

The impact of advertisement on children behavior marketing essay

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



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Introduction (importance of your topic)

In 21st century, people are heavily bombarded with the advertisements and other promotional activities to market their products. These market attacks are effectively planned, and enlighten with glamour as per the emotions, needs, wants, and demands of the consumers. (Jam, Akhtar, Hijazi, & Khan, 2010). Every now or then marketers are looking for the new practices to indulge consumers to promote their brand and develop brand loyalty. Nowadays marketers are creating new needs through their marketing campaigns instead of just promoting their products. This scenario has worsened the situation and has affected the consumers' behavior adversely regardless of the age. Due to the intense competition from the marketers consumers' need are manipulated and consciously or unconsciously, they are forced to behave in a certain desired manner. Now marketers are focusing and trying to attract and influence the children by designing ads that are considerably attractive for children and persuasive enough for their emotional attachment with the product. Previously children were targeted indirectly, but now marketers are succeeded to target children directly with the products so that they can insist on purchasing the specific product for their use. Advertisement to children is a widely discussed topic due to children inability to understand the purpose or intent of advertisement and unintended effects of advertisement to the children. It is widely seen as the centre of an increasingly commercialized culture. Food sector has been the most in focus and the problem of obesity is highly associated with unhealthy

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food advertisement to the children. Advertisement to the children has been affecting the children behavior such as increasing materialistic value in children, violent behavior, and parent-child conflicts. In order to prevent the children from the unintended negative effects of advertisements, many countries have made stricter legislative regulation or in few cases complete ban to all kind of advertisement towards children under a certain age.

Marketers see children as future, as well as current market. They advertise heavily in order to establish brand loyalty. Due to excessive advertisement targeted to children and its exposure to children, a change in behavior is observed. Children's behavior is manipulated by the advertisement content. Children are unable to interpret the advertisers' message prone to accept advertiser messages as truthful, accurate, and unbiased. Advertisement to children directly is considered destructive for the development of children personality. Furthermore, regulatory bodies have introduced some regulations, which intent to have strict control on the advertisement content targeted to children. However, their implication is up to minimum level to non-existent in some cases. There is need to conduct research to spot the impacts of advertisement on children and to monitor the regulatory bodies.

Background Information

Advertisement is one of the effective tools of integrated marketing communication to motivate consumers to buy the products. It also has strong linkage with entertainment also and the proliferation of media has blurred the distinguishing lines between advertisements and entertainment (Moore, 2004). Advertisements featuring products like snacks, toys,

confectionaries, cookies and fast food are specifically targeted at children, in order to motivate them to try new brands and buy more. In 1952, Mr. Potato, a toy was advertised to children first. A strong correlation has been observed between children and television advertisements, which are full of fascination and excitement. Now a day's children and adolescents are widely exposed to all kinds of advertisement through different communication sources. Young people are exposed to 40, 000 advertisements per year on television beside internet, magazine and in school. Annually the children aged between 2-7 years old and 8-12 years old, experience an average of 13, 904 and 30, 155 advertisements per years respectively whereas the number for 13-17 years old children is rounded to 28, 655 advertisements per year. In term of hours, children aged 2-7 years old face approximately 107 hour; 8-12 years old face approximately 230 hour and 13-17 years old faces approximately 217 hour of television advertisement in a year. The advertisers today are recognizing children' as a huge market for product and services and through advertising to children, their priority is to make them loyal to the products or brand at an early age so that they can become a part of their long-term profit oriented customer in future. Media violence can lead to aggressive behavior in youth. Over 1, 000 studies confirm this link. It also says that Media violence is especially damaging to young children (under age 8) because they cannot easily tell the difference between real life and fantasy. Violent images on television and in movies may seem real to young children, viewing these images can upset them. Media violence affects children by increasing their fear of becoming victims. It makes them less sensitive to violence and to victims of violence. This increases their appetite for more violence in

entertainment and in real life. Media violence often fails to show the consequences of violence. This is especially true of cartoons, toy commercials, and music videos. As a result, children learn that there is few if any repercussion for committing violent acts.

