
CATALYTIC EFFECT OF TV ADVERTISEMENTS ON CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Watching television (TV) has become an integral part of everyday life of people. All members of family, children to elderly like to watch TV channels of their choice. Some get addicted to it to such an extent that they would not like to miss a serial of their choice. Religious channels are favourite of older people, while Doremon, Pogo, Nick are favourite channels for children. To take advantage of the availability of target audience on these channels marketers include advertisements of their products which include food products like chocolates, biscuits, so called health drinks like Dew, Mazza, soft drinks like Pepsi, Coca Cola, tasty foods like cheesy pizza with double layer of cheese, Mayonnaise, Maggie, McDonald, KFC and many more of such type of products without considering whether the product is good for the target viewer or is unhealthy or harmful, till the demand is in flair. For greater impact advertisers promote food products associating with a healthy child or a slim women or a well-built man. For some products a celebrity is roped in. There is a well known saying in India that "We are, What We Eat". This is proving correct in the present scenario as people appear to have forgotten the essence of 'simple eating and long living'.

Keywords: *Watching T.V., Food Habits, Avertisiments, Marketing*

Introduction

Watching television (TV) has become an integral part of everyday life of people. All members of family, children to elderly like to watch TV channels of their choice. Some get addicted to it to such an extent that they would not like to miss a serial of their choice. Religious channels are favourite of older people, while Doremon, Pogo, Nick are favourite channels for children. To take advantage of the availability of target audience on these channels

marketers include advertisements of their products which include food products like chocolates, biscuits, so called health drinks like Dew, Mazza, soft drinks like Pepsi, Coca Cola, tasty foods like cheesy pizza with double layer of cheese, Mayonnaise, Maggie, McDonald, KFC and many more of such type of products without considering whether the product is good for the target viewer or is unhealthy or harmful, till the demand is in flair. For greater impact advertisers promote food products associating with a healthy child or a slim women or a well-built man. For some products a celebrity is roped in. There is a well known saying in India that “We are, What We Eat”. This is proving correct in the present scenario as people appear to have forgotten the essence of ‘simple eating and long living’.

It is a matter of concern that children in 8 to12 years age group watch so much television, and therefore see so many food advertisements that they may be the group *most* affected by food marketing, particularly because this is an especially important time for shaping children’s food habits, since they are likely to have more time away from their parents, have their own money, and have more opportunity to make their own food choices (Walter Gantz, et al, 2008). Watching TV advertisements some children may be caught up into the grip of these advertisements, particularly food advertisements and may develop a craving for the food stuffs they see, and finally this develops into their habit. The marketing teams have become so smart that they focus on children’s preferences and target small children whose minds can be captured playing on children’ psychology. Children start imagining fancy land foods and toys as they watch TV. This is leading to certain serious health problems among children, one of which is obesity. More and more children are becoming food alcoholic and are developing serious diseases like diabetes, hypertension, etc. Children generally consume larger quantity of food when they are watching TV as it acts as stimulant for appetite, while they do not realize what they are eating. They eat and grow in a way as they see in the imaginary world while watching TV. With constant increase in the number of TV commercials the degree of impact of advertisements is increasing on people and among these children get addicted to advertisements especially of food.

The exposure develops a craving among children and they start demanding for those items. Parents may become more and more helpless in resisting the increasing demands of their children. It appears that no one is concerned about protecting children from advertisements of unhealthy junk food. There are no strict regulations in place so far in India and whatever exist are not strictly enforced. Parents do not realize that stomachs of their children are becoming junk yards and soon they shall have to face the ill effects in the form of diseases like childhood diabetes, high blood pressure etc,

Background

Companies invest millions of dollars every year on marketing their brands and products. They just want to make more and more profits selling food items like pizzas, burgers, chocolates, ready sauces, flavored mayonnaises, magi, ready packed instant food mixes, food drinks, soft drinks etc. Fast foods advertisements have become the fastest selling proposition for marketers. It is well known that hypertension due to overweight at an early age can be catastrophic. As a mother my experience with children is that they demand advertised food seen by them, which looks good to them while watching TV and which triggers their taste buds. They demand pizza or pasta, and compliment it with mouth watering cold beverages like Mock-tail, Coke, Pepsi or any other such type soft drink, which they drink down with equal delight.

For older children and teenagers words like mocha and cappuccino, which they see in TV advertisements, have become part of their vocabulary. For lunch and dinner they show high preference for 'ready to eat products' like vegetable curries, parathas, frozen vegetables and ready kebabs, as these are readily available at restaurants. TV has revolutionized buying and eating habits of people, particularly urban upward mobile young persons. Children keep parents fully updated with everything that is going on around them.

