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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY OF STUDENTS' BEHAVIOR TOWARDS ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE STATES OF GUJARAT

*Dr. Falguni C. Shastri

Jasani Arts and Commerce College, 1, Vidyanagar, Chhelbhai Dave Marg, Rajkot – 360001, India

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ABSTRACT

The influencing factors may include advertisement, friends, parents, etc. the buying behavior and spending pattern of students go hand in hand. Once they decide what to buy, they automatically decide how much to spend. When they decide what to buy-advertisements, friends, parents and various other factors play a very important role. Prominent among them are advertisements and friends. Advertisers through television can reach a whole spectrum of consumers.

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INTRODUCTION

This era is characterized by excessive specialization, mass production and competition. This has increased the importance of advertising in the modern business world. Advertising is growing as an industry in the modern national and international market scenario. Generally, advertisements have two basic objectives: to provide information to the consumer about the product such as, its availability, price, duration etc and thereby persuade the customer to buy the production. It also enables the consumer to compare and choose the best product and service available as per his/her requirement. The term consumer behavior can be define as the behavior that the consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. The prime motive of an advertiser is to reach the prospective customers and influence their awareness, attitude and buying behavior. Advertisers spend a lot of money to keep individuals interested in their products. To succeed, they need to understand what makes potential customers behave the way they do. The advertiser's goal is to get enough relevant market data to develop accurate profits of buyers to find the customers' group for communication. This involves the study of consumer behavior: the mental and emotional process and the physical activities of people who purchase and use goods and services to satisfy particular needs and wants (Arens, 1996). The advertiser intends to spread his ideas about the product and offerings among the prospects. Popularization of

the products is thus, the basic aim of advertising (Ramaswami and Namakumari, 2004). Television advertising is the best selling and economical media ever invented. It has a potential advertising impact unmatched by any other media (Saxena, 2005). Reactions to T.V. advertisements seem to be stronger than the reaction to print advertisements (corlis, 1999). The advertisers find more effective to use television rather than print media to reach consumers, partly due to low literacy rate (Ciochetto, 2004). T.V. advertisements not only change emotions, but send out a substantial message exerting a far-reaching influence on the daily lives of the people (Kotwal *et al.*, 2008)

The influencing factors may include advertisement, friends, parents, etc. the buying behavior and spending pattern of students go hand in hand. Once they decide what to buy, they automatically decide how much to spend. When they decide what to buy-advertisements, friends, parents and various other factors play a very important role. Prominent among them are advertisements and friends. Advertisers through television can reach a whole spectrum of consumers. The children are exposed to an overwhelming amount of advertising (Cruz, 2004). A young child in the age group of 13-19 years constitutes a teenager. Almost every child and teenager in India is regular viewer of the television. They spend most of their free time in front of the television, watching programmes and channels of their choice (Dubey and Patel, 2004). They watch nearly 20000 commercials in one year. The majority of the children believe television advertisements to be informative and most children respond favorably to them (Cruz, 2004).

*Corresponding author: Dr. Falguni C. Shastri,
Jasani Arts and Commerce College, 1, Vidyanagar, Chhelbhai Dave
Marg, Rajkot – 360001, India.

They also exert a substantial influence on their parents'/consumers' decision-making and spending (Hawkins *et al.*, 2001). Parents in dual-income families have more discretionary income and are busier and feel guiltier, and therefore, are softer when it comes to teenagers' requests (Sellers, 1989). Marketers who take advantage of young people's power to softer to influence family purchase choose commercials or television programmes that reach children or teenage youth together with their parents (Kraak and Pelletier, 1998). Teenagers have become a strong influencing group and even have the ability to influence the purchase decision in the family-from cakes and cars (Shashidkar and Adivi, 2006). Procter *et al.* (1982) noted that the principal aim of consumer behavior analysis is to explain why a consumer acts in a particular way under certain circumstances. It tries to determine the factors that influence consumer behavior, especially economic, social and psychological aspects, which can indicate the most-favored marketing mix that the management should select. Consumer behavior analysis helps to determine the direction that consumer behavior is likely to make and to give perfect trends in product development, attributes of the alternative communication method, etc.

Literature Review

The Indian advertising industry is a billion-dollar industry today and is growing at the rate of 40-50% per annum, and is one of the fastest-growing industries in the country (Unnikrishnan and Bajpai, 1996). As a wide range products and services are consumed or used by children, many companies tend to target them (Chandok, 2005). Advertisers target teenagers because on their high disposable income, their influence on parental purchase, their early establishment of loyalty to certain brands, and conventional wisdom that they buy products on impulse (Fox, 1996; Mc Neal, 1999). A teenager possessing greater financial resources would have more money to spend on discretionary items for him and may also exert greater financial resources would have more money to spend on discretionary items for himself and may also exert greater influence on family purchase (Beatty and Talpade, 1994). The girl teenagers are more attracted towards TV advertisements featuring celebrities, children or jingles (Dubey and Patel, 2004). While purchasing cosmetics, stationary, gifts and cards, the girls give importance to international inputs by the TV advertisements into their decision to buy. It was also found that girls had a positive attitude towards inputs by the TV advertisements into their decision to buy. It was also found that girls had a positive attitude towards TV commercials (Kotwal *et al.*, 2008). The reason for higher response could be due to the higher number of advertisements targeted at them (Dubey and Patel, 2004). Rural India has been witnessing a sea change particularly in the standard of living and life styles. With the population over one billion, India is on the threshold of becoming one of the world's foremost consumer market. About a quarter of this huge mass of consumers is the urbanized and three quarters are rural (Sehrawet and Kundy, 2007). Roman Rao (1997) observed that the boom in rural areas is caused by factors such as increased discretionary income, rural development schemes, improved infrastructure, expanding private TV channels coverage and emphasis on the rural market by companies. The marketers and advertisers who

