CHAPTER-VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

TV advertising has emerged as the most innovative and an effective means of communicating with the customers. It has grown increasingly sophisticated, elaborative and highly personal in nature. Advertisers can fine tune a particular message, intrude the human minds and generate a desired response. TV advertising with a wide coverage is directed at actual as well as the potential customers.

In recent years, children’s market has become very important to manufacturers and marketers. They are the main focus in any form of advertising and their role in advertising is increasing day by day. Exorbitant amount of money and efforts are being spent on advertising to reach this segment. The heavy marketing directed towards children, appears to be driven largely by the desire to develop and build brand awareness/recognition, brand preference and brand loyalty in times to come.

There are many aspects that make children an important segment. They are indulging in independent shopping at a much younger age than the earlier generations, and have an increasing influence on their families’ purchase (though their contribution varies by product category). Children as young as three years old develop an ability to recognize advertising and by the age of 7 or 8 years, they are capable of understanding exactly what advertisers are trying to achieve and by ten, children become adept critics and prove to be a tough audience to please (Rossiter and Robertson, 1976).

Marketers use all possible tactics to muster the attention of the children which may include illegal, dirty or underhand tricks, promoting untrue claims and reliance on false information. There has been a growing concern about the effect of TV advertising on the juvenile minds of the children. Parents are really concerned as they believe that children are like a sponge that absorbs things easily, hence they are concerned with the immediate and the long term impact the TV advertising would have on the overall development of their children. Parents are of the opinion that TV advertising makes children materialistic, aggressive, eccentric, rude, violent and sometimes intolerant about the world around
them. They believe that TV has been instrumental in bringing these changes in the behaviour of their children. Some parents are of the opinion that TV advertising related to food products are fraudulent and encourage unhealthy eating habits among children. On the other hand food marketers are interested in children as consumers because of their purchasing influence, and as future adult consumers.

The above-mentioned concerns regarding TV advertising to children has made it imperative for the parents to think seriously and undertake certain concrete measures to try and limit influence of TV advertising on children. Some parents are of the opinion that it is the responsibility of the government to enforce strict regulations and control over TV advertising. On the other hand, some researchers consider that it is the responsibility of the parents to mediate and safeguard the interests of their children (Nathanson et al., 2002).

A great amount of research on advertising over the past few decades has focused on the construct, ‘Attitude towards advertising,’ which was first introduced by (Bauer and Geyser, 1968). Subsequently the researchers have tried to focus on different dimensions of attitude by targeting specific populations. However, attitude of parents towards TV advertising directed at children has not fancied many investigators, particularly in India. Whatever research is available has been conducted in developed countries.

The present study has therefore attempted to identify and explore different dimensions of attitude and perception of parents on issues such as impact of TV advertising in general, social and cultural impact, level of mediation, and control and restriction of TV advertising directed at children.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the study are as under:

1. To examine the attitude of parents towards TV advertising directed at children in general.
2. To investigate the role of parents in mediating the TV viewing habits of children.
3. To find out the attitude of parents regarding the impact of TV advertising on social and cultural values of children.
4. To study parental perception towards role of government, advertisers and parents in controlling and restricting TV advertising directed at children.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The catchment area for the present study is the state of Punjab and union territory of Chandigarh. It was planned to have a sample of 500 respondents from the afore stated cities / U.T. From each of the selected cities a sample of 125 respondents was planned to be surveyed. But due to response error, the effective sample has been virtually reduced to 408 respondents. Three cities of Punjab viz; Amritsar, Jalandhar and Ludhiana were selected. Amritsar is representing Majha region, Jalandhar Doaba region and Ludhiana is the representative of the Malwa region. Chandigarh is the capital of Punjab and it is more cosmopolitan city. The population essentially consists of the salaried and business class. The selected cities being modern, socially, culturally and educationally more developed, their residents are expected to be ideal respondents for an in-depth study of the type undertaken here. Moreover, limitations of time and resources accounted for the geographical concentration to these cities.

In the present study mothers of the children of age group six to twelve years have been considered as a basic sampling unit. This is because of the fact that mothers in the Indian family are more invasive, interventionist and assertive in their families, particularly towards children. Moreover, they are more emotionally involved in upbringing of children and have an indelible influence on their personality. Previous research is also a
testimony to the fact that mothers are the primary caregivers to the children and are more associated with mediation of TV viewing and have participated in most of the studies (Ward and Wackman, 1972; Atkin, 1972; Popper, 1971; Rose, Mukerji, 2003).

Convenience sampling has been used to select the respondents. However an effort was made to select the respondents with diverse socio-economic status to make sample a true representative of the population.

The data was collected using, structured, non-disguised and pretested questionnaire. Working status of the mothers was selected as a variable for the analysis of the data. Mothers were judged on their perception and attitude about TV advertising in general, followed by the perception that they carry about the parental role in mediating the TV viewing habits of children. Other two important issues that were judged, were their perception about the impact of TV advertising on social and cultural values of children and the control and restriction of TV advertising.

In order to arrive at meaningful results suitable statistical techniques such as Weighted average scores (WAS), t-test for independent samples, ANOVA, Chi-square test, Factor Analysis have been used. Chronbach alpha was used to test reliability of tools. SPSS statistical package was used for the analysis.

The salient findings are presented in the summarized form in the forthcoming paragraphs.

