(Rana, 2015) Research studies over the year's world over have brought out various types of negative impact of intense viewing of television by children. The direct influence of TV viewing on the extent of violence and deviant behavior patterns of children has been reiterated – even in India. In fact, there are a couple of confessions by adolescents, even a biography, as to how they picked up ideas about a rape or robbery or revenge or killing or suicide or kidnap, etc from one or other TV programme. Even some court judgments have commented on such effects of TV programmes.

(Lapierre, Fleming-Milici, Rozendaal, McAlister, Castonguay, 2017) Research has also found that children and adolescents may engage in more mindless eating while watching TV or playing video games. With children spending more time typing or tapping on a screen, they're naturally spending less time outside engaging in physical activities which leads to many health problems that can range from mild to chronic. Children are uniquely vulnerable to the persuasive effects of advertising because of immature critical thinking skills and impulse inhibition.

(Dadras, Shahi, Zadeh, 2017) Nowadays, a lot of advertisements feature risky stunts that can only be performed by professionals. Children frequently attempt to imitate the stunts at home, despite the fact that the commercials include legal warnings. Children are more likely to make impulsive purchases when they see flashy advertisements on television. Children frequently lose the ability to live without materialistic happiness after watching commercials. Ad

producers ought to keep in mind that advertisements can also have a negative effect on people, particularly young children. We have discussed some of the most obvious negative effects of advertising on children in this article.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Levin, 2022) Ads is an important aspect of media that can have a major influence in the child's evolution process beginning from his childhood to his teen years and beyond. The television advertisements impact both the genders equally. The product choice they make and how they see their gender role changes with television ads. The industry causes young women to constantly compare themselves to what the media tells them and they try to dominate them by how they should dress up, what they should look like, what kind of things they should purchase, and also they try to have a control over their thinking ability. On the other hand, young male put more stress on becoming muscular like one of those male models in the Ad. They often get carried away in the product choice when they see a celebrity endorsing a particular product. These comparisons have a lasting impact on them which leads to feelings of negative self-esteem.

(McGinnis, Gootman, Kraak, 2006) Increased exposure to advertisements on television, magazines and movies have a major impact on children due to their impressionability. Advertising of foods and beverages influences the diet and health of children. Based on food advertising children try to reach out for whatever food they have seen being advertised either on television or even billboards. Despite the fact that children's choices are highly influenced by their parents and surroundings, they tend to make decisions at a younger age. Of the numerous products available in the market, the most common and influential purchases are carbonated soft drinks, candies, and salty snacks. In relation to that they tend to eat more and this can result in obesity.

(Barrie 2004) Ads for alcohol on television also have a negative impact on children. Throughout their childhoods, advertisements for alcoholic beverages are constantly shown on television. How they always interpret what they see in those advertisements is unknown. Preschoolers are one of the most affected groups. Their views and assumptions regarding alcohol shift as a result. According to research, an advertisement's likeability increases its effectiveness. Even so, very little research has been done on alcohol advertising. In a case study of the UK, alcohol commercials are typically shown in the early evening hours of television programs. Because they are at home right now, the outcome is accidental exposure to teenagers.

In addition, according to (Chan, 2010), advertising can have a negative effect on children because it always confuses the relationship between needs and wants. As a result, it has a tendency to lower someone's self-esteem, particularly children. This is due to the fact that if they do not receive what they desire from the advertising, they typically experience feelings of low self-esteem and a sense of relative poverty in comparison to those who are able to access them. However, parents typically spend more money on their children than they do on themselves. Children's perceptions are distorted as a result of the constant stimulation they receive because they are unable to distinguish between television programming and advertisements. Companies try to give children a reason to make their parents buy their products when they distribute advertisements. Video games, for example, are among these products that can be very harmful to a child. According to (Pardun, 2014), the practice of using children as the primary focus of advertising fosters divisions between parents and children.

