CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a summary of salient findings of the study is presented. Conclusions are drawn with reference to the objectives framed and the implications of the conclusions are used to suggest the remedial measures to the Parents, to incite awareness on the allied health problems influenced by ‘Television Food Advertisements’. Following are some of the important findings and conclusions derived out of the research:

7.2 HEDONIC HUNGER OF CHILDREN – IMPACT OF TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

- The Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis is computed to test the significance of various proposed attributes of ‘Television Food Advertisements (TFA)’ on the health issues of children. It reveals the fact that all the identified factors of TELEVISION FOOD ADVERTISEMENT showed a positive sign and implies they all have an impact on influencing the children on the behaviour, dietary habits, food preferences and ultimately affecting their health.
- The Confirmatory Factor Analysis resulted in reducing the variables of television food advertisements, into a six factor structure highly influencing the children such as:
  - Celebrities
  - Jingles
  - Peer Influences
- Buying Behaviour
- Food Choices
- Health Issues

15% of the children spend 2 to 4 hours and remaining 85% spend 3 to 6 hours viewing Television. Longer duration is spent in viewing television during holidays.

64% of the children highly agreed that ‘good looking models’ generally advocate good products, 75% children prefer Complan or Pediasure due to the inducing information of the advertisement. 68% of the children like Noodles because of its taste and enabling them to prepare at ease. 64% of them like to eat snacks and packaged drinks or soft drinks and nearly 55% of the children frequently become sick due to fever and cold, and other infectious diseases.

The correlation value of Buying Behaviour is 0.355, Food Choices is 0.356 and Health Issues is 0.358 which indicates a positive relationship and the significant value is 0.00 (P<.01). Hence it is concluded that there is significant relationship between “Television Food Advertisements” and the other variables such as, “Buying Behaviour”, “Food Choices” and “Health Issues” of children.

A model fit of 54% from regression analysis explains the dependent variable i.e. Television Food Advertisement relating to the independent variables (i.e., Celebrities, Jingles, Peer Influences, Buying Behaviour, Food Choices and Health Issues) and all variables considered significant.

From independent ‘t’ test, the mean level of influence of the age group of 10 to 12 years is more than the age group of 7 to 9 years; and influence of female children is found to be more than the male respondents.

While analysing the perception of sample respondents from Friedman test, it is found that ‘good-looking models’ and advertisements featuring children’ has a strong impact on the food products advertised. Similarly, the factors, ‘parents watch the Television advertisements and buy things’, and ‘parents can easily be persuaded’ has a strong impact on the food products advertised.
- It is deduced that the children prefer ‘health drinks’ followed by ‘Noodles and snacks like chips, chocolates’, has a strong impact on the food products advertised. Finally it is found that the food products advertised in television, induce the children to buy those products and ultimately causing various infectious diseases and illness like fever, cough, cold or indigestion problems due to which reason, their percentage of attendance is imperfect in school.

7.3 PARENTAL VIEWS ON THE BUYING BEHAVIOUR AND FOOD CHOICES OF CHILDREN

- The Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis was computed to test the significance of various influential factors of TELEVISION FOOD ADVERTISEMENT such as ‘food products’ advertised; ‘food choices’, ‘buying behaviour’ of children and its effect on their health issues. It revealed a positive effect and the results of ‘goodness of fit index’ showed all the variables had a perfect fit on the influential factors.

- The CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) reduced the variables into four primary influential attributes such as ‘Food products’, ‘Food choices, ‘buying behaviour / purchase requests’ of children that would impact the health of their children.

- The demographic variables such as ‘gender’, ‘income level’, occupation’, and ‘number of children’, of the respondent’s parents were analysed using percentage analysis. Around 60% of the parents earned an income above Rs.25000, 31% of them earned between Rs.20000 and Rs.25000 and only 8% of them earned below Rs.25000. It was also found that parents having single child are more influenced by their children on purchase requests as also female parents are more induced than male parents.

- It was found that around 56% of parents prefer their children having noodles, cornflakes and snacks due to the choice/preference of their children or due to time constraints in preparing food for their children. 63% of the parents opined that their children frequently fall sick.
In Multiple regression analysis, to find out the influence of Television Food Advertisements on the health issues of children, the ‘R’ square value is 0.632 and adjusted R square value is 0.630 and this tells us that our model account is 63% of variance influenced by ‘Television Food Advertisement’ factors. Hence it is a clear indication that there is a model fit of 63% which explains the dependent variable i.e., Television Food Advertisement influencing on the independent variables (i.e., food Products, food Choices, buying behaviour and health problems).

When analysis was made to find the mean level of influence, the four dimensions of food advertisements has shown a significant relationship with the ‘Occupation’ of the respondents’ parents and it is found that the mean level of influence of ‘employed parents’ is higher than the ‘Unemployed’ parents. In relation to the ‘gender’ of parents, it is inferred that female parents are more influenced than male parents in the buying behaviour of children as also with reference to ‘number of children’ had by respondent’s parents, it is found that, parents having single child are having higher level of influence compared to other two categories and finally employed parents were found to have a higher level of influence compared to self–employed parents.

