

Parent's attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products: An empirical study in Goa.

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Abstract:

Background: Parents are concerned about the influence of advertising on children, their T.V viewing habits and their consumption of advertised products. They want to protect their children from the undesirable effects of advertising. As a result, they exert a lot of control on the T.V viewing behaviour of their children and also consumption of advertised products.

Aim: The aim of this study has been to find out parents attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products and how they have been able to control their children's behaviour in this respect.

Methodology: Data has been gathered from urban and rural areas of Goa during the period from August 2013 to April 2014. Parents of children in the age group of 6-12 years were approached through the schools. They were told to take the questionnaire home and get it filled by the parent who spent maximum time with them. Parent's attitude was measured through parental advertising mediation scale developed by Young, De Bruin and Eagle (2003) and partially by Walsh, Laczniaak and Carlson (1998).

Findings: The results of the present study show that rural parents are more concerned about the influence of advertising on their children's T.V viewing habits and consumption of advertised products and exercise strict control and try to avoid conflicts that may occur due to inability to satisfy their children's demands.

Conclusion: Parents in general are concerned about their children's T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products and undertake various measures to control their children's T.V viewing and consumption behaviour like controlling programs viewed by children, monitoring T.V viewing and encouraging other activities like playing instead of T.V watching.

Originality: Parental attitude on advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products has been dealt with in various literatures but there is hardly any study conducted in the state of Goa. The current study goes into this aspect and investigates the situation that exists in urban and rural areas in Goa.

Keywords: Advertising, advertised products, children, parents, television.

Introduction

India has been characterised by joint and extended families (Webster 2000) but rapid urbanisation has led to development of nuclear families. Parents in India are found to be authoritarian in their style of parenting (Jambunathan and Counselman, 2002; Rose et al, 2003) T.V viewing by children is moreover controlled by Indian parent's (Singh and Kaur, 2012) but they put fewer restrictions on T.V viewing by children (Rose et al., 2003).

It has been found that the negative impact of exposure to ads can be reduced if parents discuss the content of programs with their children (Wiman, 1983., Bijmolt et al., 1998; Valkenburg et al., 1999; Buijzen and Valkenburg, 2003, 2005). Frequent denials to purchase what children demand may at times result into parent-child conflict. Therefore it is important for parents to undertake mediation so as to reduce children's exposure to food advertisements.

Literature Review

Previous research has found that a large number of ads are shown when children view T.V the most (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004, George 2003). Out of these a large proportion of ads comprise unhealthy foods (Kotz and Story 1994; Byrd-Bredbenner and Grasso 1999). In India as children watch a number of ads (George, 2003) they are exposed to large number of commercials for food and this in turn increases propensity for advertised food consumption (Miryala, 2011).

Buijzen and Valkenburg (2005) studied the effects of different types of mediation of T.V advertising on purchase requests and parent-child conflict. It was found that active mediation was more stronger in reducing advertising effects than restrictive mediation (Wiman 1983 and Bijmolt et al. 1998).

Buijzen (2009) in his study on parents of 4-12 year old children in Netherlands found that active mediation was more effective in reducing advertising effects than restrictive mediation in younger (4-8 year old) as well as older children (9-12 year old). It was found that with open discussion and control parents can reduce impact of food advertising on children.

Scope of the study

The Study explores parents attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products in urban and rural areas of Goa and the time frame for this study is from August 2013 to April 2014. Samples of 1000 parents were taken through random sampling method.

Objectives of the study:

This research was conducted with a view to study parents attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products.

To achieve the above objective the following hypothesis were framed:

Hypothesis:

H01: There is no significant difference in parent's attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products in urban and rural areas of Goa.

H02: There is a significant difference in parent's attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products in urban and rural areas of Goa.

Research methodology

This research deals with findings of a survey undertaken on parent's of 6-12 year old children from various schools selected randomly from urban and rural areas of Goa on issues related to advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products by children. Sample consisted of 1000 children in the age group of 6-12 years and one of their parent selected randomly.