What is more alarming is that to promote their products advertisers work on the concept, 'what is seen is sold' (Jo dikhta hai woh bikta hai), not considering the negative impact on the minds of young generation, particularly children who get pepped up with all that exposure. Creativity in such advertisements has become a good selling proposition. Children get persuaded with these advertisements, shape their preferences of food and get entangled in the web of media promotion.

No one seems to feel concerned about this change, neither the industry nor the government or the public interest groups or teachers or parents. Under the conditions one feels persuaded to understand, how the children who are on the receiving end feel about the change, what may be the implications of this change in food preference of children for children and society at large and what is the way out in such a difficult situation. The present study was undertaken to address these issues.

Literature Review

Food advertisements on television and their effect on children has been a matter of grave concern in all countries over the years. There have been many studies focusing on watching programs on television by children, food

advertisements on television and their effect on food habits of children etc. Some of these studies on children and electronic media, television and media literacy among children, television advertisements for children, and food advertisements on television targeting children, effect of food advertisements on children, television advertisements and eating disorders in children are reviewed here.

Children and Electronic Media

A Study in Ireland on impact of electronic media, particularly television and computer consoles, upon traditional childhood play and certain aspects of psychosocial development amongst children by Seline Keating, (March 2011) brought out that excessive use of electronic media among children is resulting in traditional play being displaced and the years of childhood innocence lessening. Consequently “mini-adults” instead of children are emerging with knowledge too complex for their stage of development. Research comprised of 3 questionnaires for 3 different target groups namely, 2nd and 6th class boys and girls, their parents, and the teachers in their schools. It found that indeed electronic media is impacting upon a child’s development in varying forms and highlighted the dominant presence of television in households. The findings however, showed the contrasting opinions of parents regarding television and computer consoles upon their family life and child’s growth. Teachers clearly expressed their anxieties for the children in their school and outlined the areas of a child’s development being impacted upon that were of greatest concern to them.

According to Bakari Chavanu (1999), by the time children graduate from high school, they will probably have spent twice as much time watching television as attending school. By the age of 17, they will probably have seen 350,000 television commercials.

Television and Media Literacy Among Children

As per Kamaruzaman Jusoff, Serdang, Selangor and Nurul Nadiah Sahimi, there are more negative outcomes that can be seen among children due to excessive amount of television viewing and also with the broad range of content being broadcasted, which include violence, sex, alcohol and so forth. Thus, it is now important for parents to make sure that their children are media literate so that they could later be better consumers, become pro social, and develop other positive development. Young children today are adults of tomorrow. So it is important for them to be media literate once they are exposed to the television, as it would be easier for parents to develop their children with positive behavior and attitude at a younger age.

Television Advertisements and Children

Maggie, (2012) observed that children aged 8 to 18 years spend average of four and a half (4 1/2) hours per day watching television, one and a half (1 1/2) hours using computers, and more than one (1) hour playing video games, while the maximum amount recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics is two (2) hours of television per day. Thus kids watch on average of over ten food related advertisements every day (nearly 4000 a year). Nearly all (98%) of food advertisements viewed by children are of food and beverages that are high in fat, sugar or sodium and most (79 percent) are low in fiber.

Surveying the research on children and television during 1994-2000, Gunilla Jarlbro observed that many different actors having economic and political stakes in the issue are active in the policy debate. Those favouring TV advertising aiming at children prefer to cite research based on observations, the results of which indicate that even very young children can recognize and comprehend commercial messages. Opponents of such advertising tend, on the other hand, to cite findings based on verbal responses that show that only after some years can children distinguish commercials from other programme content and perceive its intent. The fact that central concepts are defined differently in different studies – such as what is meant by “understanding the intent of advertising messages” – naturally makes it difficult to compare the results of the studies; they do not seem to have measured the same things. What is more, the studies do not always document their methods, which make it impossible to judge whether the conclusions drawn are valid.

The survey concluded by mentioning that since the proponents as well as opponents of television advertising aimed at children have initiated and financed studies, the results of which often serve their respective interests and that a majority of the studies on this subject have been steered by extra-scientific interests, e.g., the policy decision, whether or not advertising to young children should be banned or regulated, means that the studies have had different starting points and perspectives.

