

## **Impact Of Harmful Advertisement on Changing Behavior of Children – A Study with Reference to Chennai City**

**V. Mahalakshmi,**

Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, VISTAS, Pallavaram, Chennai-117.

E-mail: vmahalakshminatraj@gmail.com

**Dr. M. Thaiyalnayagi,**

Professor, Department of Commerce, VISTAS, Pallavaram, Chennai-117.

E-mail: tnthaiyal4@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

In any society in the world Children are playing vital role for building a future society. Parents always consider their children are their expendable assets. Children receive their knowledge through the process of socialization, and they consider their parents as the first teacher to learn their behavior. In South Asia, The Indian children are replete with more knowledge and IQ and they are accessible to more TV advertisements, other advertisements in their day to day life. The advertisements, messages, information have their potentiality to completely change the behavior of children in the process of socialization. The main aim of this study is to test the influence of harmful advertisement in changing the behavior attitude of children. This study depends upon the primary data obtained through a research questionnaire. Convenience sampling method is applied to collect the 472 responses in the popular metropolitan city of Chennai. The subsequent usage of t-test- reliability test, factor analysis, linear multiple regression analysis and structural equation model revealed that the harmful advertisements create the desire among the children and simultaneously put a lot of pressure on parents. The marketers use very young children as their brand ambassador to reach the psychology of children. They also use some popular cartoon characters, fantasy characters to influence the child to concentrate more on their product.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In any society in the world, children are playing vital role for building a future society. Parents always consider their children are their expendable assets. Children receive their knowledge through the process of socialization, and they consider their parents as the first teacher to learn their behavior. They always require a component of friendly as well as a flexible parent for their physical and mental development. They develop a behavioral culture source from both parents. In the present juncture of TV culture and environment the children sharply reflect to their messages received thorough TV commercials. The TV commercials and other advertisements create both optimistic as well as pessimistic impact on behavior of

students (Allen D. Kanner and Tim kasser, 2000).

In South Asia, the Indian children are replete with more knowledge and IQ and they are accessible to more TV advertisements, other advertisements in their day to day life. The advertisements, messages, information have their potentiality to completely change the behavior of children in the process of socialization. In Indian continent, more than 200 TV channels telecast over 50,000 advertisements to reach their citizens. Both public and private players are playing a vital role to reach their viewers through TV programs. These TV channels have their viewers including children to successfully reach their advertisements in their psychology. The children up to the age of 14

are accessible to all types of programs including unsuitable programs. The availability of actual TV channels, cable TV networks and DTH connection reached almost all the viewers in the subcontinent.

These TV media give more information to the children regarding foods, beverages, clothes, fabrics, shoes, toys and other entertainment products and entertainment services. This information is stored in the psychology of children and mode them into two types of personalities namely emotional children and logical children respectively. These personalities are dominant in categorizing the behavior of children and their change in the Psychology. There are several touching advertisements designed for children attraction and mode them to compel the parents to buy the product or services for their convenience.

The children convince their parents through their logical approach or emotional approach to motivate their parents for the rapid decision making on purchase. Sometimes these advertisements create only negative impact on children and stimulate their excessive imagination to consider unrealistic things as real. Therefore, the present research paper encounters the problem of determining the negative effects of harmful advertisements on the psychological behavior of children (Amy Aidman, 1995).

### **LITERATURE REVIEWS.**

Brian Wilox et al., (2004) argued that the children targeted advertising are able to reach the young children very easily and indicated the success of advertisement. The children are not having full common sense to comprehend television advertising useful for

their day-to-day life. They have different perception from that of adults. The target advertisement can easily persuade the children below the age of 8 years. They have little awareness on the intention of advertisements.

Chris Peston (1992) highlighted the importance effect of television advertising on children psychology. He found that it is an important issue severely affecting the behavior as well as the attitude of children. These issues were raised in response to the changes in the socialization of children and their attitudinal shift towards the television channels. There is an age basis of receptivity to television commercials in highlighting the effect persuasion among children.

Dale kunkel, (1992), emphasized the importance of attitudinal changes of children during the purchase of any products to them. The cognitive effect on children to buy the advertised products is the major effect of advertisement. The influence of children on parents during the purchase is conspicuously identified. There is a total change in the children's attitude and behavior towards advertised products. Ernest J. North and Theuns Kotze, (2001) measured the influence of attractive advertisements in TV for children and it is going in the direction intended by advertisers to persuade the children during the purchase of their needed products.