**TV Viewing Habits amongst Children**

It is observed that 58.82 per cent of the respondents (mothers) report that their children watch TV regularly as compared to 8 per cent of the mothers, who report that their children rarely watch TV. Working status-wise analysis reveals that 64.39 per cent of working and 53.91 per cent of non-working mothers agree that their children were the regular watcher of TV. Majority of the mothers (57.35%) report that their children watch TV for 1-2 hours daily, whereas, only 4.14 per cent of the mothers report that their children watch TV for more than four hours on daily basis. Statistically no significant difference is observed in the responses of the working and the non-working mothers.
Most of the parents (59.81%) agree that their children seek prior permission before watching TV. Working and the non-working mothers almost show similar responses as 57.02 per cent of working and 63.13 per cent of non-working mothers agree to this statement. Working and non-working mothers do not differ significantly in their views regarding children seeking prior permission before watching TV.

Age at which the children should be allowed to watch TV is another important parameter. Majority of the parents (71.8%) agree that 3 to 7 years is the most appropriate age at which children should be allowed to watch TV. 70.28 per cent of working and 73.3 per cent of non-working mothers agree to the above statement. Only 4.17 per cent of the parents are of the opinion that children less than 3 years should be allowed to watch TV. Insignificant chi-square value of 2.308 suggests that working and non-working mothers did not differ significantly in their views regarding age at which the children should be allowed to watch TV.

About 86.76 per cent of the parents acknowledge that their children watch advertisements along with other TV programmes, whereas, 4.66 per cent of the parents are not sure about the same. Chi-square value indicates that the working and non-working mothers did not differ significantly in their views regarding their children watching TV advertisements along with the programmes.

Since parents report that their children watch advertisements along with the TV programmes, they were further asked the product categories whose advertisements generate interest amongst their children. Six product categories such as ‘Toys’, ‘Candies’, ‘Biscuits and cereals’, ‘Fast food’, ‘Beverages’, and ‘Automobiles’ were included in the list. The preference was got ranked from 1 to 6 on the basis of the weighted average scores. The highest weighted average score of 4.58 is given to ‘Toys’, followed by the ‘Candies’ (4.53). The lowest score of 2.59 is given to the ‘Beverages’. One way analysis of variance to these six product categories revealed the F-ratio of magnitude 3.084 for the overall sample. This value being insignificant, suggest that children did not differ in their choice to the afore stated six categories of the TV advertisements. Weighted average scores of the working and non-working mothers are subjected to t-test, the t-values of 1.20 and 2.34 are significant for ‘Toys’ and ‘Fast food’. The higher weighted average
score (WAS) for ‘Toys’ in case of working mothers suggests that the children of the working mothers give preference in watching TV advertisements for ‘Toys’. Whereas, the higher WAS value of 3.93 suggests that the children of the non-working mothers are more inclined towards watching the TV advertisements of ‘Fast food’. Further it is seen that the working and non-working mothers do not differ significantly in their views regarding preference of the children in watching the TV advertisements for the product categories of candies, biscuits and cereals, beverages and automobiles.

Mothers were asked to express the preferences, their children show towards the different types of TV advertisements. Six different categories of major TV advertisements were identified such as, ‘Advertisements showing children’, ‘Celebrities’, ‘Animated cartoon characters’, ‘Jingles’, ‘All kind of advertisements’ and ‘Any other’. Mothers were asked to rank their preference for these categories of advertisements. The maximum WAS of 2.24 (overall sample) is given to the advertisements showing ‘Animated Cartoon Characters’, whereas, the lowest WAS of 1.12 is given to ‘Any other’ category of advertisements. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) gave F-value of magnitude 13.24, which is significant at 1 per cent level. This is suggestive that children differ in their choice to the afore stated six major categories of the TV advertisements. Difference of opinion among working and non-working mothers became evident as the working mothers gave the highest weightage of 2.58 to advertisements showing ‘Animated cartoon characters’, whereas in case of non-working mothers it is 1.86. When these preferences are subjected to the t-test, it is observed that the t-values of 3.59, 3.28, 2.35 and 2.16 were significant at 1 per cent level for the advertisements ‘Showing children’, ‘Animated cartoon characters’, ‘Celebrities’ and ‘All kind of advertisements’. Thus it can be concluded that working and non-working mothers differ significantly regarding the preference of their children towards various TV advertisements.

Children react in different manner when they watch different types of TV advertisements. Majority of mothers (54%) state that their children ‘Watch them with more interest’, this is followed by 27.7 per cent of the mothers with a belief that their children ‘Switch to some other channel’, 11.8 per cent of the mothers believe that their children ‘Show
indifferent attitude’, 3.6 per cent responded that they are ‘Not sure’ and 3 per cent are of the opinion that their children ‘Move out of the room’.

Analysis of the responses of working and non-working mothers reveal that 53.93 per cent of the working and 53.92 per cent of the non-working mothers are of the view that their children watch TV advertisements with more interest. Whereas, 24.61 per cent of working and 30.43 per cent of non-working mothers are of the opinion that their children switch to some other channel whenever the advertisements are shown on TV.