Related Definitions

Kotler, Wong, Saunders, & Armstrong (2005, p. 719) defines the advertisement as " Advertisement is a paid form of non-personal communication and promotion of ideas, goods, services by an identified sponsor." Quinn & Ruth (2002, p. 17-18) define the children advertisement " Children Advertisement is that kind of paid commercial message which is delivered to the children during their television Programs or some time delivered according to the direction of broadcaster during or after any other television program". Child's Behavior: The study will be focused specifically change in behavior of children due to the advertisement in terms of violence, submissiveness, influence on spending of family, parent-children relationship. It will be measured through children, and parent's response in survey. Cognitive ability: it is the measure of process of acquiring knowledge by using reasoning, intuition, or perception. It is assumed that cognitive ability of a child develops with the age so this will be measured through age. Cognitive ability will help the children to perceive the message in advertisement; it can affect the child's behavior positively or negatively. Authoritative parental control: it is the strong monitoring and supervision of parents to children specifically when they are exposed to advertisement. It can affect the perceived message of the advertisement. It will be measured

through children and parents response in survey. Lifestyle: it is the standard of living of children, which expose the children to advertisement content on media. It is assumed that lifestyle is associated with income level so it will be measured through income level of respondents of survey. Enhancement of knowledge of children: it is the increase in knowledge of children due to advertisement content. It will affect the child's behavior in positive manner. It will be measured through children, and parent's response in survey. Frequency of commercials: it is the number of advertisement, a child view in a day. It will affect negatively in case of violent content. It will have positive affect in case of informative content. It will be measured through children, and parent's response in survey. Endorsement of brand characters: it is the use of animated characters in the advertisement to gain the attention of children, thus increasing the sale of products. It will negatively affect parent-children relationship, and it will increase the influence of children on family purchase. It will be measured through children, and parent's response in survey. Entertainment aspect of advertisement: It is interest and involvement level of children in the advertisement, which enables them to develop bond and associate with it. It will be measured through children, and parent's response in survey.

Problem Development

Advertisement to children is a very sensitive issue and children are believed to be more skeptical and vulnerable to the marketing activities due to their vulnerability to understand and differentiate things than the adults. Children from all over the world have different cognitive ability, but the general

censuses is that children understanding of advertisement grows with age and it is very tough for a younger children to understand advertisement completely. Children are unable to distinguish between the advertisement and program content due to their lack of cognitive ability. Moreover, children also have difficulty to interpret the advertiser's message. As television has a massive reach to a greater number of audiences, where children are one of them, the advertiser try to motivate children to the products or brands from the earlier age so that the long-term relationship can be build. The advertisements are bombard repeatedly so that children make the purchase of particular product. Children are most vulnerable to the marketing activities and seem to be attracted towards anything fantasies their world regardless of their impacts on them. The study will focus on how the advertisements have affected the children.

Literature Review

The literature review will set a solid foundation for further research on the defined research objective by studying the research work of different authors on related topics. It will ensure that no important variable that in the past advertisement had caused an impact on child's behavior is ignored. The aim of this literature review is to identify the indicators of children's behavior that had been caused by advertisement. Recently, children are targeted directly for the advertisement of children related products, where previously parents were advertised directly, and children indirectly (Wilcox, et al., 2004; Paine, Brenkert, Wesisskoff, & Kimmel, 1984). Products advertised were grouped into six categories that included toys, cereals/ breakfast foods, sugared

snacks/drinks, fast foods, healthy food/drinks, and other. (The Nature of Advertising to Children, 2008) Advertising is not seen as anything more than fun and entertainment and there is a consensus that children under the age of 5 years do not understand the intent of advertising. (Young, 2010) As children mature, they develop more information- processing skills Children younger than eight are not capable of information processing strategies. 8-12-yearolds can process the information, but only with the help of cues. At the other extreme, over 12 years old spontaneously respond to information storage and retrieval strategies. They acknowledge that advertising does not always tell the truth and are more likely to express skeptical views toward advertising. (Roedder, September 1981; Moore & Lutz, June 2000; Young, 2010) The widespread use of television has led to the increase in commercial appeals to children, which grew exponentially with the advent of cable television. It is estimated that advertisers spend more than \$12 billion per year to reach the youth market and that children view more than 40,000 commercials each year. Estimates suggest that children spend an average of 4 hours per day watching television (S. Moore, 2004) . A recent study found that a majority of all U. S. children have televisions in their bedrooms and have unsupervised access to computers. Hence, children that view advertising content in the absence of parental monitoring and supervision are more prone to the harmful change in behavior (Wilcox, et al., 2004). S. Moore, 2004 relates to the U. S. Department of Education, 2003 that approximately 88% of children between 5 and 14 years old use computers, and 53% have access to the Internet. Advertisers know that their efforts influence child audiences. Product preference develops with repeated