The impact of television advertising on children clearly depends upon their process of socialization as well as their level of exposure to advertisements. The TV commercials have their strength and potentiality to change the characteristics of the children.

George Wilson and Katie Wood (2001) highlighted the most prevailing appeal of TV advertisement over children in the form of the programs with fun/happiness. They use these themes as the persuasive strategy to cover up the target children. The marketers are very meticulous in designing their advertisement for children. The Marketers are focusing more on their “nag factor” of products to get their target children to increase their sales.

Gerald J Gorn and Marvin F Goldberg (2002) stated that the advertisements vehemently attract the children pressure on parents to buy the products they need. The research also found that the children are influenced by the advertisements in TV and convince their parents both logically and emotionally to accomplish the family purchase decision. They are ready to design their continuous strategies due to the continuous influence of advertisements. The children focus more on the purchase of products which are primarily for their own consumption.

Jorn R. Rossister and Thomas S Robertson (2004) “innovatively found that the children involve in process of being immersed in the commercial culture and this process create a harmful effect over children. It is further found that the above average number of children is intimately accessible to the television rather than other communication and entertainment tools. The marketers make the children to become their own marketing advertisers.”

K.A.Coon and K.L.Tuker 2006). identified that the advertisers spend more than twelve billion dollars per year on advertising on children in the USA. They mainly focus on such a advertisements to influence the

children and through their influence on their parents intended to increase their sales. The main aim of the advertisements of the marketers is to bombard the children psychology thorough superficial values from TV advertisements. These strategies sometimes can create conflicts and animosity among the parents.

### **RESEARCH GAPS.**

After reviewing both empirical and descriptive research works at international level, the researcher identified three unaddressed issues which are not concentrated by the researchers namely.

1. How one can distinguish the effect the advertisements into harmful and commercial advertisements.
2. What are all the indicators of changes in the behavior and attitude of children?
3. In which way the harmful advertisements create negative impact on children after watching the advertisements?

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.**

1. To classify the harmful advertisement perception of parents of the children in the study area.
2. To measure the influence of harmful advertisement in changing the behavior attitude of children.
3. To identify the different approaches of children to convince their parents due to the influence of advertisements.

### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESES.**

1. There is no significant influence of harmful advertisement on Children behavior and attitude.

2. There is no significant influence of approaches of children on purchase decision of Parents.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN.**

This research is empirical in its approach. The empirical evidence are derived through responses from the parents of children. A research instrument is framed based on the gaps in the literature. The questionnaire consists of five parts namely demographic details of parents, children's details, and characteristics of harmful advertisements, effects of advertisement and approaches of Children to convince their parents. The first two part comprises only optional type questions and others are parts questions are framed with Likert's five-point scale. The research is conducted in one of the most popular metropolitan Chennai city, India.

### **SAMPLING METHOD.**

Since the study depends on the primary data obtained from parents of the children up to the age of 14. Their convenience is very important to give their transparent and rational opinion to the questionnaire. Therefore, the convenience sampling is appropriate to collect the responses from the parents. The formation of normal distribution is very important for the sample, therefore a wide data collection becomes indispensable. All the fifteen zones are considered for the research and the researcher circulated 30 each in all the fifteen zones of Chennai city and able to receive only 432 usable

responses. Hence the sample size of the research is 432.

### **DATA ANALYSIS.**

The data collected from the parents of Children up to the age of 14 is coded with numerical values and entered in SPSS package to analyze the data anatomically. After entering the data the reliability and validity are done through cronbach alpha method and confirmatory factor analysis. After validation and estimation of reliability, the researcher applied linear multiple regression analysis to sharply measure the influence of harmful advertisement on the attitude and behavior of the children. Exploratory factor analysis and k-means cluster analysis are used to identify the different approaches of children in convincing the parents for their purchase decision and classification of parents into heterogeneous groups regarding the behavior towards their children.

