

A Study on Effects of TV Advertising on Children

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Abstract: Television becomes a National Phenomenon in India when on August 15, 1982; The National programme of Doordarshan was inaugurated. Presently television has come to occupy a central place in the lives of the people. TV, to a great extent, determines the rhythm of people's life not only in towns but in villages as well. This anxiety is more about the growing up children. Young children whose basic personality structure is being formed spend a lot of time before TV. TV appears to compete with the traditional agencies of socialization such as family, school and religious organization. The chief socializing agency is, of course, the family which is supported by the school and the religious community. Parents who are charged with the responsibility of socializing the young are naturally concerned with the impact of TV may have on their words. The main purpose of the study is to focus on the effects of TV advertising on children.

Keywords: TV, Advertising, Children, Alcohol, Tobacco, Effects, Parents

I. INTRODUCTION

Television remains the most effective medium for reaching today's customers and it also is most efficient for introducing people to brands. Advertising through television allows marketer to show and tell a wide audience your business, product or service. It allows one to actually demonstrate the benefits of ownership. Television appeals to the literate as well as the illiterate and this is one feature of TV that makes it unique and different from other mediums. The hour today is the hour of mass communication. Advertising in particular has become an indispensable mode of communication with the market. Advertising is a means of communication with the user of product or service.

The importance of advertising grows steadily as brands rely heavily on media for various marketing objectives such as increasing sales, creating knowledge and awareness in the market etc. the field of advertising continues to grow and evolve. Advertising also plays a very important role in shaping the ever-changing norms of society both nationally and globally. With the growing role of advertising in the lives of peoples' attention now is being paid to the various negative as well as positive effects of advertising.

TV advertising is the non personal communication of the information usually paid for persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media. The advertisers intended to spread his ideas about the products and offerings among the prospects. Popularization of the products is thus, the basic aim of

advertising. Television advertising is the best selling media to target the audience.

II. FACTORS AFFECTING CHILDREN

Advertising to children help in generating jobs, putting money into the economy and instilling the importance of freedom to choose at a young age. It helps in developing a child's ability to comprehend the value of money and teaches them that a person can achieve anything if they have the will to pay the price. The millions of dollars are spent every year by the advertising industries on the ads that target children. Young audiences are bombarded with persuading messages through media such as internet, television, magazines, bill boards, radio etc.

(a) Television Advertising to Children

As far as advertising goes, the biggest impact made on children is through television. According to a recent study, children spend about 4 hours 30 minutes every day watching TV. This means that they are bombarded with advertisements daily and truth is that not even the top researches know how they may be being influenced by these ads. How children react to them depends on a number of factors including their age, what they have experienced or know and how much opportunity they have had to ask questions and discuss what they see in the media.

Research suggests that when children watch more television, they are likely to want and demand more toys or other products. It is also suggested that they may notice ads more when they watch television on their own. According to a national survey of children's TV watching behavior is 72% reported that they had no restrictions on the amount of time they could watch TV and 52% reported that they had the freedom to watch any type of content they wanted. Studies have found that the children do not have the ability to skeptically view marketing messages or even identify advertisements as marketing messages until they are teens. This means that marketing messages can be perceived as truths, and in many cases, those messages can stay with them until they becomes adults.

(b) Advertising and Alcohol Consumptions

Over the years, there have been a lot of research on alcohol ads and its effect on children. More recently, there have been more subtle marketing strategies with the placement of certain products in films and TV shows. Studies show that advertisements can push unhealthy behaviors in children and

adolescents. They also show that it is becoming increasingly difficult to protect them as companies market their products by exploiting the internet and social media.

(c) Advertising and Tobacco Consumptions

Children are influenced by tobacco promotions even before they understand the purpose of advertising. Adolescence is a time of vulnerability when youths must struggle to form an identity, to become independent of their parents, and to establish themselves with their peers. Tobacco advertising exploits the vulnerabilities of youths by offering tobacco as the key to the desire self image, as a badge of independence, and as the key to acceptance by their peers.

Tobacco advertising causes more children to use tobacco, it would seem necessary that children be exposed to tobacco advertising, and that this exposure occur before the onset of tobacco use. One would also expect to see some effects of advertising on children's knowledge, attitudes, or behavior concerning tobacco use. One might even see a dose – response effect in those children who are most familiar with tobacco advertising would be most likely to use tobacco.

(d) Sexual Content in Advertisements

Many advertisements these days use beautiful young women to attract buyers. This will no doubt have a seriously a negative effect on how children think. From chocolates to clothing, almost every ad seen is sexual in nature. Children then think that they need to look that the way to be accepted. Or that is how they should behave to be popular. Children both young and teenager have a negative prospective and this affects them in many different ways.

Children today have major body issues due the images they see on TV, magazines etc. They are told that they have to look a certain way to be accepted in society. If they are not slim or fair or beautiful, they are unpopular and will not make any friends. They also think that if they do not look or act sexy like the women on TV, they will not be accepted. On the other hand, so- called Pretty / Handsome look down on their counter parts based solely on their looks. There are some of the effects of the ads seen today.

The children can also become body conscious due to the ads that depict popular women / men as being slim and sexy. The fact is that no matter where one looks, they are always beautiful women / men with the perfect bodies and faces marketing products. Due to their desire to look like such women / men, children can develop eating disorders like bulimia, anorexia etc. These can be extremely dangerous and even caused death in some cases.

III. POSITIVE EFFECTS

(a) Advertising makes the kids aware of the new products available in the market. It increases their knowledge about the latest innovation in the field of technology.

(b) Convincing advertisements, which centre around healthy food products, can help improve the diet of a child, if they are attractive enough.