**Attitude of Mothers towards TV Advertisements directed at Children**

Mothers were asked to give their responses to a list of twenty two statements, regarding attitude towards TV advertisements in general. These attitudinal statements were evaluated using Likert scale in which mothers were asked to express their level of agreement/disagreement with respect to various statements ranging from ‘Strongly agree’ to ‘Strongly disagree’. It was hypothesized that no significant differences will be observed in the attitude of working and non-working mothers. The weighted average score of each statement was calculated which varied from as high as 4.24 on the statement A1 (TV has become an indispensable part of the Indian family) to as low as 2.45 on the statement A20 (TV advertising has no effect on children because they have gone immune to such kind of advertising) for the overall sample. Both working and non-working mothers gave the highest importance to the statement A1 with the weighted average scores of 4.27 and 4.21 respectively. Similarly the lowest weighted average scores of 2.36 and 2.53 were respectively given to the statement A20 both by working and non-working mothers. From this analysis, it is observed that mothers (overall, working and non-working) give the highest priority to the statement A1 and the lowest weightage to the statement A20. The weighted average scores of working and non-working mothers were subjected to t-test. The significant t-values reveal that working and non-working mothers differ significantly on statements A2; A4; A5; A6; A7; A8; A12; A17; A19; A20 and A22. In all, mothers differ in their attitude for 11 statements. Out of these eleven statements, seven statements A2; A4; A6; A7; A8; A17 and A22 differences were found to be significant at 5 per cent level and for statements A5; A12; A19 and A20 were significant at one per cent level. The null hypothesis is partially upheld as almost 50
per cent (11 out of the 22 statements) did not show significant differences. From the above discussion, it can be inferred that mothers are of the strong opinion that TV has become an indispensible part of the Indian family because it adds to the awareness, provides exposure to outside world, and enhances creativity and imagination among children. At the same time, they were averse and believed that advertisers are exploiting children through unnecessary portrayal, encourage consumerism, make false claims about the products and even advertise those products which have no relevance and are not meant for the children. Mothers believe that TV advertising can be useful for children if done within the limits and children watch advertisements under parental supervision.

Further, these twenty two statements have been factor analysed. In all, six factors emerged in an attempt to assess the attitude of the parents towards TV advertising directed at children in general. Total variance explained has been 38.5 per cent. Low variance may be due to the fact that only six factors emerged. The factors: ‘Aggressive Behaviour’, ‘Mature Behaviour’ and ‘Pestering Behaviour’ together explain 30.34 per cent of the variance. The first factor ‘Aggressive Behaviour’ accounts for the highest factor variance of 15.73 per cent. It is followed by the second factor ‘Mature Behaviour’ which accounts for 8.852 per cent of the variance. Similarly the next three factors highlight pestering tendencies, defiance and senseless consumerism among children. It could be inferred that mothers hold negative opinion about TV advertising directed at children as they believe that TV advertising has encouraged aggression, pestering, defiance and senseless consumerism among children. On the other hand some of the mothers carry a positive attitude for TV advertising as they consider children are mature enough to understand the intentions behind TV advertising. They believe that TV has become indispensible part for the society.

A comparison of the factor structure of working and non-working mothers reveal seven factors in case of working mothers which together accounted for 63.727 per cent of the total variance. The most prominent factor is ‘Unrealistic Projection’ which accounts for 21.817 per cent of variance. The other six factors that were identified in case of working mothers are, ‘Materialistic Outlook’, ‘Immune Behaviour’, ‘Creative Exposure’, ‘Pestering Behaviour’, ‘Indispensable Media’, and ‘Parental Involvement’. In case of
non-working mothers, the attitudinal statements converged to six factors that explain 54.56 per cent of the common variance. The most significant factor that explains the highest variance of 16.20 per cent is ‘Pestering Behaviour’. The other five factors are ‘Immune Behavior’, ‘Overall Development’, ‘Defiant Behaviour’, ‘Harmful Effects of TV’ and ‘Consistent Parental Involvement’.

The comparative picture of the factor structure for working and non-working mothers reveal that more or less they cover the common ground, of course with divergence of opinion based on the priority to areas specific to each. The convergence is observed in three dimensions explained by the common factors of ‘Immune Behaviour’, ‘Pestering Behaviour’, and ‘Consistent Parental Involvement’. However, the working mothers more strongly believe that children are being unnecessarily projected in the TV advertisements which are often misleading and deceptive in nature, therefore they advocate ‘Unrealistic Projection’ of children in TV advertisements.

Non-working mothers, on the other hand, believe that advertisers are exploiting the young minds by emotionally involving children through TV advertisements. This is ultimately reflected in their behaviour as they develop pestering tendencies. Hence, they are of the opinion that TV advertising directed at children is encouraging ‘Pestering Behaviour’ among children.

**Mediating Role of Parents**

Since children are exposed to the different levels of TV advertising, parents are concerned and want to have some kind of mediation from their side. Parental mediation of TV advertising refers to any kind of active efforts put by the parents to safeguard their children from the effects of TV advertising that might be intended or unintended. Indian mothers play a pivotal role in the upbringing and education of children. Therefore probe into this attitudinal dimension becomes very relevant for this study.

Parents were asked to report the behavioural change in their children after they are exposed to the TV advertisements for different products. Majority of the parents (72.54%) report that their children ‘Sometimes ask for that product’. It is seen that 73.30 per cent of the working and 71.89 per cent of the non-working mothers agree to the above
Mothers differed in their responses for ‘Never ask for that product’ as 6.92 per cent of non-working mothers and only 1.57 per cent of working mothers agreed to this statement. 2.62 per cent of the working mothers and 2.30 per cent of the non-working mothers report that their children pressurize them to buy the product through tantrums. The t-values reveal that the working and the non-working mothers differ significantly in their views regarding behaviour of children after watching the TV advertisements of the product meant for them.

After being exposed to TV advertisements, children approach their parents or other members of the family to make a purchase request. Parents were asked to specify whom their children approach or request to buy the products that catch their attention in advertisements. 40.93 per cent of the parents responded that their children approach ‘Mothers’ with purchase requests. Whereas, 34.55 per cent of parents report that children approach both ‘Father’ and ‘Mother’. No significant differences are observed in the responses of working and non-working mothers.