Food Advertisements on Television Targeting Children

A study about food advertising targeting children on Malaysian television (Tilakavati Karupaiah, et al, 2008) reported on data covering 6 months of television that food advertising frequency during children’s prime time TV varied between TV channels and increased during weekends, school vacation and Ramadhan. It was found that advertisements of snacks are screened 5 times more frequently than fast foods and are the major component of food advertising on children’s TV in Malaysia. The nutritional content of these

snacks was a major concern, as they are high in calories, sodium and salt per 100g of consumed food.

A study published in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* (November/December, 2009) examined how food advertising aimed at children might be a large contributor to the problem. Children's networks had the highest percentage of food-related commercials. Food advertisements were predominately for sugary cereals and sweets, high fat food, convenience or fast-food restaurant food, and chips/crackers. When compared to television for a general audience, children's networks in this study exposed young viewers to 76% more food commercials per hour than did the other networks, with the Saturday morning 7-10 AM time slot being more saturated with food commercials. Approximately 7.7 food commercials per hour appeared in programming on the children's networks, which is approximately one (1) food commercial every eight (8) minutes. The authors stated that "study after study has documented the adverse health effects of food advertising targeting children and adolescents. Health educators need to develop and evaluate comprehensive nutrition programs that augment nutritional education with media use reduction strategies to lessen exposure to ads. School- and family-based programs that have attempted to reduce children's media use have shown promise."

A Kaiser Family Foundation Report on television food advertising for children in the United States by Walter Gantz, Nancy Schwartz, James R. Angelini, and Victoria Rideout, (2007) covered all genres of programming viewed by children, and combined data from a detailed analysis of advertising content with viewing data from a large national sample of children to determine how many ads young people actually see, given the mix of programming they watch. The report concluded that children of all ages are exposed to a substantial amount of advertising content of all kinds (including for products other than food). Even the youngest children, 2 to 7 years age see an average of 38 ads a day across all products, while twins and teens see many more-an average of 83 and 79 ads a day, respectively-more than a half-hour a day of advertising. Turning specifically to food advertising, it mentioned that the food and beverages continued to dominate the television advertising landscape, particularly for children. Food is the most widely advertised product on the 13 networks in the study, accounting for 19% of all ads. Among children's shows, fully half (50%) of all ad time is for food.

The study revealed that children's exposure to food advertising varies significantly by age, the youngest children (ages 2 to 7years) see an average of about 12 food ads a day, or more than 4,400 food ads a year (32% of all ads they see). Because they watch so much more TV, and because they watch different types of TV, twins see a much higher number of food ads than

younger children—an average of 21 ads a day, or more than 7,600 a year (25% of all ads they see). For teenagers, the figures are just about 17 food ads a day, or more than 6,000 a year (22% of all ads they see).

Based on a comprehensive review of the research, the US Institute of Medicine, (2006) released a report that revealed strong evidence that television advertising influences children's food choices, what they asked their parents to buy, and actual eating habits. Children will eat about 167 extra calories for every hour of TV that they watch. A preschooler's risk for obesity will increase by 6% for every hour of TV watched per day. One thirty-second commercial can influence the brand preferences of children as young as two.

Based on an extensive review of the research, the American Psychological Association (2007) determined that children 8 years and younger really did not understand that commercials and advertisements were trying to influence them. Preschool children stated that food in McDonald's wrappers tasted better than food in plain wrappers, suggesting that branding can even influence how they think foods will actually taste.

According to Kelly Brownell, (2002) the average American child sees 10,000 food ads on TV each year, and 95 percent of those commercials are for fast foods, soft drinks, candy, or sugar cereals. If you think that may be the reason the United States has a growing number of overweight and obese children, you're not alone.

Television Advertising and Eating Disorders

A study by Katherine Kam reviewed by John M Goldenring, on serious health problems for children and teens brought out that eating disorders can cause in children and teens serious changes in eating habits that can lead to major, even life threatening health problems. Eating disorders typically develop during adolescence or early adulthood. However, they can start in childhood, too. Females are much more vulnerable. Only an estimated 5% to 15% of people with anorexia or bulimia are male. With binge eating, the number rises to 35% male.

A report by Plato Leung published in Contributor Network (October 25, 2008) stated that advertisers are the engine behind many of the messages people watch, read, and listen to. Money from the sale of advertisements helps pay for television and radio programming, magazines, and other mass media. The influence of advertisers goes beyond ads, jingles, and commercials. TV and movie producers make extra money through "product placement" deals. Companies pay to have their products incorporated into scenes.