The questionnaire included items developed from a wide range of sources especially criticisms that were quite often expressed in literature that are very much related to advertising and directed at children. The questionnaire was first pre-tested on parents using convenience sampling and then given to parents from different schools. Questionnaires were sent through children to their parents explaining the purpose and intention of the survey. The respondents were told to rate the items on a 5 point likert scale. The likert scale used for the study is strongly disagree -1, disagree- 2, neutral- 3, agree- 4 and strongly agree- 5. Data gathered was classified on the basis of area (urban and rural) and analysed using Mannwhitney test.

Sample profile

In the sample, parents from all educational levels were represented: In case of fathers 30% were SSC, 19% were HSSC, 11% were diploma, 19% were graduates and 7% were post graduates. In case of mother's 26.5% were SSC, 20% were HSSC, 24% were graduates and 7% were post graduates. On the occupation front 68% of the fathers were in service sector, 30.1% in business and 2.3% in agriculture while in case of mother's 24% were in service sector, 5.8% in business, .4% in agriculture and 70.2% were housewives.

The annual income ranged from Rs. 60,000 to Rs.10 lakhs. 52% parents came from nuclear families, 38% from joint families and 10% from extended families.

Tools for the analysis: Mean, Standard deviation and Mannwhitney test.

Result and discussion

The questionnaire used in the study contained a battery of statements used to measure parents attitude towards advertising, TV viewing and consumption of advertised products. Statements A1-A8 measure parental attitude towards advertisements, statements B1-B4 measure children's capacity to understand advertisements, statement C1-C6 measure children's behaviour regarding advertisements, statements D1-D2 measure regulation of advertising to children, statements E1-E4 measure conflict, statements F1-

F5 measures food advertisements, statements G1-G3 measures influence of advertisement on children, statement H1-H9 measure parental concern with child nutrition, statement I1-I12 measure parental restrictive mediation. The responses were drawn on a 5 point scale (strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly disagree). These statements were based on the research undertaken by Young, De Bruin and Eagle (2003) and partially by Walsh, Lacznia and Carlson (1988). The statements along with p values are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Area wise distribution of parent's attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products using Mannwhitney test

St. no.	Statements	Area	Number of respondents	Mean	S.D	Mean(IQR)	Mannwhitney test z value	p value
A1	Advertisement is a valuable source of information for consumers	urban	500	3.76	1.03	4	2.94	.003*
		rural	500	3.94	.94	4		
A2	Children's are exposed to too many advertisement messages on T.V	urban	500	3.91	.86	4	.43	.670
		rural	500	3.86	.94	4		
A3	Advertisements are generally misleading	urban	500	3.51	.99	4	1.23	.217
		rural	500	3.56	1.06	4		
A4	T.V ads contributes to children's understanding of the world around them	urban	500	3.52	1.02	4	.26	.792
		rural	500	3.53	1.04	4		
A5	T.V ads to children are full of tricks & deceptions	urban	500	3.70	.97	4	.64	.523
		rural	500	3.72	1.02	4		
A6	Advertisements do not always tell the truth	urban	500	4.06	.91	4	.12	.902
		rural	500	4.05	.96	4		
A7	Purpose of ads is to sell products	urban	500	4.32	.79	4	.08	.935
		rural	500	4.33	.75	4		
A8	Ad creates awareness of new products that have arrived in the market	urban	500	4.11	.81	4	.70	.486
		rural	500	4.15	.78	4		
	Parents attitude towards advertisements	urban	500	3.86	.47	3.8	1.19	.235
		rural	500	3.89	.49	3.9		
B1	Children are more influenced by ads than grown up people	urban	500	4.01	.90	4	.25	.804
		rural	500	4.01	.94	4		
B2	Children aged between 10-12	urban	500	3.73	.92	4	.59	.558