(c) Certain advertisements, with strong messages motivate the kids in chasing their future prospects such as becoming a Doctor, Scientist or an Engineer. They generate the passion in children, regarding their future and make them realize the importance of education.

(d) Some advertisements inculcate good habits in children, as all the toothpaste companies create strong awareness regarding dental hygiene in kids.

(e) They can be a strong source of information, certain advertisements, especially public service announcement present innovations and technological milestones that can offer a good learning opportunity to the child. Moreover, they also educate children about the new products in the market.

(f) Advertisements that present other children of a similar age engaging in activities like helping out in the house or saving can influence kids to do the same.

(h) Cautionary advertisements that reveal the consequences of alcohol and smoking can help children understand the risks associated and urge them to stay clear such products.

IV. NEGATIVE EFFECTS

(a) Advertisements encourage children to their parents to buy the products they see in the commercials, regardless of whether they need them or not and whether they are useful or not. Many through tantrums and use different tactics to force the adults to get them what they want.

(b) Children are likely to misinterpret the messages that are conveyed in commercials. Studies have shown that they also tend to focus on the negatives rather than the positive sides of the messages.

(c) Flashy commercials and ads on TV, the internet, magazines etc. create a tendency for impulse shopping.

(d) Children tend to get attracted to high end brands that advertise clothes, shoes and other products and disregard lesser known ones that are not seen in ads.

(e) Many advertisements seen today involve dangerous stunts which children try to imitate as do not understand the statutory warnings that come with the ads.

(f) With so many attractive commercials, marketing junk foods and unhealthy beverages, children's health has been adversely affected. These ads encourage unhealthy eating, which in term has lead to an increase in obesity, diabetes, heart related problems and other conditions in young children.

(g) Child advertising may impact self esteem, making them feel inferior to other children if they do not have the latest products that are seen in the commercials?

(h) Sexually suggestive ads are everywhere these days. This makes children objectify women and also allows them to think that looking or acting a certain way is the only way to make friends or be popular. These ads also make young girl's body conscious and in many cases, can cause eating disorders like bulimia, anorexia etc.

(i) With more commercials targeting children, reality and fantasy do not seem too different. This can cause a lot of confusion among children, distorting their sense of reality.

(j) Cut down on screen time, limit the amount of time that your children are allowed to watch TV or use of Computer. It is also advised, that you monitor the content that your kids are watching.

(k) Help your child to learn the difference between 'Needs' and 'Wants' and teach them to only ask for something that they need.

V. PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN

(a) The first thing recommended by expert is reducing screen time. This way, parents can reduce the number of messages that young children are exposed to. Parents are also urged to keep track of what their children see when they are given time to watch television.

(b) Also, parents should not simply refuse when their children ask for something. They should ask them why they want a particular product and where they saw or heard about it. If they answer that they saw it on television or on the internet, they should be told that advertisers want them to want it and that they are trying to sell the product to them. This can lead to further discussion about advertising and how they work on the masses.

(c) The advertising effect on children can be limited. Young children often believe what they are told by advertisements and do not have the ability to understand the difference between the TV show they are watching and advertising messages.

(d) People becoming more sexually, more and more advertisement are using sexually suggestive strategies to attract buyers. Children see these images on their TV screens, computers and magazines and it will undoubtedly have an effect on their young minds. It is important for parents to not only monitor their children's screen time, but talk to them about what they see as well. Children do not know the difference between an ad on TV and reality, so it is crucial that they understand that they see on TV is not really how people act. They have a tendency to mimic what they see and that is why parents need to be careful of what they are exposed to.

(e) The goal should be to help children to figure out the difference between the product information and the strategies used by advertisers to sell the product. To make sure that

children processes ads critically, they need to learn how to determine between the content that is commercial and non commercial and identify the persuasive intent of the advertisement.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

There is an increasing need for the parents to be more aware of the content of advertising that their children are being exposed to. Some of the suggestions are given below:

(a) Parents and family play a key role in limiting the use of television and internet. Constant monitoring and adequate reasons would also make the children more sensible in their use of these medium.

(b) Entertainment from channels like discovery, travelling and living is not as harmful as the one from Hollywood movies.

(c) Marketers may rely upon radio and newspapers more than others means of media as per the finding of this study after watching advertisement from different media consumers are under influence especially Newspapers and Radio and consumers have more faith in these media while making purchase decisions.

(d) Families should also change with the changing world and become of acceptable of the needs of the today's world.

(e) Parents who spend more time watching TV with their children agree that some of the advertised products are not good for their children. In such cases also, parents themselves need to educate their children. For that matter the parents should also be educated on that behalf.

(f) Consumers do not enjoy buying a brand that comes with a free gift. They also assess the value of the free gift. So, free gift as marketing strategy is not that useful. But rupees of schemes get favorable response. However, in comparison to contests, free gifts do well. So marketers can use these strategies to promote the products.

(g) As children grow older the parents and schools should take out time to explain to them about various experiences which are new to them such as infatuation, use of hazardous substances like alcohol etc. need to compete with others for social approval.

VII. CONCLUSION

Advertising has adverse effects on children in both positive and negative ways. Children tend to discourage that the influence of such commercials is negligible when they decide to smoke or consume alcohol. The peer pressure actually is dominant factors that drives children's such habits. The role of commercials in influencing their decision cannot be overlooked as in the same time.

Advertising gives a direct stimulus to consumer which in turn prompts the producer to produce more and better quality. Advertising makes people work harder than they otherwise would. This has had the effects of raising the aggregate level

of the economy. In the long run, advertising has probably played a major part in making people favorably disposed towards high level of consumptions and in creating new products and ideas. Thus, advertising also increases the employment levels, directly and indirectly.

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