Purchase requests of the children are not always entertained. Parents were asked to specify, who refused to accept such purchase requests. The results reveal that 38.97 per cent of the parents report that usually the refusal comes from the ‘Father’. 33.51 per cent of working and 43.78 per cent of non-working mothers agree to this statement. Almost 34.80 per cent of the parents report that it is ‘Mother’ who refuses to give in to all such tactics. The responses of working and non-working mothers when compared reveal that there is significant difference in their views as evident from the significant t-value of 9.681 at 5 per cent level of significance.

Mothers were asked to specify the level and pattern of interaction of their children with the different members of the family. 56.62 per cent of the mothers report that children show maximum interaction with their ‘Mothers’. It is followed by ‘Both (Father and Mother)’ (35.05 %), ‘Father’ (5.64%) and ‘Others members’ (2.69%). Joint activities between children and family members are most important parameter to gauge the level of interaction. Majority of parents (89%) report that they engage their children in some kind of joint activities. Relatively higher percentage of working mothers (93%) report that they are involved in the joint activities with their children as compared
to 85 per cent of non-working mothers. Chi-square value of 7.167 at 5 per cent level of significance is suggestive of the fact that significant differences exist in the responses of working and non-working mothers regarding the joint activities undertaken in the family. Almost 32 per cent of the mothers report that they prefer ‘Eating out’ with their children, 30.38 per cent prefer ‘Watching TV’ with their children and 24.30 per cent prefer ‘Shopping’ with their children. Working and non-working differ in their responses as working mothers prefer ‘Eating out’ and ‘Watching TV’ with their children, whereas, non-working mothers prefer ‘Shopping’ with their children.

Parents were asked if TV advertisements directed at children should be allowed. Almost 52 per cent of the parents disagree and were of the opinion that TV advertisements directed at children should not be allowed. 47.55 per cent of parents agree to this statement. Working mothers hold more conservative and truant attitude as 60.2 per cent of them are against the airing of TV advertisements directed at children. Non-working mothers on the other hand hold liberal views and favour TV advertisements directed at children to some extent.

Parents play a vital role in mediating the TV viewing habits of their children. Results show that 47.55 per cent of the parents consider ‘Instructive mediation’, as the most effective method of TV mediation. This is followed by ‘Co-viewing’ (30.88%), ‘Restriction’ (15.68%) and ‘Indifference’ (5.23%). These results show that mothers perceive ‘Instructive mediation’ and ‘Co-viewing’ to be the most effective ways of mediating TV viewing habits of children. On the other hand responses of working and non-working mothers when analysed, reveal that working mothers were more strict as they favour ‘Restrictive mediation’ (18.85%), and ‘Indifference’ (5.23%) to be the better methods of mediation as compared to non-working mothers who advocate ‘Restrictive mediation’ (48.85%) and ‘Co-viewing’ (32.74%) to be the better methods of mediating the TV viewing habits of their children. Working and non-working mothers do not differ significantly in their responses as they hold almost similar views regarding mediation of the TV viewing habits and advertising directed at children.

Respondents were further asked if formal education needs to be given to parents about the control they can exercise over TV advertising directed at children. The results reveal
that majority of mothers (93.14%) agree that parents need to be educated about their role in controlling the TV viewing habits of their children. The comparative analysis of the responses of working and non-working mothers reveal that 94.76 per cent of the working mothers and 91.70 per cent of the non-working mothers feel that there is a need to educate parents on the above mentioned issues.

Fifteen statements reflecting the perception that the parents carry regarding their mediating role were scored on the five point Likert scale. Weighted average scores for the various statements were compared using t-test. The overall weighted average scores of the statements range from as high as 4.58 for the statement M2 (Parents should be actively involved in bringing up of the children) to as low as 2.52 for the statement M14 (Children are mature enough to differentiate the programmes from the commercial intent of the TV advertising). Out of these fifteen statements majority of the mothers agree to nine statements. The weighted average scores in all these statements range from 4.48 to 3.55. These statements were: M2 (Parents should be actively involved in bringing up of the children), followed by M3 (Giving moral and ethical values to the children is the responsibility of parents); M1 (Parents are instrumental in teaching the basic values to the children); M9 (Parents need to instruct the children about what programmes they can watch on TV); M5 (Parents should actively participate in educating children about TV advertising and its impact); M7 (Parents should openly discuss with their children the intentions of TV advertising; M8 (Parents should take strict measures to control the TV viewing habits of the children); M6 and M15. After analyzing the above statements it is observed that overall mothers carry a common belief that parents have to play an active role in bringing up the children, they are instrumental in teaching them the core values, educating them and openly discuss the intentions behind the TV advertising. They further advocate that parents should strictly instruct the children about the programmes they can watch on TV.

The remaining six statements have the weighted average scores that range from 3.23 to 2.52. These statements are M4 (Parents expose children to TV for their own convenience as they have no time); M12 (Parents should not be strict towards mediating TV viewing habits of the children); M11 (Parents should ban children from watching all those TV
channels that show lot of advertisements directed at them); M13 (Children are sensible enough and can manage their TV viewing habits); M10 (Parents should completely ban the children from watching TV advertisements directed at them) and M14 (Children are mature enough to differentiate the programmes from the commercial intent of the TV advertising).

These statements project two viewpoints among mothers. Some of the mothers advocate that parents need to act tough, strict and even suggest that they should completely restrict children from watching TV programmes that show excessive advertisements. Whereas, some mothers were of the view that children are sensible and mature enough to manage their TV viewing habits.

