CHILDREN’S ATTITUDE TOWARDS TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON FAMILY PURCHASE DECISIONS.

Abstract

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Children have come to constitute a very important consumer group that influences family purchases of various products in many ways. Marketers pay special to this group recognizing them as a primary market, an influencing market, and a future market. Due to dramatic changes taking pace in the society regarding technology, information processing and changing media environment, children especially the 8-14 year olds are growing up much faster, are more connected and more informed than any other generation before them. The rise of dual income of parents, increase in working women, reduction in family size, rise in number of televisions in household especially children’s bedrooms, more commercial pressure, arrival of new products in the market above all due to presence of immense media environment, children are able to experience consumption and purchasing at a much faster rate than ever before. Marketing targeted at children, including infants, often based on highly sophisticated and manipulative psychology, has its main focus through television commercials. The centrality of television in children’s lives is indicated by the fact that 9 out of 10 children watch it almost every day.

No, socializing agent has attracted more attention than mass media especially television, in children consumer behaviour literature. Many advertisements broadcasted on television are creations of brilliant minds which aim to persuade people to buy. These advertising messages get across the children minds due to the beautiful audio and visual effects. Advertising influences children purchase request and family dynamics. The earlier literature reported that television commercials affected children’s attempts to influence parental purchase purchasing, calling advertising a “vehicle for unhealthy persuasion.”
The present study is an attempt to investigate children purchase request affected by television advertisements. The main objective of the study are to assess the children attitude towards television advertisements taking a sample of rural and urban children, to measure the ability of television advertisements to influence family purchases with regard to various product categories and to analyses the parent’s perception of influence of television advertisements on their children.

The result indicated that children from both the domicile has overall positive attitude towards television advertisements considering them as important source of product information and enjoyment, though to some extent they do consider television advertisement to be manipulative and Irritative. A significant number of children from both the domicile indicated that their purchase request is majority of time influenced by television advertisements. The result added to the body of evidence supporting the notion of ‘reverse socialization’ (where parents learn from children) stating that children are active influencers in the purchase of some high involvement products in the family like mobile phones, computers, cars, video players etc., besides having more influence in the purchase of less expensive products and those for their own use. For majority of product categories weak positive correlation was reported indicating that children perceive themselves as exerting greater level of influence than their parents perceived them to have. Television advertisements have more effect on urban families’ budget as compared to rural families. Parents’ from both the domicile perceive that TV ads help in economic socialization process of children by providing them relevant knowledge about brands and products, but showed a great concern about junk food ads and do believe that ads are reason for family conflict as it increase ‘nag factor’ and also generates materialistic values among children. Age, gender, education level, parents’ income, family type which do effect children involvement in family purchase decisions were not measured in the study. The result overall indicated that television advertisement are the main source for development of Indian children consumer socialization and parents and children usually work together in family decision making. Marketers must address the needs of both partners and work to help any conflict that may arise.

**Keywords**: Consumer behaviour Children, television, advertisements, Decision-making, Purchasing, Media usage, Attitude, Parents-child survey, Socialisation.