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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# IMPACT OF TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS ON CHILDREN WITH REFERENCE TO BUYING HABIT OF CHOCOLATE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

Advertisement is the predominant Promotional Mix Variable which is being used in every industry to get noticed by their prospective customer, and thereby turning them into life time consumers. These advertisements are also playing their part in shaping the lifestyle of the individuals at large, whether elders, teenagers or children. Especially, these advertisements are influencing the lifestyle of the children in much greater fashion, both in righteous and unrighteous direction. The main objective of this study is to find out, how children are influenced by the television advertisements. The focus of the study is on effect of television advertisements on children with reference to different chocolate brands and their advertisements, to measure the impact of advertisement of chocolate on children, to study the reasons of preference of chocolate. An attempt has been made to know the children's awareness about chocolate brands and preference to buy. On random basis 100 children, in the age group of 5 - 10, and 50 parents are interviewed with the help of interview schedule and data thus collected is presented in the form of pie charts. Interpretations are also derived according to objective of the study.

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## INTRODUCTION

Science & Technology is playing phenomenal role in the advancement of human race. Eventually, science brought lot of gifts to mankind; one such is mass-media. This mass-media includes Newspapers, Periodicals, Television, and Radio etc. Of all these, Television is playing influential role in an individual life. Advertisements are used by every industry to get noticed by their prospective customer, and thereby turning them into consumers. And these advertisements are also playing their part in shaping the lifestyle of the individuals at large, whether elders, teenagers or children. Especially, these advertisements are influencing the lifestyle of the children in much greater fashion, both in righteous and unrighteous direction. The degree of impact of advertising on adults may be of some concern but the outcome on children is indeed devastating. Advertisers of children's television used to appeal to the parents earlier but now they appeal directly to children who do not have the emotional or cognitive tools to evaluate what's being sold to them. Television is no more just a source of entertainment for children.

They showcase the must haves for a kid making them a consumer even before they have reached the age of three. Small kids even below the age of three are found to be dominating the purchase decision, which is again the result of increasing influence of advertisements. Today, when children accompany their parents to super markets or shopping malls, they have their own shopping lists ready, sometimes, of the products yet to arrive in the market. Thus the influence of the media on the psychosocial development of children is profound. Using the powerful medium of television commercials many companies are seeking to attract the large and powerful segment of the children into their folds. This research paper majorly deals with understanding the children's likes and dislikes and their parents' role in the decision making and the influence of advertising on the buying habit of chocolate. The data collection was done using on-the-spot sampling in the form of personal interview. The facts and findings analyzed are presented in the form of pie charts for ease of understanding.

### Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to make generalization of children's buying behavior towards the purchase of chocolates and impact of television advertisement on their buying habits. This study is a step toward generalizing the buying habit of

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chocolate by children pertaining to following major set of objectives:

- To know the buying behavior of children towards different brands of chocolates.
- To know the reason for preferences to buy different chocolate brands.
- To know the children's awareness about different chocolate brands and their advertisements
- Impact of advertisement on buying behaviour of children towards different brands of chocolates.

## Review of Literature

Children today are exposed to all types of advertisements on the various media like the television, print media and internet among which Television is the most influencing media in case of children (Effect of Advertisements on Children). Children over the span of ages 2-11 years, they develop consumption motives and values as they are exposed to commercial activities; they develop knowledge about advertising, products, brands, pricing, and shopping; and they begin to develop strategies for purchase requests and negotiation. Before a certain age, children lack the defences, or skills, to discriminate commercial from relationship from television advertising to adiposity (Institute of Medicine, 2006), a review of previous research could significantly find no study that examined the relation between children's understanding of advertisements' persuasive intent and the impact of advertising; this relation has been generally taken for granted without any kind of scientific research supporting it as specially in case of confectionary products in India.

Indian confectionary players heavily spend on advertisement of their confectionary products (chocolate brands). As a result of that industry observed a decline in the share of non-branded products. Children today are extremely aware of the various brands in the market and are conscious of the products they use or consume. They pick and choose carefully according to their needs, style, preferences etc. They also exercise a lot of independence in decision-making and influence the family buying behaviour. Today's kids are well informed, better than their parents. This is because virtually from birth today's children are exposed to TV commercials, banner ads, billboards, logos and product promotions (Singh & Ram, 2010).