Linkage of Television Viewing to Unhealthy Eating

Dr Natalie Pearson and Professor Stuart Biddle (2011) reviewed 53 studies worldwide focusing on sedentary behaviour and dietary intake, and found a clear association between screen time and an unhealthy diet in children, adolescent and adult. In particular, television viewing was strongly associated with the consumption of energy-dense snacks, drinks and fast food, and a lower consumption of fruit and vegetables.

Professor Biddle explains: “Not only are television viewers exposed to numerous advertisements that can influence the type of food they desire and consume, but television can also act as a distraction, resulting in a lack of awareness of actual food consumption or overlooking food cues that may lead to overconsumption.” For some people, a substantial proportion of their daily energy intake is consumed whilst watching TV.”

Dr Pearson adds: “If parents place their children in front of the TV with a snack or a meal while they do other household chores, children may start to associate TV viewing with eating. The more time children and adolescents spend sedentary in front of a screen, the more likely they are to eat unhealthy foods.”

The research, found similar behaviour patterns for children, adolescents and adults, highlights the important role parents can play in curbing unhealthy habits because TV viewing and snacking habits are typically modeled by parents and caretakers. Any interventions should aim to target adults and children together.

Objectives of the Study

The main object of this study was to understand the effect of TV viewing and food advertisements on the food habits of children and adolescent and how their food habits are shaped. Specific objectives in this respect were as stated here:

1. To identify the relationship between television viewing and eating habits of children,
Particularly in relation with advertised food.
2. To study how food marketing has shaped children’s preferences, and advertised food buying by children.
3. To understand the role of parents in supporting food buying and eating habits of their children

Research Methodology

This study was based on opinion survey of a cross section of young and adolescent children from private schools and government schools in Udaipur. After drawing up on the existing literature on the subject to understand the nature and complexity of the problem a survey was designed to capture the opinion of children representing different demographic groups such as gender (male, female) age (under 10 years and between 10 and 18 years), schools (private schools and government schools), level of their education (higher secondary, secondary and primary) etc.

To capture the opinion of all demographic groups in the sample of 100 participants, 50 participants were selected from government schools and 50 from private schools. Likewise 50 male participants were selected and 50 female participants were selected. The selection of the schools, classes and participants for the survey was made completely random – schools were selected from the list of schools at Udaipur, classes and class rooms were selected from the selected schools after obtaining information about classes and class rooms from school administration and the participants for each demographic group were selected at random based on their willingness to participate in the survey after explaining the objectives of the study.

A comprehensive questionnaire was designed for the opinion survey. The questionnaire contained 18 questions, 3 about demographic profile of participants, 6 about impact of electronic media advertisements, 6 about impact of advertisements on TV on children's behavior, 2 about opinion of participants on effect of celebrity or child endorsements of product in TV advertisements on children's behavior, and 1 on opinion about impact of food advertisements and their consumption on health. In six (6) questions about impact of TV advertisements a participant was given four (4) alternatives among which only one (1) was to be tick marked. For six (6) questions about impact of TV advertisements on behavior of children a participant was required to indicate his opinion by tick marking 'yes' or 'no' and for three (3) questions a participant was required to indicate his opinion on impact of celebrity or child endorsements on his choice and impact of fast food on health of children such as obesity.

To ensure that the questions may be understood properly by children the questions were translated in Hindi and two sets of questionnaires were printed one in English and its translation in Hindi. Both the questionnaires were tested to ensure that there is no difficulty in understanding of the questions for both medium school children. The participants were served the questionnaire by hand after ascertaining their choice of language in the presence of their teachers. The questionnaires were collected after the participants completed them. For primary school level students only 8 to 10 years age group participants who

could read and understand the questions and mark their choice appropriately were distributed questionnaire. Participants were given adequate time and freedom to mark their choice.

This study thus was designed to determine whether food marketing is a predominant segment in television advertising landscape for children, and whether children's exposure to such messages is substantial, while their exposure to countervailing health messages on TV is minimal and also whether it had affected the buying and eating choices of children creating health hazards. This study however, did not address the issue whether food advertising on TV targeted at children was increasing or decreasing, nor whether food advertisements on TV should be in any way restricted, either through voluntary industry efforts or through regulatory-policy etc. The analysis of data collected through survey was limited to impact on children in general and on less than 10 years age group and 10 to 18 years age group. Gender wise (male – female), school type wise (private – government), medium of instruction wise (English – Hindi) and education level wise (secondary – senior secondary) analyses were not attempted.