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.**

This section is started with the reliability computation for the different factors of research. The questionnaire comprises the factors namely "harmful advertisement perception of customers", children behaviour and parent' response towards children behavior. Among these three factors the first factor consists of five variables, children behaviour has eight variables and parent's response comprises five variables respectively. Cronbach alpha method is applied on these three types of variables and the following results are obtained

**Table 1 Cron bach value and reliability**

Factors	N	Mean	Cron bach alpha	Significance
Harmful advertisement	432	3.4240	0.892	.000
Children behaviour	432	3.6920	0.902	.000
Parent's response	432	3.7260	0.845	.000

From the above table, it is found that all the reliability cron bach alpha coefficients are found to be above the required value of 0.75. It implies that the variables of the factors harmful advertisements, children behavior and parents response are easily understood by the respondents and facilitated them to give a

transparent and rational opinion to the statements.

In the second stage of analysis the researcher applied t- test to determine the exact perception of parents on harmful advertisements and the results are clearly presented below

**Table 2- Parents perception on harmful advertisement**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-values	sig
B1	432	4.0880	.81338	.03638	29.910	.000
B2	432	4.0500	.77246	.03455	30.395	.000
B3	432	4.0400	.74801	.03345	31.089	.000
B4	432	3.7700	.89817	.04017	19.170	.000
B5	432	3.3420	1.05985	.04740	7.216	.000

From the above table it can be ascertained that the parents expressed their perception in Likert's five-point scale and t-test is applied on these statements with test value 3. The results indicated that all the mean values of five statements are greater than 4 which imply the parents strongly agreed to all the five variables of harmful advertisements namely stimulating the children,

advertisements are designed friendly to children and attractive product attributes. Some adult scenes in the advertisements and give them matured information. The parents strongly agreed that the harmful advertisements create a pessimistic impact on the behavior of the children.

In the third stage of analysis, an exploratory factor analysis is applied on the eight

variables of Children's behavior in Likert's five point scale and the following results are obtained.

**Table 3-KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.644
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	648.862
Sphericity df	28
Sig.	.000

From the above table the KMO value and Bartlett's test for sampling adequacy as well as the chi square values clearly supported that the variables and their reduction into meaningful factors are significant. The

variables reduction is possible according to the perception of respondents. The number of factors derived out of eight variables is presented in the following table.

**Table 4- Total variance of Children behaviour**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.272	28.403	28.403	2.270	28.380	28.380
2	1.658	20.730	49.133	1.660	20.753	49.133
3	1.106	13.825	62.958			
4	.821	10.257	73.215			
5	.665	8.310	81.524			
6	.529	6.608	88.133			
7	.501	6.268	94.401			
8	.448	5.599	100.000			

From the above table of variance it is found that eight variables are reduced in to two predominant factors. The first factor consists of four variables namely

- 1.The advertised product is related to their education.(.879).
2. The product is useful to all the family members.(.824).
3. The offer price of the marketer is very cheap.(.799)

4.The children like the product as it is used by their favorite character.(785)

Hence this factor is "logical behavior" of children for the purchase of products.

The second factor also comprises four variables with appropriate variables loadings

1. They won't take food until they purchase product.(.889)
2. They will not cooperate to the family members.(.871)
3. The perform poor in the studies.(.844)

4. They have more emotional attachment to the advertisements.(798)

Therefore this factor can be called “emotional behavior” of the children, In the next stage of analysis the researcher intended to estimate the influence of harmful advertisement perception on two children behavior factors namely logical behavior and

emotional behavior respectively. In this scenario harmful advertisement factor is considered as independent variable and the two children behavior factors logical behavior and emotional behavior are taken up as dependent factors respectively. In this scenario a linear multiple regression analysis is exploited and the following results are obtained.

**Table 5 Influence of harmful advertisement on children behavior**

IND	DEP	R-square	Beta	T-values	sig
HAA D	Logical	.432	0.880	5.81338	.000
HAA D	Emotion al	.334	0.500	4.77246	.000

From the above table it can be ascertained that R-square values, F-values, beta values and t-values of the independent variables are significant. This also shows that the beta value are highly significant at 99 percent confidence level., This shows that the harmful advertisement has great and tremendous impact over the behavior of children, It directly affects perception on two children behavior factors namely logical behavior and emotional behavior respectively. This also leads to the rejection of hypothesis 1 at 5 percent level and concluded that there is a significant influence of harmful advertisement on Children behavior and attitude.

In the next step of analysis the researcher intended test the hypothesis 2 stating that There is no significant influence of approaches of children on purchase decision of Parents.

In order to test the hypotheses the children behavior factors namely logical behavior and emotional behavior are considered as independent variables and the parent’s response is taken as dependent variable.