Advertisement is one of the important tools to attract more customers; its effectiveness depends on the target audience with regard to that a brief review of some of the relevant literature is as under. (Mukherjee, 2007) showed that advertisements have three types of effect on children's tender minds – cognitive effect, attitudinal effect and behavioral effect children readily get attracted to the advertised products due to their observable features, but their consumer knowledge.

(Sheoliha, 2007) opined that Indian marketers are becoming more complex day by day, but a new phenomenon which is gaining prominence is "advertising to children". Today, kids have more self-sufficiency and influence power in the family in purchase decisions. Even corporations have realized the power of schools in promoting their products, and naturally companies like McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Lilliput and many more successful players have attained a good market share.

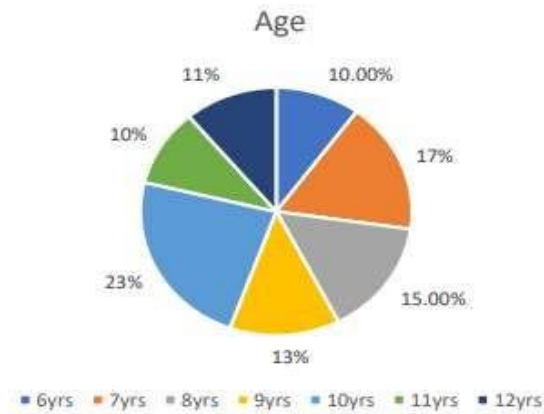
(Katke, 2007) discussed the link between television advertising and its influence on child health and family spending. Every aspect of children's lives has been adversely affected by recent trends in advertising and marketing. Researchers link advertising to increased violence, obesity and eating disorders in children, as well as family stress and negative values.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research refers to the search for knowledge. It is a scientific and systematic search for information on a particular topic. Intrusiveness is the mother of all knowledge and this method that we implement to get good knowledge can be termed as research. Secondary data means data that are already available i.e. They refer to the data which have already been collected and analyzed by someone else. Secondary data are second hand pieces of information compiled together. This data is not gathered as primary data and hence they are comparatively less reliable than primary data. A quantitative approach is

required to gather information on the experience and perspectives towards the negative impact of advertisements on children. We have used secondary data for this study, by collecting various data from multiple sources like books, articles, journals, etc. These are the following sources used by us to analyze, interpret and construct this research - Internet for getting information on rules & regulation on advertising, Internet for getting the contents of the foods targeting children, journals to get some relevant information on kids.

#### 4. ANALYSIS



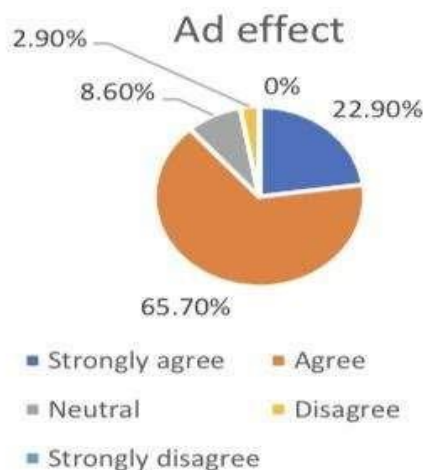
(Source: Thakural, 2019)

This pie chart shows the age group of the children, where the maximum 23% children belong to the age group of 10 years. The second highest being 17% from the age group 7 years. Maximum children belong to this age group 7-10 years.



(Source: Thakural, 2019)

This pie chart shows the amount of hours children spend watching television. The highest 54.30% children spend 2-4 hours and the second highest 34.30% spend 4-6 hours a day watching television.



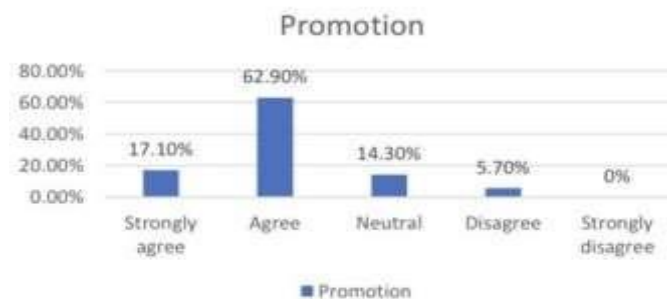
(Source: Thakural, 2019)

The above pie chart shows that 88.6% of the parents think that their kids get influenced by ad commercials promoting certain products while 2.90% disagree with the statement.