The Demographic Profile of Participants in the Survey is Given in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participants in survey

Gender	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Male	16 (32%)	34 (68%)	50
Female	15 (30%)	35 (70%)	50
Total	31	69	100

School Management	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Male	17 (34%)	33 (68%)	50
Female	14 (28%)	36 (72%)	50
Total	31	69	100

Education Level	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Senior Secondary	00	27 (39%)	27
Secondary	00	42 (61%)	42
Primary	31	00	31
	31	69	100

It may be observed from the demographic profile of participants that age group wise about one third (31%) were from under 10 years age group and two thirds (69%) were from 10 to 18 years age group. All the participants in under 10 years age group were from primary education level. Among 10 to 18 years age group 61% participants were from secondary school level and 39% were from senior secondary school level.

Discussion and Findings

Television is a powerful medium of communication. It is widely used by households for sourcing updated news stories as well as entertainment. In India it is the principal source of home entertainment for middle class families. With the availability of multiple TV channels 24/7 there are always some programmes available on TV for all age groups, language groups and socio economic strata. Members of family view their favourite channels and programmes on TV sometimes together and sometimes separately.

The power of TV is being harnessed by business to market their products. Advertisements are developed as per the likely preferences of target groups and then posted on their favourite channels and their favourite programmes during their prime times. This includes children also. Attractive advertisements for food, clothing, toys, electronic appliances etc are shown on the channels watched by children with the object of creating demand for these products among the children.

Impact of TV Advertisements

The impact of television advertisement being visuals is known to be greater on the audience as compared to other media. The impact is also expected to last for a longer period. Children may not be exception in this respect. Rather due to impressionable age the impact may be greater.

Table 2: Media of Attraction for Children

Media and Attraction	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Print Media	02 (6.5%)	16 (23.2%)	18 (18%)
Radio	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Television	23 (74.2%)	38 (55.1%)	61 (61%)
Words of mouth	6 (19.3%)	15 (21.7%)	21 (21%)
	31	69	100

As per the survey TV was the most attractive medium of communication

(61%) for children from all age groups compared to other media. However, it had a greater attraction (74.2%) for children in less than 10 years age group, as compared to children from 10 to 18 years age group (55.1%). Attraction for words of mouth (19.3%) and print media (6.5%) was low for less than 10 years age group and they had no attraction for radio. The attraction for print media improved about three and a half times (from 6.5% to 23.2%) and for words of mouth slightly (from 19.3% to 21.7%) for children in 10 to 18 years age group. (Table 2)

Table 3: Average Period of Watching TV Per Day by Children

Period of TV watch	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
< 1 Hour	03 (9.6%)	29 (42.0%)	32 (32%)
Between 1 to 2 hours	14 (45.2%)	35 (50.7%)	49 (49%)
Between 3 to 5 hours	14 (45.2%)	05 (7.3%)	19 (19%)
More than 5 hours	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)
	31	69	100

Watching TV programmes though is common in all age groups for children it was at 1 hour for 32%, between 1 to 2 hours for 49% and between 3 to 5 hours for 19%. It was higher among children in less than 10 years age group with 45.2% watching for 1 to 2 hours, 45.2% watching for 3 to 5 hours and only 9.5% watching for less than 1 hour. In 10 to 18 years age group children, 42% watching TV for less than 1 hour, 50.7% watching for 1 to 2 hours and only 7.3% watching for 3 to 5 hours it was lower as compared to less than 10 years age group. This may be due to the fact that children in 10 to 18 years age group give more time to studies, games and other activities. (Table 3)

Table 4: Preference of Children for Watching a TV Channel

TV Channel Watched	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Cartoon	25 (80.6%)	6 (8.7%)	31 (31%)
Serials	0 (0%)	19 (27.5%)	19 (19%)
Music Channels	2 (6.5%)	27 (39.1%)	29 (29%)
Movies	4 (12.9%)	17 (24.6%)	21 (21%)
	31	69	100

Though there are a variety of channels available on TV in India the preference for channel and for programme may not be the same for all age groups. Among children the preference is generally for Cartoon network, Music, and Serials. As the participants in this survey were given option to

mark their choice among these four channels, indicated preference for Cartoon network (31%), music (29%), movies (21%) and serials (19%) in the order. The children in less than 10 years age group indicated very high preference (80.6%) for cartoon channel, followed by movies (12.9%) and music (6.5%) and no preference for serials. Children in 10 to 18 years age group indicated higher preference for music (39.1%), followed by serials (27.5%), movies (24.6%) and cartons (8.7%). This indicated that there is a marked shift in preference of TV channels for viewing with age among children. (Table 4)