The weighted average scores of various statements emerging from the responses of working and non-working mothers were analysed using the t-test. The t-values of the statements M2 (Parents should be actively involved in bringing up of the children) and M13 (Children are sensible enough and can manage their TV viewing habits) with the values of 2.219 and 2.05 were found to be significant at 5 per cent level. Whereas, the statements, M5 (Parents should actively participate in educating children about TV advertising and its impact); M9 (Parents need to instruct the children about what programmes they can watch on TV); M14 (Children are mature enough to differentiate the programmes from the commercial intent of the TV advertising) and M15 (Restricting Children from watching TV will not help because they need to entertain themselves) with the t-values of 1.602, 1.694, 1.472 and 1.369 were found to be significant at 5 per cent level.

Finally it is concluded, that most of the mothers agree it is the responsibility of the parents to teach basic values to their children. They are also of the opinion that sometimes parents encourage their children to watch TV as they are busy to find time for them. Co-viewing and discussions about the intentions of the advertisers behind such advertisements need to be discussed with children.

The dimensionality of the beliefs towards mediation of TV advertising is assessed using the factor analysis approach. All the 15 statements were subjected to factor analysis
which finally culminated into extraction of six factors. The most significant factor is ‘Parental Ethical Responsibility’ which accounts for 16.25 per cent of the overall variance. The other five factors were ‘Child Maturity’, ‘Strict Parental Control’, ‘Instructive Parental Control’, ‘Parental Educative role’ and ‘Parental Convenience’, which accounted for 10.481%, 7.528%, 3.649% and 3.468% variance respectively.

Attitude of the working mothers towards mediation of the TV viewing habits of children is judged using the factor analytical approach. It resulted in emergence of five factors which collectively explained 61.912 per cent of the common factor variance. Out of these factors the most prominent factor is, ‘Active parental role in child rearing’. It independently contributed 22.002% to the common factor variance. Other four factors were, ‘Child Maturity’, ‘Restrictive Parental Role’, ‘Parental Convenience’ and ‘Co-viewing’.

The factor analysis of the responses of the non-working mothers resulted in the extraction of six factors, which accounted for 59.17 per cent of the total variance. The most significant factor that emerged among these six factors is, ‘Active Parental Role in Child Rearing’ which accounted for 18.334 per cent of the common factor variance. This factor highlights active role of parents in bringing up the children. The five other factors were ‘Child Maturity’, ‘Instructive Parental Role’, ‘Strict Parental Check’, ‘Co-viewing’ and ‘Parental Convenience’.

A careful analysis of the factor structure of working and non-working mothers suggested that both share, more or less the common attitude towards the mediating role of the parents towards the TV advertising directed at the children. They strongly press upon the active role and responsibility of the parents in upbringing of the children. Working mothers share four of the five factors with non-working mothers. The factor of ‘Restrictive Parental Role’ in case of working mothers is different from the non-working mothers who believe in ‘Instructive Parental Role’ of parents and also they were of the view that the parents should have a strict check over the TV viewing habits of the children. Despite holding divergent views about the TV advertising directed at children, both working and non-working mothers advocate the need, importance and prominence of ‘Active Parental Role in Child Rearing’.
Impact of TV Advertising on Social and Cultural Values of Children

In order to assess the impact of TV advertising on the social and cultural values of children, twenty-five attitudinal statements related to social and cultural values were scored on the likert five point scale with weightage varying from 5 to 1 for ‘Strongly agree’ to ‘Strongly disagree’. Weighted Average Scores (WAS) for the overall sample and for working and non-working mothers were calculated. These Weighted average scores were subjected to t-test for comparison of attitude of working and non-working mothers. The highest WAS of 4.07 (overall sample) emerged for the statement C15 (TV advertising related to the food products has increased) and the lowest score of 3.43 came out to be for the statements C5 (Exposure to TV advertising makes children more independent and hence they resist some of the family decisions) and C9 (TV advertising directed at children has made them introvert and selfish in their attitude). Out of 25 statements 19 statements have the weighted average score greater than 3.75. These statements project that TV advertising directed at children emotionally harm them, make children demanding, materialistic, violent, restless, and more inclined towards eating junk food. The remaining six statements get the WAS ranging between 3.43 and 3.50. These statements project that with uncontrolled exposure to TV advertising children have become introvert, selfish, eccentric, indifferent to the society and independent in their thinking due to which they resist the decisions taken by their parents. This shows that TV advertising directed at children to some extent has brought about shift in the social and cultural values of the children.

The comparative picture of working and non-working mothers reveal that the t-values were found to be significant for statements C3 (TV advertisements directed at children are responsible for bringing a shift in the Indian value system); C13 (TV advertisements have become more obscene in nature); C22 (Sometimes children are portrayed in the TV advertisements for those products which are not meant for them); C24 (TV advertisements projecting adult roles of children affect their personality development) and C25 (Advertisers should not be allowed to ‘voice loud’ that the product is must buy for the children). Out of these five statements, the differences of three statements C3; C22 and C24 were found to be significant at 5 per cent level, whereas, for two statements C13
and C25 the differences were significant at 1 per cent level. For the remaining 20 statements, working and non-working mothers did not differ significantly in their attitude towards shift in the social and cultural values of children.

Factor analysis of these twenty five statements is carried out which resulted in the extraction of seven factors. The most prominent factor is ‘Violent and Restless Behaviour’. This factor alone accounts for 23.964 per cent of the variance. The other factors were ‘Materialistic Behavior’, ‘Cultural Shift’, ‘Independent Behaviour’, ‘Extravagant Behaviour’, ‘Obscenity Promotion’ and ‘Unhealthy Eating Habits’. The results clearly indicate that the statements projecting attitude towards social and cultural values precipitated into seven dimensions of construct of attitude.