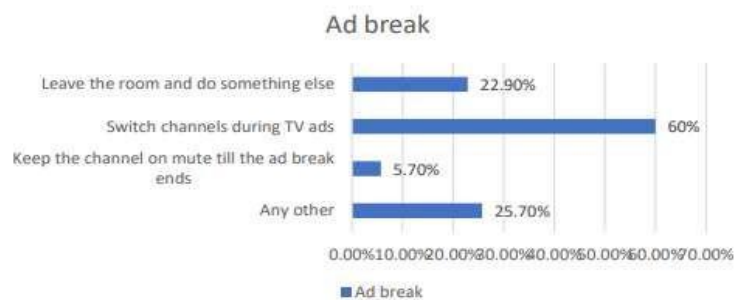
(Source: Thakural, 2019)

The above pie chart shows that 77.1% parents think that advertisements do influence the kid and make them compel their parents to buy certain products which is true since advertisements are meant to attract the target audience towards the advertised product.



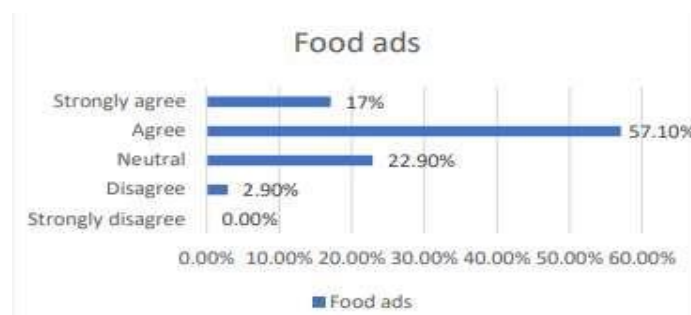
(Source: Thakural, 2019)

The following chart shows that the maximum parents i.e 62.9% think that advertisers target kids for the promotional purpose of their advertisements since it's easy to influence children. It's easy for the ad makers to make the ads more attractive by adding various elements, cartoons, characters, colors etc to build a desire for a product among the kids.



(Source: Thakural, 2019)

According to the parents, this chart shows that 60% of children do switch channels during TV ads which is the highest. While 22.90% children leave the room during the ads and do some other work.



(Source: Thakural, 2019)

According to a majority of parents, 59.10% of children like watching food advertisements while 2.90% parents disagree with it. It also shows why eating habits are easily influenced by these advertisements and there is a rapid increase in childhood obesity.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Advertisements are a leading factor for children in regular choices like purchasing toys, food products, etc. Children tend to have lower self-esteem if they believe themselves to be inferior to their peers for not owning the products that are advertised, especially if they own the products. It is important to decide what is best and needed for ourselves by having our reasons and opinions. The advertisements are created to persuade us to spend our money even if it's not necessary. It is a misconception that fashionable and branded products make us look superior in society and help us gain friends. It is vital for the parents to know their child's exposure to media and to provide guidance on age-appropriate media, which includes television, radio, music, video games and the Internet.

We can reduce the negative effects of advertising on adolescents by keeping the following points in mind. Adolescents would be less likely to use the internet or television for entertainment if they were surrounded by good people and meaningful conversation. Advertising companies should also do a thorough job of checking the morals and ethics of the ads to reduce these negative influences. Providing a child with mental stimulation and healthy outdoor activities will automatically increase their level of activity. Engaging in activities that keep teens' minds active, such as reading a book, playing an instrument, or dancing, also increases endorphin production. It is recommended that any food ADS be examined in terms of the claims they make and the food ingredients' compliance with standards established by reputable organizations like WHO.

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