A major review of the field, conducted by Hastings et al (2003) for the Food Standards Agency, has focused academic, policy and public attention on the role that food promotion, particularly television advertising, plays in influencing children's food choices, defined in terms of food knowledge, preferences and behaviour. Children's ages are also significant to understand the advertisement. Children's comprehension of television advertising and its persuasive intent increases with age, because of greater cognitive maturity and increased experience with the medium. Even a majority of 5-8 years old have only a low awareness of what a commercial really is; and although three quarters of 9-12 year old children may demonstrate a medium a medium level of awareness (eg. Commercials tell you what to buy) (Ward & Wackman in

Evra, 1995). However, it is possible to say that even though they are very young to understand, the most important thing is the advertisements impact on children. As many authors states, there are many television advertisements based on children and it is faced that children urge their parents to purchase what they want without needing. For a whole generation of new age children, television is as influential as a parent or a teacher (Panwar, 2006). According to Wiman (1986), children who talk with their parents more frequently about TV advertising and commercials make more purchase requests. Children considered television to be one of life's necessities. Studies commissioned by cable television networks in USA, found that an average of 43 percent of total purchases made by parents were influenced by children (Cooper in Caruana, and Vassallo, 2003). Exposure to it was usually extensive – before school, after school, during homework, at weekends, with or without friends (Hanley, 2000). Marketers understand this fact very well. With the growing influence of media on children, an increasingly large number of advertisements are today directed to them (Panwar, Agnihotri, 2006).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Primary data is collected from the respondents with the help of interview schedule. It was mainly directed towards investigation of the various impacts the advertising has on the children's minds & how advertisements shape their buying habit of chocolate. The responses were collected from 100 children and 50 parents, who were interviewed as per the schedule at different places of purchase. Hence an on-the-spot sampling technique was decided, which would enable using personal judgment to conveniently approach the parents and children and save time also.

### Analysis and Interpretation

The above pie chart shows about the impact of advertisements of chocolates upon children. 78% parents responded that the impact is positive and only 22% responded that the impact is negative. Thus, Majority of the children have tried to purchase that product which they have shown in the advertisement. This shows that how children are influenced by the advertisements of confectionary products (chocolates) after watching advertisements of those products and this may affect to those families in which source of income is not that much strong. The above chart 2 shows that, when asked about the circumstances in which parents grant the purchase demands of children initiated from advertisements, 32% of the parents

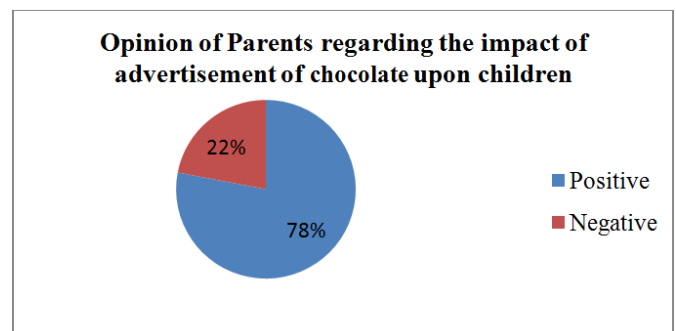


Chart 1

responded that they allow the purchase because the product is healthy, 26% allow as the product is affordable, 14% allow as there is some innovative content, 18% parents allow as it is tasty, to get rid of the demand of the children, 10% parents allowed the purchase for no specific reason, which is clearly depicted in chart 2. When investigated what really influence children to decide their preferences towards different chocolates, we have found that 35% children prefer to eat different flavour chocolates, after seeing advertisement. They insist their parents to purchase that product for them. 26% children prefer to eat just because their friends have suggested or commented about it; most of them were again in the category who consumed that item after seeing the advertisement.