The application of linear multiple regression analysis on the two children behavior factors namely logical behavior and emotional behavior and the dependent factor parent’s response brought the following results.

**Table 6- Influence of children behavior on parents response**

IND	DEP	R-sqaure	Beta	T-values	sig
Logical	Parents response	.302	.335	6.321	.000

Emotional	Parents response	.302	.335	6.321	.000
Logical	Parents response	.314	.378	5.612	.000
Emotional	Parents response	.314	.378	5.612	.000

In this table the derived R-square values, F-values, beta values and t-values of the independent variables children behaviour are significant at 5 percent level. This implies that the two children behavior factors namely logical behavior and emotional behavior are very powerful behavioural aspects which have the potentiality to change the parent's response in a positive way. Hence the hypothesis two is rejected with 99 percent confidence level and concluded that

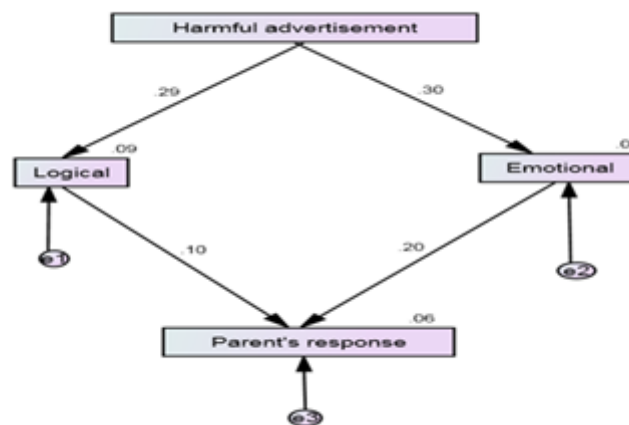
There is a significant influence of approaches of children on purchase decision of Parents. In the final stage of analysis the researcher validated the whole research relating the

important factors of research namely harmful advertisement perception of customers'', children behaviour and parent' response towards children behavior. The intrinsic and extrinsic relationship among them is validated through structural equation model. This model gives the total validation that the harmful advertisements changes the behavior of children and that changed behavior can easily grasp the parent's response in a positive way. This structural equation model is given in the form of a path diagram and table with six fit indices and their bench mark values.

**Table 7.-MODEL FIT INDICES AND BENCH MARKKS FOR OVERALL MODEL FOR HARMFUL ADVERTISEMENT**

S.NO	Fit indices	Values	Bench mark values
1	Chi-square	10.113	-
2	P-value	0.490	>.05
3	Goodness of fit index(GFI)	0.979	>.9
4	Comparative fit index(CFI)	0.976	>.9
5	Normed fit index(NFI)	0.972	>.9
6	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation(RMSEA)	0.08	<=0.08





From the above table it is found that all the six fit indices are tested for the best fit of model regarding harmful advertisement perception of customers”, children behaviour and parent’ response towards children behavior .

The goodness of fit depends upon the six statistical values namely chi-square value, p-value, comparative fit index, normed fit index, goodness of fit index and root mean square error of approximation values. All these six fit indices satisfy the bench mark value and prove the best fit of model validating the intrinsic and extrinsic relationship among harmful advertisement perception of customers”, children behaviour and parent’ response towards children behavior.

## FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

Advertisements, particularly TV advertisements create more harmful effects over the children up to the age of 14 and change their behavior, socialization process as well as attitude towards the society. Advertising well equip kids with more information and motivate them to demand to have products. They change the behavior and

attitude in such a way to express emotional black mail over their parents or convince them through a logical process. They are able to convince their parents that the product they require is useful for their knowledge and education purpose. The harmful advertisements create the desire among the children and simultaneously put a lot of pressure on parents. The marketers use very young children as their brand ambassador to reach the psychology of children. They also use some popular cartoon characters, fantasy characters to influence the child to concentrate more on their product.

It is concluded that the harmful advertisements are playing their vital role in compounding the growth in TV channels for advertising and they design different strategies to target the children. These strategies are very powerful in their potentiality to change the behavioral development of children . They exposed to advertising to choose the advertised products at a significantly higher rates and make the children more informative. These informative attitudes of children persuade them to think not to listen to their words or understand their parents.

It is suggested that the marketers must be controlled and regulated by the government to design their advertisements in such a way that it won't create any negative impact on children psychology. The parents should take care of TV channels and they should allow their children to watch the particular children or kid's channels according to their direction.

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