Table 5: Nature of effect on Children of Watching Advertisements in TV

Nature of effect - choice	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Recall	05 (16.1%)	09 (13.1%)	14 (14%)
Positive impression	00 (0%)	17 (24.6%)	17 (17%)
Creation of Interest	17 (54.8%)	29 (42.0%)	46 (46%)
Creation of Desire to own	09 (29.1%)	14 (20.3%)	23 (23%)
	31	69	100

To understand the nature of effect on children due to watching TV participants were required to indicate choice among four alternatives - recall, positive impression, creative interest and creation of desire to own. As per choices marked by less than 10 years age group participants the effects were creation of interest (54.8%), creation of desire to own (29.1%) and recall (16.1%), with none indicating positive impression. The choice of effect indicated by 10 to 18 years age group participants were creation of interest (42.0%), positive impression (24.6%), creation of desire to own (20.3%) and recall (13.1%). Thus recall was put at the lowest level, while creation of interest (46%), creation of desire to own (23%) were at higher level among children. (Table 5)

Table 6: Period of Impact on Children of TV Advertisements

Period of Impact	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Few hours	12 (38.7%)	27 (39.1%)	39 (39%)
One day	11 (35.5%)	14 (20.3%)	25 (25%)
One Week or More	07 (22.6%)	13 (18.8%)	20 (20%)
No effect	01 (3.2%)	15 (21.7%)	16 (16%)
	31	69	100

To understand the period over which the impact of advertisement watched

lasts the participants in survey were given four alternatives – few hours, one day, one week or more and no effect. The survey indicated that in case of less than 10 years age group children the period of effect was few hours on 38.7%, for one day on 35.5%, one week or more on 22.6% and no effect on 3.2%. Among 10 to 18 age group participants 39.1% indicated that it lasted few hours, 20.3% indicated one day, 21.7% indicated no effect and 18.8% indicated one week or more. Thus the results for the two age groups in this respect were close to each other. (Table 6)

Table 7: Items of Attraction for Children in TV Advertisements

Items of attraction	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Food Items	15 (48.4%)	16 (23.2%)	31 (31%)
Clothing	0 (0%)	18 (26.1%)	18 (18%)
Appliances	0 (0%)	25 (36.2%)	25 (25%)
Toys	16 (51.6%)	10 (14.5%)	26 (26%)
	31	69	100

To understand the choice of items of attraction among TV advertisements for children, participants were given choice of marking one among four items – food, clothing appliances and toys. The survey results indicated that children in less than 10 years age group were more attracted to toys (51.6%) and food items (48.4%) and not by clothing and appliances at all. But children in 10 to 18 years age group indicated higher attraction for appliance (36.2%), followed by clothing (26.1%), food items (23.2%) and lower for toys (14.5%). There appeared a wide divergence in choice of items of attraction among two age groups of children and that there is a shift in choice with age among children from toys and food items to appliances and clothing. However, food items remain in choice for both the age groups of children. (Table 7)

Impact of TV Advertisements on Behavior of Children

Television is a news and entertainment device. It is commonly available in all middle income and higher income households and also in many of the lower income households. There is a wide choice of channels and programmes and these are available 24/7. Members of family cluster together and watch some of the channels and programmes while sometimes some members of family such as ladies and elderly watch programmes of their choice separately. Children in the family are also part of this assembly sometimes while at other times children watch some programmes that are of interest to them and attract them on their own. Such programmes are particularly available during the time slots when children are generally available at home. Taking

advantage of the availability of different age group persons at home marketers put advertisements of their products that may attract them. During time slots when children watch TV they put up advertisements of products that are likely to attract children.

To understand the impact of these advertisements on children six (6) questions were included. For this first the participants were asked to confirm whether they accept the impact of these advertisements on them and then five (5) probing questions were asked to understand whether there was impact and what was the nature impact. The results of the survey are classified in table 8 to table 13.