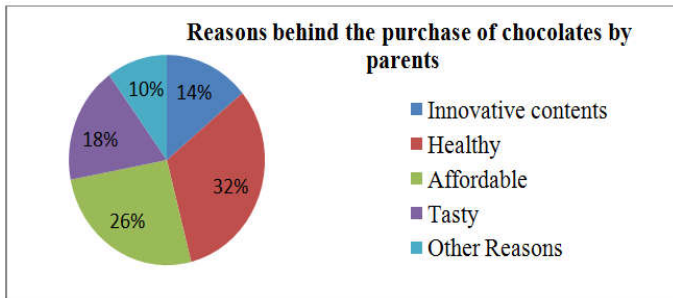


Chart 2

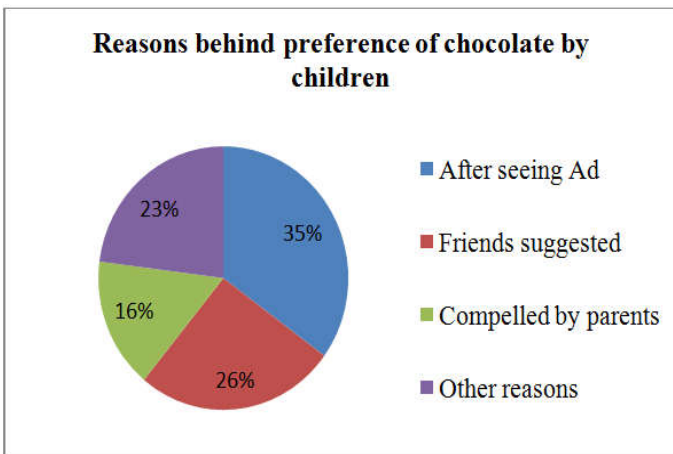


Chart 3

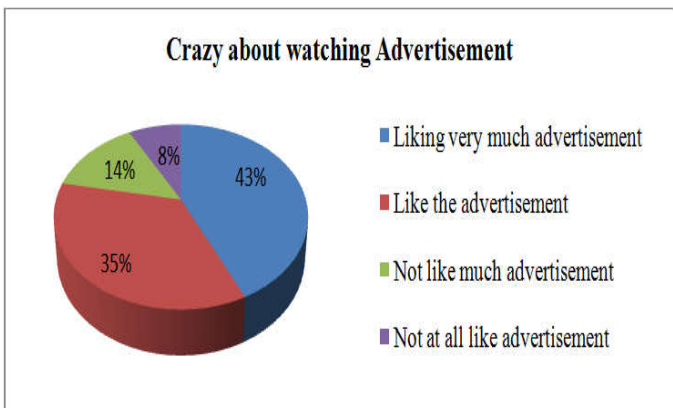


Chart 4

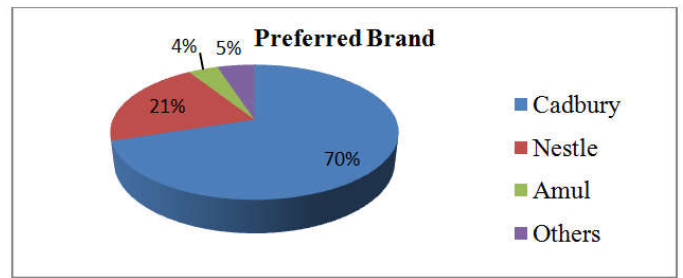


Chart 5

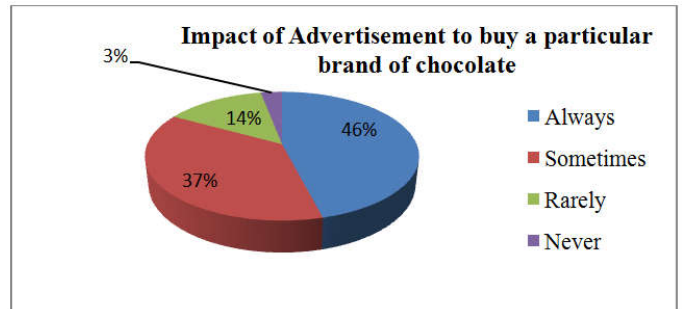


Chart 6

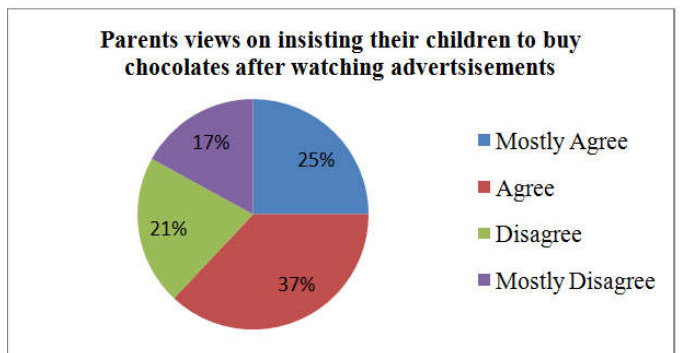


Chart 7

16% children prefer to consume chocolate as it is healthy and compelled by their parents. 23% children prefer to buy chocolates for other reasons, which includes for getting free tattoo and other promotional things. It also includes just because his/her favourite celebrity is associated with the advertisement of that product. In order to know the children's awareness and preference for buying different chocolate brand they have been asked to rank the liking of advertisement of chocolate is concerned. They have been asked respond to five point scale - Crazy about advertisement, like very much, like the advertisement, not like much and not at all like advertisement. In the above chart 4 depicts the impact of advertisement on children's buying habit of chocolate. 43% of children likes very much for watching advertisement to know about the different chocolate brands available in the market. 35% children responded that they like the advertisement because of to see their favourite brand of chocolate is associates by their favourite celebrity. Whereas, 14% children comments that they do not like much to watch advertisement in television. Their views were that advertised products are not always well; sometimes it becomes hazardous to health. So advertised brand of chocolate always not affects on their

buying habit. Only 8% children comments that they do not like advertisement at all. So there is no relationship between advertisement and their buying behaviour of chocolate. Chart 5 presents the most preferred brand of chocolate by children. In the undertaken study it was found that Cadbury is the most favored brand with 70% of share as against 21% of Nestle, 4% & 5% respectively for Amul and miscellaneous ones. It has been asked to children that, whether they are preferred a particular brand of chocolate after watching the advertisement. It has been given to children to rank their views with scale never, rarely, sometimes, always. The above pie chart shows that advertisements of chocolates sometimes affect the purchase decision of children.

In our survey we have found that there are 46% children preferred to buy a particular brand of chocolate always, whereas 37% of children sometimes buy a particular brand of chocolate. It is analyzed that 14% of children rarely purchases a particular brand of chocolate. Only 3% children never buy a particular brand of chocolate after watching advertisement. This shows that purchase decision of children is sometimes influenced after watching