In order to arrive at the comparative picture of the factor structure these twenty five statements were factor analysed separately for working and non-working mothers. The attitude of the working mothers towards these statements converged into eight factors, which explained 67.59 % of total variance. The most significant factor emerged as ‘Materialistic Behaviour’ which contributes 24.48 per cent of the overall variance. The other seven factors were; ‘Violent and Restless Behaviour’, ‘Cultural and Value shift’, ‘Unhealthy Eating Habits’, ‘Obscenity Promotion’, ‘Compulsive Role of Advertising’, ‘Unnecessary Portrayal’ and ‘Changes in Fashion Style’.

In case of non-working mothers these statements converged into seven factors, which collectively explain 61.17 per cent of the common factor variance. The most significant factor is ‘Materialistic and Selfish Behaviour’. It accounted for 28.03 per cent of the overall variance observed. The other six factors were: ‘Obscenity and Violence Promotion’, ‘Unhealthy Eating Habits’, ‘Effect on Personality Development’, ‘Demanding and Unreasonable Behaviour’, ‘Detached and Indifferent Behaviour’ and ‘Unnecessary Portrayal’.

To find the common dimensions of attitude towards impact of TV advertising directed at children on their social and cultural values the comparative picture of factor structure for working and non-working mothers revealed four common factors: ‘Materialistic Behavior’, ‘Obscenity Promotion’, ‘Unhealthy eating habits’ and ‘Unnecessary
Portrayal’. ‘Materialistic Behavior’ is most prominent factor both for working and non-working mothers. Further working mothers perceive a definite shift in the social and cultural values of the children in terms of being indifferent and becoming more demanding. Working mothers are of the view that due to the compulsive role of the TV advertisements on children and violence wrapped in glamour, the eating habits of children are changing. They are of the opinion that TV advertisements projecting junk food need to be banned.

**Issues Related to Control and Restriction of TV Advertising Directed at Children**

Parents are concerned about the TV advertising directed at children and acknowledge that there is a need for parental mediation that may be restrictive, instructive, co-viewing or Indifference. Upsurge in the economic status of consumers, demand driven markets and to cap all globalization has created common world markets in which the universal brands of almost all the products are alluring and targeting children as prospective consumers. In developed societies, protection of children is ensured from the onslaught of violence, food products specially junk food, obscenity and changing fashion styles. In Indian context, lack of stringent rules and regulations have worsened the problems. Society, specially the parents feel a need for a strict regulatory framework at the government level as well as creation of the self regulatory system and its strict enforcement to safeguard the interests of the children. In this context parents were asked to give their views on different issues relating to control and mediation of TV advertising directed at children.

The responses of the mothers to the twelve attitudinal statements that highlight their concern for control and restriction of TV advertising were got on the five point Likert scale.

It was hypothesized that working and non-working mothers do not differ in their attitude towards the issues related to control and restriction of TV advertising directed at children. The weighted average score of each statement is calculated which varied from as high as 4.31 on the statement R11 (Special educational programmes need to be made for parents and children) to as low as 2.75 for the statement R5 (All the TV advertisements meant for children should be banned). Out of the twelve statements, majority of the parents agreed
on the statements R1; R2; R3; R7; R9; R10; R11 and R12. The conclusion that flowed from this analysis is that majority of the parents advocate formulation of strict guidelines and setting up of the central regulatory authority to monitor TV advertising directed at children. Parents further believe that all such advertisements need to carry the statutory warnings and advertisers should adhere to some code of conduct and should desist from exploiting children through these advertisements. Respondents agree that parents have to play an important role in educating children about the intentions of the advertisers, who promote senseless consumerism among children through the advertisements.

The WAS of the twelve statements were subjected to t-test. Out of twelve statements only three statements, R2 (There should be a central regulatory authority to look into the issues related to TV advertising for children); R3 (All the TV advertisements meant for children should carry the statutory warnings) and R9 (Advertisers should behave ethically and stop exploiting juvenile minds) have the t-values that are significant at 5 per cent level. The high weighted average scores for all these three statements were in the favour of working mothers as they more vociferously advocate for setting up of the central regulatory authority, statutory warnings before and during the programmes and above all administration of self check by the advertisers in order to safeguard the interests of the children. For other nine statements, no significant differences were observed in the attitude of the working and non-working mothers.

These results support the hypothesis that no significant differences exist in the attitude of working and non-working mothers towards the issues related to the control and restriction of the TV advertising directed at children. These twelve statements were subjected to the factor analysis in order to extract the factor structure underlying the attitude of the mothers. For the overall sample, four factors were extracted. The highest variance of the order of 19.25 per cent is explained by the first factor named as ‘Central Regulatory Authority’ the other three factors were ‘Complete Ban on TV advertising for Children’, ‘Parental Vigilance’ and ‘Active Parental Participation’.

The views of the parents project that there should be a regulatory mechanism to check advertising directed at children. With extreme views, parents advocate banning all advertisements directed at children. Respondents agree that parents have to be vigilant
about the advertisements, where children are involved and they have to play a special role in giving inputs to the advertisers who are instrumental in designing TV advertisements for children.

In order to arrive at the comparative picture of the factor structure, the twelve statements were factor analysed separately for working and non-working mothers. The attitude of the working mothers towards these statements associated with issues related to control and restriction of the TV advertising directed at children converged into four factors, which conjointly accounted for 62.378 per cent of total variance. Out of the four factors the most significant factor is ‘Central Regulatory Authority’ which alone contributed 22.441 per cent of the overall variance. Other three factors were ‘Parental Vigilance’, ‘Complete Ban on TV Advertising for Children’ and ‘Active Parental Involvement’.