Table 8: Acceptance of Impact of TV Advertisement on Behavior

Expression of Impact	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	27 (87.1%)	58 (84.1%)	85 (85%)
No	04 (12.9%)	11 (15.9%)	15 (15%)
	31	69	100

During survey 85% of the children accepted that advertisements on TV have impact on their behavior. The proportion of such children in less than 10 years age group was slightly higher (87.1%) than in 10 to 18 years age group (84.1%) (Table 8)

Table 9: Expression of Impact of TV Advertisement Through Singing Jingles/Tunes

Singing Jingles/tunes	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	24 (77.4%)	47 (68.1%)	71 (71%)
No	07 22.6%)	22 (31.9%)	29(29%)
	31	69	100

To understand how this impact finds expression participants were asked whether they sing jingles and tunes they hear in advertisements. On this 71% participants recorded that yes they do sing jingles/ tunes which they hear in TV advertisements. The proportion of children singing jingles/ tunes of advertisements among less than 10 years age group was higher (77.4%), as compared to children in 10 to 18 years age group (68.1%). (Table 9)

Table 10: Expression of Impact of TV Advertisements

Through Urge to Buy

Urge to buy	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	29 (93.5%)	57 (82.6%)	86 (86%)
No	2 (6.5%)	12 (17.4%)	14 (14%)
	31	69	100

When asked further whether TV advertisements create an urge to buy the product advertised, 86% participants recorded yes they experience an urge to buy the product. The proportion of such children among less 10 years age group was higher (93.5%), as compared to 10 to 18 years age group children (82.6%). (Table 10)

Table 11: Expression of Impact of TV Advertisements Through Insistence to Buy Food or Item

Insistence to buy food or item	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	29 (93.5%)	47 (68.1%)	76 (76%)
No	02 (6.5%)	22 (31.9%)	24 (24%)
	31	69	100

In response to another probing question whether they 'insist to buy food or item' they see in TV advertisements 76% participants admitted that yes they do insist on parents and guardians to buy food or items they see in advertisements. The proportion of such children was high (93.5%) among less than 10 years age group as compared to 10 to 18 years age group (68.1%) children.(Table 11)

Table 12: Expression of Impact of Food Advertisement on TV by Eating Snacks while Watching

Eating snacks while watching TV	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Always	13 (41.9%)	33 (47.8%)	46 (46%)
Sometimes	18 (58.1%)	27 (39.1%)	45 (45%)
Not at all	0 (0%)	9 (13.1%)	9 (9%)
	31	69	100

For still stronger confirmation of impact the participants were asked whether they 'eat snacks while watching TV programmes' on which 46% recorded always, 45% recorded sometimes, and only 9% recorded that they do not eat snacks while watching TV programmes. Such an impact was very high

among less than 10 years age group children (41.9% recording always, 58.1% sometimes and none recording not at all), as compared to 10 to 18 years age group (47.8% recording always, 39.1% sometimes, and 13.1% recording not at all). (Table 12)

Table 13: Expression of Impact of Food Advertisements on TV by Liking Junk Food More Than Home Cooked Food

Liking junk food more than home cooked food	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	29 (93.5%)	51 (73.9%)	80 (80%)
No	2 (6.5%)	18 (26.1%)	20 (20%)
	31	69	100

In response to another probing question ‘whether they liked junk food more than home cooked food’, 80% participants recorded yes they do and 20% recorded they do not. However, in this respect the proportion of children in less than 10 years age group who recorded positive response was very high (93.5%) as compared to among children in 10 to 18 years age group(73.9%). (Table 13)

Thus very high proportion (85%) of participants admitted impact of TV advertisements on their behavior and this was further confirmed by their various expressions of impact of TV advertisements. The impact was higher in case of children in less than 10 years age group as compared to children in 10 to 18 years age group.

Impact of celebrity or child endorsements in TV advertisements on children

It is usual for marketers to rope in some celebrity or child in advertisements to give stronger message and heighten the impact. To understand how this strategy worked on children three (3) questions were included. Participants were required to express their opinion on celebrity or child endorsements of products in advertisements on TV and the effect of food advertisements and consumption on their health. The results are classified in tables 14, 15 and 16.

Table 14: Opinion on Impact of Celebrity or Child Endorsements of Products in TV Advertisements-Whether Acceptance as Good Quality

Acceptance as good quality	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	12 (38.7%)	22 (31.9%)	34 (34%)
No	19 (61.3%)	47 (68.1%)	66 (66%)
	31	69	100

In response to the question whether a product endorsed by celebrity or

child on TV advertisement was accepted by them as ‘good quality’ only about one thirds (34%) participants recorded yes they do accept the item of good quality but about two thirds recorded no they do not accept the item of good quality. Among less than 10 years age children 38.7% recorded ‘yes’ and 61.3% recorded ‘no’, while among 10 to 18 years age group children 31.9% recorded ‘yes’ and 68.1% recorded ‘no’. Thus the opinion of both the age group children was similar and indicated that the impact of celebrity or child endorsements was not high. (Table 14)

Table 15: Opinion on Celebrity or Child Endorsements of Products in TV Advertisement-Whether Created Intention to buy the Product