exposures to commercial message. (Wilcox, et al., 2004) Paine, Brenkert, Weisskoff, & Kimmel, 1984 states that children alone cannot be classified as consumer, as they do not make purchase from their own money, their parents fund the purchase and help them in taking decisions. S. Moore, 2004 referred to McNeal, 1998, recent estimates suggest that children account for approximately \$24 billion in direct spending each year, and influence an additional \$500 billion in family purchases. Children's buying behavior is influenced by advertising, however parental control, and peer pressure also counts. Entertainment aspect and endorsements by brand icons definitely play a role in the children's buying decision process. Furthermore, children cognitive ability develops with the age, which helps them to interpret the commercial message.(Priya, Baisya, & Sharma, 2009)Young children develop affection with heavily promoted product characters appearing on television. (Paine, Brenkert, Weisskoff, & Kimmel, 1984) Advertisers use animated characters to promote their products. Animated characters grab the attention of young children even preschoolers could recognize the frequently seen characters and they may relate to it. Three to six year old could relate the character to the socially taboo products. They may like the character, but dislike the product. Preferences are tenuous at best in young children, and are often not related to product recognition and affect because deliberate processing and communication of preference, intention, and choice requires cognitive abilities that may not be present in children until they are school age. The lack of age differences between the two- to three-year- olds and the four- to five-year-olds supports the notion that these abilities probably do not develop until a later age.(Neeley & Schumann, 2004)There are three critical

points in the process by which children's television advertising works: (1) the point at which the child develops a desire for the advertised product; (2) the point at which the child requests the product; and (3) the point at which the parent purchases the product. (Paine, Brenkert, Weisskoff, & Kimmel, 1984) Every purchase decision parent's face requires assessment from several points of view: from the perspective of the family budget, other comparable products, and the interests and needs of various family members. However, when a child initiates a consumer decision by making a request, a new factor is introduced. It increases the number of requests to which they must respond, and it alters the factors relevant to their purchase decisions (Gorn & Goldberg, 1977). Parents are forced to buy the products for their children, which they cannot afford even. Apart from advertisement there are other factors involved which could persuade children especially from low income families to buy the product, however exposure to commercials do have an impact. TV advertising has some unintended consequences for child-viewers (Goldberg & Gorn, 1978) . Buijzen & Valkenburg, (2003) agrees with Williams & Burns, 2000 that advertising exposure may cause to become materialistic as they tend to desire for the advertised products. Younger children more often come into conflict with their parents about advertised products than older children do young children quite often ask, whine, and show anger to persuade their parents. Older children, in contrast, tend to use more sophisticated persuasion techniques, such as negotiation, flattery, and white lies. In case the parents deny the children request, or the advertised product is not up to the expectation then it may cause unhappiness. (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2003)

(Goldberg & Gorn, 1978) Psychologists may assist parents and older children to consider the influence of advertising in their lives more seriously and to take actions protecting them from unwanted commercial influence (Wilcox, et al., 2004) Current voluntary guidelines for children's advertising prohibit advertisers from explicitly instructing children to request that their parents buy the advertised product. (Paine, Brenkert, Weisskoff, & Kimmel, 1984)Villani & M. D. 2001 gave the historical analysis of Dietz and Strasburger's review (1991) which demonstrated the multiple effects of television on child and adolescent cognition and behavior; the topics ranging from cognitive development, to obesity, to aggressive behavior and violence, drug use, suicide, sexual activity. According to the National Television Violence Study 1994-1997, it was estimated that young people view 10, 000 acts of violence per year, with 61% of shows containing violence of some kind. The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) has recently issued a detailed report arguing that growing health problems such as childhood obesity and poor diets can be linked to the advertising of high fat, high sugar foods aimed at this young audience (Center for Science in the Public Interest, 2003). Food advertising on television dominated by breakfast cereals, confectionary, savory snacks, soft drinks, and fast-food restaurants; advertising for staples and fresh foods is in decline. It is unethical to conduct an experiment and cause the obesity deliberately among the children. (Livingstone, 2005)Children must acquire at least two key information-processing skills in order to evaluate the advertisement. First, they must be able to distinguish between commercial and non-commercial content. Second, they must be able to recognize advertising's persuasive intent and

use this knowledge to interpret selling messages television commercials have become increasingly focused on entertainment and image creation. Critics assert that it is unfair to advertise to children, as they lack the cognitive skills and life experiences needed to resist persuasive claims. Supporters, on the other hand, have argued that children's vulnerabilities are often overstated and that by providing product information advertising helps parents and children to make more informed choices. (S. Moore, 2004) From literature review, the important factors effecting child's behavior through advertisement were identified such as endorsement of brand characters, frequency of commercials, enhancement of knowledge of children, entertainment aspect of advertisement. All these variables affect child's behavior etc. Moreover, it will be helpful in designing a sound research methodology and developing a good theoretical framework.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Authoritative parental control
Endorsement of brand characters
Intervening Variable
Lifestyle
Frequency of commercials
Child's Behavior
Enhancement of knowledge of children
Cognitive ability
Entertainment aspect of advertisement

Independent variable Moderating Variable Dependent Variable

Problem Definition

The Impact of Advertisement on Children Behavior in Pakistan.