	understand advertising's communication intent							
		rural	500	3.76	.92	4		
B3	Children are able to distinguish between programmes & ads	urban	500	3.94	.91	4	.25	.802
		rural	500	3.93	.89	4		
B4	By age of 5 children acquire ability to differentiate between commercials & programmes but did not know the intent	urban	500	3.57	1.04	4	.09	.932
		rural	500	3.59	1.01	4		
	Children's capacity to understand advertisements	urban	500	3.81	.62	4	.32	.749
		rural	500	3.86	.89	4		
C1	T.V advertising to children encourages them to desire products they don't really need	urban	500	3.94	.91	4	.31	.758
		rural	500	3.95	.94	4		
C2	Children usually look for advertised products	urban	500	3.75	.96	4	1.10	.272
		rural	500	3.83	.90	4		
C3	Children could recollect advertised products more quickly & demanded them	urban	500	3.76	1.02	4	.18	.858
		rural	500	3.82	1.64	4		
St. no.	Statements	Area	Number of respondents	Mean	S.D	Mean(IQR)	Mannwhitney test z value	p value
C4	T.V advertising to children encourages them to put pressure on their parents to buy goods	urban	500	3.75	1.09	4	.51	.608
		rural	500	3.78	1.09	4		
C5	Children demanded products endorsed by celebrities	urban	500	3.40	1.13	4	1.78	.075
		rural	500	3.27	1.14	4		
C6	Children get disappointed on not being able to buy new advertised products	urban	500	3.69	1.02	4	.21	.832
		rural	500	3.66	1.08	4		
	Children's behaviour regarding advertisements	urban	500	3.74	.81	3.8	.51	.612
		rural	500	3.72	.69	3.8		
D1	T.V advertising to children should be banned	urban	500	3.23	1.07	3	1.38	.168
		rural	500	3.32	1.16	3		
D2	T.V advertising to children less than 12 years should be restricted	urban	500	3.43	1.08	4	1.11	.267
		rural	500	3.49	1.15	4		
	Regulation of advertising to	urban	500	3.33	.95	3.5	1.41	.159

	children							
		rural	500	3.41	1.03	3.5		
E1	T.V advertising is an important cause of my children pestering me for advertised products	urban	500	3.38	1.09	4	.00	.997
		rural	500	3.37	1.14	4		
E2	T.V advertising encourages my children to want products they don't need	urban	500	3.59	1.07	4	.10	.918
		rural	500	3.58	1.12	4		
E3	T.V advertising leads to family conflict	urban	500	2.96	1.10	3	2.06	.039*
		rural	500	3.11	1.15	3		
E4	Children argue when request for advertised product is denied	urban	500	3.45	1.11	4	.53	.596
		rural	500	3.42	1.11	4		
	Conflict	urban	500	3.34	.81	3.5	.67	.503
		rural	500	3.37	.84	3.5		
F1	There are too many additives in food products advertised in T.V progr. directed at children	urban	500	3.86	.89	4	1.97	.049*
		rural	500	3.96	.89	4		
F2	All advertised foods are not fit to be consumed	urban	500	3.82	1.03	4	.50	.615
		rural	500	3.79	1.02	4		
F3	Advertisement depicts food products as better than they really are	urban	500	3.68	1.07	4	.24	.809
		rural	500	3.68	1.05	4		
F4	Food advertisements influence children's eating habits	urban	500	3.84	.97	4	.62	.536
		rural	500	3.91	.86	4		
F5	Food ads usually shown on T.V were for breakfast cereals, confectionery & used more animation ,humour & promotion	urban	500	3.75	.90	4	.03	.979
		rural	500	3.74	.93	4		
	Food advertisement	Urban	500	3.81	.70	3.8	.56	.573
St. no.	Statements	Area	Number of respondents	Mean	S.D	Mean(IQR)	Mannwhitney test z value	p value
		rural	500	3.82	.58	3.8		
G1	Children are influenced by ads in children's programmes	urban	500	4.01	.84	4	1.23	.220
		rural	500	3.94	.88	4		
G2	Children are influenced by ads in other programmes (adult programmes).	urban	500	3.45	1.05	4	.21	.837
		rural	500	3.44	1.04	4		