Intention to buy the product	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	15 (48.4%)	57 (82.6%)	72 (72%)
No	16 (51.6%)	12 (17.4%)	28 (28%)
	31	69	100

In response to another opinion question whether the endorsement of a product by celebrity or child created ‘intention to buy’ that product, about three fourths (72%) participants recorded ‘yes’ and about one fourths (28%) recorded ‘no’. In this respect the proportion of positive opinion and negative opinion to the question in less than 10 years age group children was similar with 48.4% recording ‘yes and 51.6% recording ‘no’. On the other hand the proportion of positive opinion on the question was very high (yes = 82.6%) compared to negative opinion (no = 17.4%) among 10 to 18 years age group children.

Table 16: Opinion on Food Advertisements on TV and Their Consumption Resulting in Obesity

Results in obesity	Age		Total
	Under 10 years	10 to 18 years	
Yes	19 (61.3%)	52(75.4%)	71 (71%)
No	12 (38.7%)	17(24.6%)	29 (29%)
	31	69	100

The opinion on impact of food advertisements on TV and their consumption on health or resulting in obesity, 71% children recorded ‘yes’ and 29% recorded ‘no’. The positive opinion regarding effect on health or obesity however, was lower among less than 10 years age group children with 61.3% recording yes and 38.7% recording no as compared to 10 to 18 years age group children among which 75.4% recorded ‘yes’ and 24.6% recorded

'no'. Perhaps the senior group could recognize the impact on their health and obesity better.

Findings, Conclusions and Suggestions

Findings and broad conclusions from the survey are as under:

- 1. Watching advertisements on TV by children:** Television is a very attractive medium of communication for all age groups, particularly for children, compared to other media.

The proportion of children watching TV for more than one hour is two times of those watching for less than one hour. This is still more in case of children in less than 10 years age group.

Among various channels available on TV the choice of children is higher for music and movies. However, in case of less than 10 years age group the choice is very high for cartoon network.

Creation of interest in the product and desire to own the product were major impacts of watching advertisements on TV on children.

The duration of impact on watching advertisement of a product on TV on children lasts for less than few hours or one day in most cases.

The items of attraction on watching advertisements of products on TV for less than 10 years age children are mainly toys and food items where as clothing and appliances are products that attract children in 10 to 18 years age group more

- 2. Impact of advertisements on TV on behavior of children:** Marketers of products are well aware of the choices of children and put advertisements of their products on channels watched by children during the period they are available at home.

High proportion of children accepted that watching advertisements on TV has impact on their behavior.

This impact finds expression in large proportion of children singing jingles/tunes which they hear on advertisements on TV. The proportion of such children among less than 10 years age group was higher.

Advertisements of products on TV created urge to buy the product advertised among children.

As a result of such an urge they insist on their parents and guardians to buy food or items they see in advertisements on TV.

Some children like to eat snacks while watching advertisements on TV was another expression of such an impact. This is particularly more in case of children in less than 10 years age group.

Children like to eat junk food more than home cooked food was yet another expression of impact of advertisements of such products on TV.

3. Impact of celebrity or child endorsements of products in advertisements on TV: Endorsements of products in advertisements on TV by celebrity or child during the period when children watch channels of their choice are targeted at impacting their choice of the product.

However, in the opinion of about one third of the participants in the survey such products are accepted by them of good quality, while two thirds do not accept.

Still about three fourth of the participants accepted that endorsements by celebrity or child created intention to buy the product advertised.

It was also the opinion of about three fourth of the participants that the consumption of junk food impacted their health and it results in obesity.

Thus the survey results indicated that children like to watch TV channels of their choice including the advertisements of products and food; that this created a strong impact on their behavior; that this has adverse effect on their health. The level of understanding about such impacts was higher among 10 to 18 years age group children as compared to children in less than 10 years age group.

Children of all ages are exposed to a substantial amount of advertisements for food and beverages, though their exposure varies significantly by age. It should be understood that to make children grow healthy, nutritional value balanced diet is essential. Here comes the role of parents to divert their child from junk food and stop them from demanding and eating such food. Though handling children is not easy in respect with what they want to eat, it can still be managed if parents use patience and tact. Some simple things are required to divert them, which when followed with smartness can relieve parents from child's upcoming health problems. For businesses dealing in food and marketers it may be suggested that rather than junk food they should develop healthy food items and advertisements of healthy food items should be shown on TV, rather than junk food. This will evidence their commitment and concern for future of the nation.

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