The analytical results of the responses from the respondent’s parents, on the impact of food commercials in television, on their children (i.e., the respondents), were found to be positive and hence it is construed that the TELEVISION FOOD ADVERTISEMENT influences the dietary habits and the buying behaviour of children which has shown a negative effect on the health of the respondents.
7.4 PEDIATRICIANS’ VIEWS ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL AND HEALTH PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN

The structural equation model analysis was computed to test the significance of the factors of ‘Television Food Advertisements’ relating to the psychological, emotional and allied health problems in children. It revealed that all factors have been influenced by TELEVISION FOOD ADVERTISEMENT at a significance level of 5%.

- The CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) confirmed the influence of the major variables such as psychological & emotional problems, change in dietary habits and buying behaviour and its impact on the physical health of children.
- The multiple regression analysis showed a model fit of 80.6% which explains the dependent variable i.e., Television Food Advertisement strongly influencing on the independent variables (psychological & emotional problems, dietary habits and change in behaviour and health problems in children).
- The chi-square test confirmed that the children have high impact of hedonic hunger and stress due to the food products advertised in the television.
- The relationship between mean ranks and the pediatrician’s responses has revealed that there is an increase in number of obesity children and that is due to the reason of the influence of television food advertisement.

7.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The time spent for the daily schedule of activities on a normal school day and how much time they spend on each activity every day, has been analysed. All children were found to spend 2 to 3 hours in studying and doing their homework and they spend only less than 30 minutes in playing. It is found that 15% of the children spend 2 to 4 hours and remaining 85% spend 3 to 6 hours viewing television. All children spend 2 to 3 hours in their studies, 1 to 2 hours playing, and more than 6 hours viewing television during holidays.
From the study, it clearly shows that the study time and play time has drastically reduced now-a-days and majority of the time is spent in viewing television and computer games. This in turn changes the dietary habits due to hedonic hunger, preferring most of the food products advertised in the television, either due to curiosity, anxiousness or attracted by the advertisements. Parents too spend ample time watching television and are obliged to bend upon to the purchase requests and preferences of food choices made by their children.

The study finally construes, consolidating the responses from the children, views of parent’s, and the pediatricians, that many children were found to be obese / afflicted to sickness very often, has lesser resistance to infectious diseases, resulting from frequent intake of junk food especially influenced by the food advertisements in television.

Thus the study concludes that “Television Food Advertisements” strongly influence on the ‘Health Issues’ of the Children.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PARENTS:-

Pediatricians have suggested several diet tips to the parents to help nurture healthy child community.

- Teach children to read food labels. Select one piece of information such as calories and show them how to compare calories for different foods.
- Prepare healthy, tasty, and fun food for your children with special care for them.
- Educating them about the causes and effects of consuming junk food.
- Regular reading of journals on healthy food.
- Substitute healthy foods for junk foods
- Have regular family meals.
- Involve them in cooking, to create interest
- Teach Healthy Eating Skills to Children
- Divert children from viewing television to reading books, or playing indoor/outdoor games.
- Avoid entertaining children to watch Television programs along with advertisements
- Encourage participation in outdoor activities, such as sports, hobbies, and family outings

7.7 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Child welfare being the major concern for any society, there is an immediate need for educating the parents and children for the betterment of the future of children. There exists a wide scope for further research in this area such as;

- Experimental study on the changes in the behaviour of children due to the television food advertisements.
- The effects of dietary changes and unhealthy practices among children
- Working parents and the behavioral changes of children
- Purchase decisions and attitudinal changes of children in families were both parents are working

7.8 CONCLUSION

“We worry about what a child will be tomorrow, yet we forget that a child is already someone today” – Stacia Tauscher

It is clearly observed and concluded from the findings, that food advertisements has strong influence on the Health Issues of Children. Children watch the advertisement, they absorb everything that the advertisement says and they believe what they see and hear. Children always listen to what they hear and believe in them. It is therefore very important to watch the children and teach them what is true and what is not. There are advertisements that exaggerate and have a
dangerous impact to children. Advertisers maybe trying to attract children to patronize their products and services but they are not very good for children.

Sometimes too much advertisement of a certain product could make the child crave for that product even if it is not good for the health. 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 obtain an aggressive behaviour towards buying 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. What becomes harmful is when innutritious foods are eaten regularly and supplant nutritional foods in the child’s diet. The parents may need to concentrate on the health of their children and also they have to prevent children by watching television and advertisements for a longer period of time. Keeping Television and computers out of children’s bedrooms except in family living areas where they can monitor them and to schedule the activities of the child help them to stay busy and away from Television. The parents need to be a good role model for making healthy food choices.

There is an urgent need from the government to draft and implement laws for banning the food advertisements targeting the children. Also it is in the hands of the parents to watch their children’s diet and avoid all the junk foods and packed foods. Surely it will lead to good healthy habits to the children. By concentrating on healthy food choices in turn, can create a healthy society in future around us, since children are the future of our Nation, and Healthy Children can contribute to healthy nation.