G3	Children below 8 years get easily influenced by T.V commercials	urban	500	3.86	.97	4	.46	.648
		rural	500	3.86	.93	4		
	Influence of advertising on children	urban	500	3.77	.67	4	.45	.649
		rural	500	3.75	.69	3.6		
H1	I am concerned about getting my children to eat good food	urban	500	4.25	.91	4	.71	.476
		rural	500	4.25	.85	4		
H2	Children should be allowed to eat whatever they want	urban	500	2.30	1.20	2	.21	.832
		rural	500	2.31	1.24	2		
H3	Children like to eat whatever they want	urban	500	2.77	1.25	2	.36	.719
		rural	500	2.74	1.25	2		
H4	Children like to eat & drink while watching T.V	urban	500	3.78	1.10	4	.67	.505
		rural	500	3.72	1.14	4		
H5	Advertised food are generally not good for health	urban	500	3.92	1.05	4	.07	.946
		rural	500	3.92	1.07	4		
H6	Consumption of food in front of T.V has brought about unhealthy food habits in children	urban	500	4.06	.94	4	.05	.958
		rural	500	4.08	.90	4		
H7	Excessive intake of fast food results into obesity	urban	500	4.12	.89	4	.56	.574
		rural	500	4.09	.92	4		
H8	Some advertised food products create health problems	urban	500	4.07	.87	4	.07	.946
		rural	500	4.06	.91	4		
H9	Children eating too much of advertised food develop more body weight	urban	500	3.90	1.08	4	.28	.778
		rural	500	3.96	.99	4		
	Parental concern with child nutrition	urban	500	3.70	.55	3.6	.57	.571
		rural	500	3.68	.50	3.6		
I1	I determine how much T.V my children can watch	urban	500	3.91	.86	4	1.33	.185
		rural	500	3.96	.91	4		
I2	I decide when my children can watch T.V	urban	500	3.89	.94	4	1.93	.053
		rural	500	4.00	.90	4		
I3	I control which programmes my children watch	urban	500	4.01	.87	4	1.73	.083
		rural	500	4.10	.83	4		
I4	I limit the amount of T.V my child watches in one sitting	urban	500	4.04	.79	4	.16	.870
		rural	500	4.05	.78	4		

I5	I insist that my child play outside rather than watch T.V	urban	500	4.14	.91	4	.36	.716
St. no.	Statements	Area	Number of respondents	Mean	S.D	Mean(IQR)	Mannwhitney test z value	p value
		rural	500	4.13	.89	4		
I6	I do not allow T.V to be on during meal time	urban	500	3.67	1.10	4	3.03	.002*
		rural	500	3.87	1.05	4		
I7	I allow our child to watch any T.V show that he/she chooses	urban	500	2.86	1.21	2	.36	.716
		rural	500	2.89	1.25	2.5		
I8	When I feel my child watched T.V long enough I tell to switch it off	urban	500	4.19	.87	4	.05	.957
		rural	500	4.20	.88	4		
I9	My child is not allowed to watch T.V until homework is done	urban	500	4.11	.90	4	.39	.693
		rural	500	4.14	.88	4		
I10	I actively encourage my child to do other things than watch T.V	urban	500	4.09	.91	4	.39	.700
		rural	500	4.14	.82	4		
I11	I check to see what my child is watching	urban	500	4.25	.79	4	.40	.693
		rural	500	4.27	.77	4		
I12	parents should play active role in monitoring children's T.V viewing	urban	500	4.38	.84	5	.61	.545
		rural	500	4.41	.82	5		
	Parental restrictive mediation	urban	500	3.96	.45	4	2.28	.022*
		rural	500	4.02	.50	4		