advertisements of chocolates. The above pie chart shows that parents become agree when their child insists them to purchase any brand of chocolate after watching its advertisements. In our survey we have found that there are 37% parents who replied that generally they do agree when their child insists them to purchase any brand of chocolate after watching advertisements. There are 25% parents who replied that they mostly agree when their child insists them to purchase any brand of chocolate after watching its advertisements. Similarly, 21% parents are disagree on buying of chocolate after insisting their children. Only 17% parents are mostly disagree to purchase chocolate even if their children insist them after watching advertisements.

### Conclusion

All the children's purchase decisions are generally influenced by the advertisements shown all over the media, billboards and magazines. Especially confectionary products (Chocolates) are concerned they do not care price of which they want to buy. Also they do not care whether these products are healthy for them or not. While they are shopping, the first thing comes in their mind is to purchase the advertised products. In this situation, the advertising has a stronger effect on younger children.

As far as confectionary products are concerned, children are influenced more by television advertisements than by the other medium of advertising. In many cases this also poses huge problems to the parents with budget constrains to satisfy their children's needs resulting in emotional distress among them. Thus, as far as advertisements of confectionary products (chocolate) are concerned, advertisements should be shown with their pros and cons. To some extent children have limited understanding so advertisers should not directly persuade children to buy the product which is shown in the advertisement. It is the duty of parents to see what their children are watching on television and if they are highly influenced by the advertisements especially of confectionary products then parents should try to explain them what are the pros and cons of that product by using it. The role of parents and marketer plays crucial role in preventing the anti-health ads influencing the children's buying habit of chocolate. Though advertisement is integral part of the industry which wants its product to be reached to the children, they should not forget that it's their social responsibility to take care of the next generation of the country which is being targeted tactfully to earn profits. So marketers should carefully design its marketing strategies in case of children oriented products. Parents should make the kids more aware of the surroundings so that they start taking proper and logical decision.

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