Statement of Research Objectives

Ho: There is a significance difference among the children, with regard to their cognitive ability to interpret the advertiser's message
H1: There is no significant difference among the children, with regard to their cognitive ability to interpret the advertiser's message
Ho: There is a significant correlation between entertainment aspect of commercials and the children's buying behavior
H1: There is no significant correlation between entertainment aspect of commercials and the children's buying behavior
Ho: There is a significant relationship between frequency of commercials and the change in child's behavior
H1: There is no significant relationship between frequency of commercials and the change in child's behavior
Ho: Parent-Children relationship has been affected by the advertisement content and the children programs
H1: Parent-Children relationship has not affected by the advertisement content and the children programs
Ho: Monitoring the children when they are exposed to advertisement content has affected the child's behavior
H1: Monitoring the children when they are exposed to advertisement content has not affected the child's behavior

Elements of Research Design

Research type

The nature of the study is hypothesis testing as hypothesis formation is done to find out the nature of which variable, which influence the children behavior. The type of research carried out for this paper will be qualitative research. Qualitative research is applied to get information and understanding about behaviors and characteristic of children by employing

unbiased and flexible data collection method and statistical tool. The study will be based on measuring the sample on the subject area, which is ' the impact of advertisement on children behavior'. The fundamental aim is to recognize the cause and effect relationship between dependent variable and independent variables affecting it. Study setting of the research will be artificial and the study is a lab experiment with moderate interference, as the number of children will be selected to watch the children program with the advertisements, to account the change in children behavior specifically. The unit of analysis is individual, as the children will be observed individually for the change in behavior. Then the aim of the research will be to find out the different factors that affect child's behavior when there is exposure to television.

Data type and research period

Both primary and secondary data is collected for the purpose to find out the relationship among the variables. However, factors affecting dependent variable will be analyzed by using primary data mainly. Primary data will be collected from carrying out survey questionnaires from children and interview from parents; while secondary data will be gathered through various internet resources to be used for variable identification and literature review. Sample size will be 50 parents and 100 children. Secondary data collection was longitudinal; however, primary data collection was cross-sectional. Effect of a factor on child's behavior was observed in some secondary sources across the countries and in some sources across different

periods. Reference period of research has started from the month of September 2012 until the April 2013.

Sources of data

The primary data will be collected from different schools of Pakistan through survey questionnaires and interviews from parents of young children. On the other hand, secondary data sources used are academics online journals such as JStor, and ScienceDirect. Population, Working population and planned sample
The population of this research is all the children under twelve years and their parents in Pakistan and the working population is all the children studying in the grade six in different schools of Pakistan and the parents of the children. Stratified sampling will be done to select the sample of population. The sample for this paper will be 50 girls and, 50 boys students of Pakistan. They will be selected randomly for filling the survey questionnaires. Inferential statistics will be used as the values measured in a sample to estimate the values that would be measured in a population. There will be a degree of uncertainty in it. Sample will be carefully selected to add reliability to it. Moreover, there could be random error and systematic error. Respondent error could be acquiescence bias, interviewer bias, and administrative errors.

Techniques

After collecting the required data from survey questionnaires, regression analysis will be used to summaries and analyze the collected data. The extent of correlation between dependent and independent variable and the

most influencing factors affecting the child's behavior through advertisement in Pakistan will be identified.

Data analysis

The statistical package Minitab and stats graphics will be used to analyze the data. Regression will be conducted to check the relationship between the variable. Graphs and tables would be used to represent the results. The results generated from the statistical software will be interpreted for analysis.

Expected Nature of Findings

This study expects to find that children below 12 years are unable to interpret the advertisement content. Some children are unable to distinguish between children program and advertisement even. When children view advertisements without any supervision, manipulation in their behavior is evident. This study also expects to find that excessive exposure to advertisement has affected the parent-children relationship adversely. Moreover, the study anticipates that entertainment aspect and the endorsement of animated characters have caused to develop interest of children in advertisement.

Expected Limitations & Delimitations

This research will only study the change in behavior of children under 12 years, who belong to SEC A, and SEC B. The current research will only focus on the advertisement's effect on children through television advertisement. The effect of other mediums such as print media, direct marketing etc. will

not be dealt in the current research report. During an experiment test, there will be no control experiment; and experiment will be conducted once only. Moreover, there is geographical limitation; research will be conducted in Lahore area only. Sample size will be 100 only such small sample can influence the data reliability. Furthermore, there is time constraint.