Source: Primary data

* Significant at 5% level of significance

1) Parent's attitude towards advertisements: From the table 1 it can be seen that, as far as parent's attitude towards advertising is concerned, except in case of statements A2 and A6 all other statements show the impact to be greater in rural areas than urban areas as m value is above 3. Statement A1 shows a significantly high relationship between ads as a valuable source of information for consumers and area as p value is .003 which is less than 0.01 at 5% level of significance while the other statements show no significant relationship. Hence over all it can be seen that impact of parents attitude towards advertisements is higher in rural areas (mean=3.89) as compared to urban areas (mean=3.86). Parents in urban and rural areas fully agree to statement A6 while statement A2 has higher impact in urban areas.

2) Children's capacity to understand advertisements: Statement B1 shows equal impact in urban and rural areas (m=4.01). Statement B2 and B4 show higher impact in rural areas (mean=3.76 and 3.57) while statement B3 shows higher impact in urban area (m=3.94). The impact is high as m value is above 3. There is no significant relationship between children's capacity to understand advertisements and area as all p values are greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. Hence overall it has been found that impact of children's capacity to understand ads is greater in rural areas (m=3.86) as compared to urban areas (m=3.81).

3)Children's behaviour regarding advertisements: Statements C1, C3 and C4 in table 1 show greater impact in rural areas as seen from the mean values 3.95, 3.82 and 3.78 while in case of remaining statements the impact is greater in urban areas. Over all it can be seen that impact is higher in urban areas ($m=3.74$) as compared to rural areas ($m=3.72$). There is no significant relationship between children's behaviour regarding advertisements and area as all p values is greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. There is a wide agreement among parents in urban and rural areas that children look and desire for advertised products and get disappointed on not being able to buy advertised products.

4) Regulation of advertising to children: Statements D1 and D2 shows greater impact in rural areas (mean= 3.32 & 3.49) as compared to urban areas ($m=3.23$ and 3.43). Parents fully agree to both the statements especially statement D2. The overall impact also shows greater influence in rural area ($m=3.41$). More regulation is demanded by parents in rural areas as compared to urban areas as children in rural areas are found to be more influenced by T.V ads. There is no significant relationship between regulation of advertising to children and area as all p values are greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance.

5)Conflict: Statements E1, E2 and E4 show greater impact in urban areas as seen from the mean values 3.38, 3.59 and 3.45 in table 1 while in case of statement E3 the impact is higher in rural areas(3.11). There is a significant relationship between TV leading to family conflict and area as the p value is .039 which is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. Over all it can be seen that impact is greater in rural areas (mean= 3.37) as compared to urban areas ($m=3.34$). Parents in rural areas agree that ads were a cause of conflict. Family conflict is found to be higher in rural areas as parents here have less income and cannot afford to buy all that is demanded by their children. As a result there is disappointment leading to arguments and conflicts between parent and child.

6) Food advertisement: Statement F3 shows equal impact in urban and rural areas ($m=3.68$). Statement F1 and F4 show higher impact in rural areas as mean value is 3.96 and 3.91 as compared to urban area with mean=3.86 and 3.84. Statement F5 shows higher impact in urban area ($m=3.75$) as compared to rural areas ($m=3.74$). In case of statement F1 there is a significant relationship between additives in food products advertised in TV programmes and area as p value is .049 which is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. All other statements show no significant relationship. There is a strong concern among parents regarding food ads which is evident from the mean values which are more than 3. Similarly the impact is found to be greater in rural areas than urban areas as rural children are found to be highly influenced by celebrities and ads on television. Hence it has been found that overall impact is greater in rural area ($m=3.82$) as compared to urban area ($m=3.81$). As a result there is no significant relationship between food advertising and area.

7) Influence of advertising on children: Statement G1 and G2 show greater impact in urban area ($m=4.01$ and 3.45) while in case of statement G3 parents equally endorse statement G3. As a result the impact is equal in urban and rural areas ($m=3.86$) as seen in table 1. Over all the impact is high in urban area ($m=3.77$) as compared to rural area ($m=3.75$). There is no significant relationship between influence of advertising on children and area as all p values are greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance.