Working mothers gave priority to formation of ‘Central Regulatory Authority’ which should exercise strict control over TV advertisements directed at children. However, they were also of the view that parents should be vigilant and above all play an active role by giving necessary inputs to the advertisers involved in designing TV advertisements for children. Some of the working mothers advocate complete ban on TV advertisements in which children are involved.

Responses of non-working mothers towards twelve statements when subjected to factorial study converged into four factors. These four factors accounted for 63.388 per cent of the common factor variance. The most dominant factor ‘Central Regulatory Authority’ explains the highest percentage of variance of magnitude 25.610 per cent. The other three factors were, ‘Complete Ban on TV Advertising for Children’, ‘Active Parental Involvement’ and ‘Parental Vigilance’. These four factors were same as found in case of working mothers, indicating that working and non-working mothers have agreement regarding nature of control, to be exercised over TV advertisements focused at children. Both favour formation of a central regulatory authority, the responsibility of the parents is advocated by both. Direct parental involvement in formulation of TV advertisements directed at children is also an important point of convergence of views of working and non-working mothers. Parents have a greater role to play as they need to educate their children about the commercial intentions of advertisers. As an extreme step
the parents even advocate that all such TV advertisements involving children or directed at children should be completely banned.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research works needs to culminate into some form of theoretical and practical implications. The foregoing findings and discussions reveal certain implications for the advertisers, government policy makers and above all the parents. On the basis of the findings following recommendations have been made.

1. Majority of the parents are of the view that their children watch TV regularly and on an average spend 1-2 hours daily watching TV. They also agree that their children seek prior permission before watching TV. This shows the importance of TV in the lives of the children, hence advertisers should try to disseminate the appropriate information through their advertisements which ultimately benefit children.

2. Parents agree that the right age at which children should be allowed to watch TV is 3-8 years. They are of the opinion that children below the age group of 3 years should not be allowed to watch TV. Marketers should exercise self restraint and avoid such advertisements that either show or target children below the age of three. Government at their end should formulate and strictly implement such policies that ban the TV advertisements that target children of age group less than 3 years. Parents need to discourage young children from watching TV.

3. Majority of the parents report that their children watch advertisements along with the TV programmes and find advertisements of the ‘Toys’ and ‘Candies’ to be interesting and fascinating. They get attracted to those advertisements that show animated cartoon characters and celebrities in their advertisements. Advertisers should try to understand the child psychology and make such advertisements that cater to the interests of children.

4. Parents in general are concerned about the TV viewing habits of their children. Working mothers consider that children are unnecessarily projected in the TV
advertisements which are mostly unrealistic and deceptive in nature. Non-working mothers blame advertisers for exploiting the young minds, playing with their emotions and leaving an indelible effect on their personality, which is ultimately reflected in their behavior. They find TV advertising to be promoting materialism, selfishness and pestering tendencies among children. Advertisers need to behave maturely, as they should not make such advertisements that emotionally harm the children, use manipulative imagery, give fake information, make tall claims and flaunt adult content. Rather they should focus at giving true information about their products and restrain themselves from any kind of deceptive tactics to attract children. Parents need to be more vigilant and need to discourage children from watching TV advertisements which they think can harm them.

5. Exposure of children to TV advertisements results in some kind of behavioural change. Most of the parents agree that their children ‘Sometimes ask for the product’ that has been advertised on TV. Majority of the mothers report that most of the times children approach them with a purchase request and avoid approaching their father for the same. Working and non-working mothers differ in their attitude as non-working mothers report that their children have this notion that their father will decline a purchase request.Advertisers need to understand the role of mothers in rearing and safeguarding the interests of their children and the position they have carved out in the Indian family, hence they need to appreciate and formulate their advertising policies accordingly.

6. Most of the parents report that they have regular interaction with their children. 93 per cent of the working mothers profess that they are actively involved in the joint activities with their children, which include ‘Watching TV’, ‘Eating out’ and ‘Others’ as compared to 85 per cent of the non-working mothers. Parents need to spend more time with children and should be open to discuss the queries of the children in general and specifically issues related to TV advertising.

7. Overall the parents are of the opinion that TV advertisements directed at children should not be allowed. Working mothers show a conservative and strict attitude as 60 per cent of them are not in favour of TV advertisements. Non-working mothers
relatively hold more liberal views regarding TV advertisements directed at children. Views of working and non-working mothers might be different, but the fact remains that children are exposed to lot of TV advertisements. The best approach for parents who are at the receiving end can be teaching their children how to be critical of advertisements and how to become less influenced by the persuasive messages in the TV advertisements.

8. Most of the parents feel that they need to mediate the TV viewing habits of their children. This urge to mediate depends on two factors. Educating parents about their role and parental involvement. Majority of the mothers (93.14%) agree that parents need to be educated about the role they can play in controlling and mediating the TV viewing habits of their children. Most of them (92%) feel that there is a strong relationship between the level of parental involvement and their mediating role. 98.34 per cent of working mothers strongly advocate this fact as compared to 86.64 per cent of non-working mothers. Advertisers need to play a positive role as they could make such programmes / advertisements that highlight the role and importance of parents in mediating the TV viewing habits of children and safeguard interests of their children.

9. Most of the parents favour ‘Instructive Mediation’ as the effective method to control and restrict the TV viewing habits of children. ‘Co-viewing’ as a mediation method is preferred by 30.8 per cent of the parents. Working and non-working mothers differ slightly in their views regarding the mediation pattern of TV viewing habits of children. Working mothers favour ‘Restrictive Mediation’ as compared to non-working mothers who favour ‘Instructive Mediation’. Parents need to discuss the intentions of TV advertisements with their children through co-viewing and at times instruct or even restrict their children from watching those TV advertisements which they think are harmful for children.