8) Parental concern with child nutrition: Statement H1 and H5 shows equal impact in urban and rural areas (mean=4.25 and 3.92). Parents fully agree with statement H1 and disagree with statement H2 and H3. Statement H6 and H9 shows greater impact in rural areas (m= 4.08 and 3.96) while the remaining statements show greater impact in urban areas (m=2.77, 3.78, 4.12 and 4.07). The overall impact shows greater effect in urban areas (m=3.70) as compared to rural areas (mean= 3.68). The p values are all greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance and hence there is no significant relationship between parental concern with child nutrition and area. Parents are concerned about their children's health, food habits, body weight and obesity as is evident from mean values which is greater than 3.

9) Parental restrictive mediation: Except for statement I5 (m=4.14) all other statements show higher impact in rural areas as compared to urban areas. In case of statement I6 in table 1, there is a significantly high relationship between TV not allowed to be on during meal time and area as p value is .002 which is less than 0.01 at 5% level of significance. Similarly overall impact is higher in rural areas (mean=4.02) as compared to urban areas (m=3.96) and it also shows that there is a significant relationship between parental restrictive mediation and area as p value is .022 which is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. All other statements show no significant relationship.

Conclusion:

From the table 1 it can be seen that parents in urban and rural areas have more or less same attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products. Except in case of certain statements there is no significant difference in parent's attitude as far as urban and rural areas are concerned. Parents are concerned about the adverse impact that T.V advertising creates in the minds of children, especially food advertising and their urge to consume all types of advertised food.

Parents agree that ads are informative and give product information but they also agree that it is misleading; full of tricks and the purpose is to sell. Parents fully agree that children are more carried away by ads than grown up people; they could recollect all types of advertised products and pester parents to buy them. Rural parents are moreover concerned about children getting disappointed on not buying what they demand which at times leads to argument and quarrel or conflict. As a result parents from both areas favour restriction on T.V advertising especially to children below 12 years as they are innocent and do not know the selling intent of these advertisements. There is wide agreement among parents from both areas regarding the impact of food ads on the eating habits of children. They want their children to have good, healthy food which does not contain additives and which will not create health problems like obesity. In order to control their children's T.V viewing and consumption behaviour parents keep a strict vigil on what they watch, put off the T.V when their children have watched enough, encourage them to go out and play or do other things than sit in front of the television. Parents fully agree that they should play an active role in monitoring children's T.V viewing.

It can also be seen that parents in rural areas undertake more parental mediation as all mean values are found to be higher in rural areas as compared to urban areas. Children in the age group of 6-9 are very tender and do not fully understand the selling intent of the marketers and are influenced to buy or

pester parents to buy all types of unwanted food products. They may be harmful to their health resulting into all types of future problems and also obesity. As a result it parents consider it their ardent duty to protect their children from such harmful consequences. Therefore mothers in urban and rural areas undertake various steps in this direction. It can be seen from the study that rural mothers undertake strict vigil and exercise control on the T.V viewing and fast food consumption practices of their children. This could be because more mothers in rural areas were house wives and had time to spend with their children and control their T.V viewing behaviour which was not seen in urban areas as mothers were found to be working. But in spite of their busy schedule they were found to take interest in their children and correct them where ever necessary.

After analysing the above table 1 it can be concluded that only in case of 5 statements there is a significant difference between parent's attitude towards advertising, T.V viewing and consumption of advertised products and area while in case of all remaining statements there is no significant difference between parent's attitude and area. Hence H01 is accepted and H02 is rejected.

Managerial implications

Managerial implications of this research put forward the need to develop advertisements so as to suit the needs of children. It should not be undertaken only with the intention to earn profits but should be creatively made so as to attract consumption of products. The solutions that can be brought about through law require the acceptance of society to solve the issue of children's advertising.

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