10. Overall, parents carry a negative opinion about TV advertising directed at children. The factor structure underlying the attitude of the parents towards TV advertising reveals that parents consider TV to be an informative and an indispensable part of the family, but they consider that consistent exposure to TV
is making children more aggressive, materialistic and defiant in their behavior. Working and non-working mothers share the same opinion that TV advertising in general is making children introvert, unrealistic, materialistic and they develop pestering tendencies. Mothers believe that parents have to play a pivotal role and they should make consistent efforts to raise their children.

11. Mothers in general agree that parents are instrumental in teaching the basic value system to the children. The factor analysis of all the fifteen statements related to parental mediation resulted in the extraction of five factors for working mothers and six factors for non-working mothers. The factor that emerge common for working and non-working mothers is ‘Active Parental Role in child rearing’. Mothers believe that sometimes parents allow children to watch TV for their own convenience or preoccupations. Parents have a greater responsibility as they need to spend more time, actively involve themselves in bringing up the children and discuss the content of the advertisements with children. This is only possible if parents are able to bridge the gap to an extent that children feel free to discuss the different issues related to TV advertisements. Parental interaction through discussions, co-viewing would help improve and bridge this gap.

12. Impact of TV advertising on the social and cultural values of children is an important parameter, most of the parents acknowledge that TV advertising has become more obscene, unrealistic and inculcates materialism, violence and restlessness among children. They feel TV advertisements specially of food stuff encourages unhealthy eating habits among children. This clearly shows that the parents agree that TV advertising is responsible in bringing about the shift in the cultural and social values of children. They feel children should not be unnecessarily dragged in the world of advertisements, which have no relevance for them. Advertisers and parents have a great responsibility to preserve the social and cultural value system of the children. Advertisers need to make such advertisements that portray and encourage moral, social and cultural Indian values.
13. Parents believe that special educational programmes should be made for educating parents as well as children, strict guidelines to control the TV advertising should be in place. Working and non-working mothers share four common factors. This highlights the fact that there is a dire need of setting up the ‘Central Regulatory Authority’ that would look into the issues related to the TV advertising directed at children, formulation of strict rules and regulations and their stringent implementation. Parents also advocate that there should be active involvement of the parents, who need to be vigilant about the TV viewing habits of their children. Mothers are of the opinion that the government is not doing enough to tackle the various issues related to TV advertising directed at children, hence they believe that if need arises there should be a complete ban on the TV advertising for children. Equal sense of responsibility must prevail among parents, advertisers and the government. Parents have to be vigilant, advertisers need to show self regulation and the government besides formulating strict regulatory measures, need to ensure that there is proper implementation of all these rules and regulations.

The findings reveal that majority of the parents hold negative attitude towards TV advertising directed at children. They find TV advertising to be deceptive in nature, which inculcates materialism, aggression, violence, defiance, restlessness, obscenity and promotes pestering tendencies among children. Though mothers are sceptical about TV advertising directed at children but they acknowledge the fact that TV has become an inseparable part of the Indian family and is the most important source of information and entertainment for the children.

Mothers feel that parents have to play a pivotal role in mediating the TV viewing behaviour of the children, for which they need to be formally educated. Working mothers show highly conservative and strict attitude towards TV advertising directed at children hence they favour ‘Restrictive Mediation’, whereas, non-working mothers who hold more liberal views advocate ‘Instructive Mediation’. Both working and non-working mothers agree that parents need to spend more time with children, actively involve themselves in
their upbringing and encourage them to be more interactive. Hence they believe in the ‘Active Parental role in Child Rearing’.

Overall, parents perceive that in India there is an absence of well-established regulatory framework governing TV advertising targeted at children. Mothers agree that it is the prime responsibility of the government to limit, restrict, control and mediate the TV advertising, hence they strongly advocate setting up of the ‘Central Regulatory Authority’ to look into the various issues related to children directed TV advertising.

In the end, it can be concluded that there is a growing parental concern regarding TV advertising directed at children. Though parents acknowledge TV advertising as an important source of information for children, yet they believe it to be one of the major factors responsible for increase in violence, aggression, materialism, obscenity and pestering among children. Parents believe TV advertising to be responsible for deterioration of the moral fiber of the Indian society. With a staunch belief to mediate the TV viewing habits of children, mothers advocate the increasing role of parents in the upbringing of the children. A cue is thereby provided to the parents, government policy makers and the advertisers to act pro-social and responsibly, while developing TV advertisements directed at children.

**DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

- The scope of the study has been limited to the geographical boundaries of the state of Punjab and UT Chandigarh. Elaborative study can be carried out by including more states in the sample. Inter-state study can provide a better picture of the attitude that the Indian parents have regarding TV advertising directed at children.

- Since advertisers continuously adopt innovative ways to target children, they use sophisticated forms of media such as internet to penetrate the minds of the young consumers. The effectiveness and impact of such media can be explored in Indian settings.
• The present study has only taken into consideration the urban and the economically stronger strata of the society. Future exhaustive studies can be carried out by including rural and other segments of the society. A comparative research can be done across different segments.

• The study being time specific brings out the aspects relating to present era. However for comparative analysis, longitudinal studies can be carried out that can include other aspects also.

• Parental perspective has been taken in this study whereas, if self regulatory mechanism has to be adopted then the viewpoint of the advertisers and marketers needs to be considered for further research.