are having eyes on this market must perceive opportunities to target rural consumers of India, which is full of the young generation (Selvaraj, 2007). North and kotz (2001) observed that parents can use television advertisements in various ways as a means of communicating and educating their children on consumers' matters. Atkn (1978) observed that children or adolescents are most influential when they are primary customers. There are substantial variations in the account of teenagers' influence on purchase decision for products for their own use and for their family (Cotte and Wood, 2004).

Objectives of the Study

With a population of 63,891.303 Gujarat is the both largest state in terms of population in India. Gujarat is one of the most industrialized states of India and thus attracts people from India both in terms of investment and jobs. Now, a trend of nuclear family system also started in Gujarat resulted in less parental supervision. Most of these children have free and uncensored access to the TV and other forms of entertainment. They watch all types of programmes. Secondly, there is a free flow of money in the hands of children/students which is evident from their life style. There are 485 TV channels (Ministry of Information and Broad casting, 2009) telecasted in India. Reaching 26 million cable and satellite homes, and with over 160 million viewers. Every year the advertising budget of the advertisers is increasing. Consumer goods companies spend anything between 5 to 15% of their turn over on brand building and advertising. Invariably, children are the most sought after consumers as they have impressionable minds. They are easily taken by the positive image of advertising and are potential consumers for life. Advertisers know that brand loyalty is very strong among consumers, and if a child is hooked onto a product from the beginning he/she will probably stick to the same brand for life.

48 secondary schools, 32 higher secondary schools and 20 colleges were visited for the purpose of collecting the data. The sample consists of 2,500 students; students were then categorized based on Gender (Male/Female), locality (urban/rural), education (SSC/HSC/Graduate) and a detailed analysis was carried out for the purpose of understanding the significance of advertising based on the above categorization with respect to influence of advertising on buying behavior and spending pattern, general impact of advertising, attitude towards advertising, and also the behavioral pattern towards advertising.

This paper deals with and tries to understand the buying behavior and spending pattern of consumers vis-a-vis the influence of advertisements on the same. Information on various areas such as TV at home, watching advertisements, factors attracting them towards advertisements, time spent in front of the TV spending pattern, consumption of harmful products, various voices, etc. was collected. The data so collected was cross tabulated and with the help of chi-square test, was organized in the form of Multi way Frequency.

Tables

The following hypothesis was formed:

1. The buying behavior and spending pattern of the students from Gujarat is not influenced by advertisements.

Analysis

In order to test the data were classified and cross tabulated based on the following aspects and were tested separately using chi-square test to see whether there is any association between the attributes under study:

1. Availability of T.V. at home and watching advertisements.
2. Factors attracting students towards advertisements.
3. Time spent in front of TV and watching advertisements.
4. Pocket money and consumption of selected products.
5. Pocket money and vices.
6. Watching advertisements and consumption of selected products.
7. Watching advertisements and vices.

Subsequent sections give the explanation on the analysis of the above mentioned aspects.

Availability of TV and watching advertisements

The chi-square test result is presented in the Table 1. From the data collected, it is very clear that a TV at home is not a deciding factor for watching advertisements. Irrespective of having a TV at home, students from all categories do watch advertisements, with respect to educational background, the more educated the respondent the more is the tendency to watch advertisements for gathering information to make a rational purchasing decision. The chi-square test was applied to see whether there is any association between the availability of TV at home and watching advertisements among students in terms of their Gender (Male and Female), Location (Urban) and Education (SSC,HSC & Graduate & Postgraduate) as all the ‘P’ values are greater than 0.05. Only in case of students from Rural areas, ‘P’ value (0.024) is less than 0.05, leading to the conclusion that having a TV at home is a major factor for such students watching advertisement.

Table 1. Chi-square test for availability of TV at home and watching advertisements

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp-sign(2 sides)
Male	1.765	1	0.168
Female	1.868	1	0.159
Urban	0.096	1	0.748
Rural	4.886	1	0.021
SSC	3.028	1	0.071
HSC	0.243	1	0.586
Graduate	0.543	1	0.412
Post Graduate	0.039	1	0.795
North	3.123	1	0.068
West	0.887	1	0.323
Total χ^2	16.478	10	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	18.31	10	
Total $\chi^2 < X^2$ at 0.05			

No association between TV at home and watching advertisements
*Significant at 5% level of Significance

The chi-square test shown at the end of Table 1 suggests that, in spite of one category students (Rural) showing association between T.V. at home and watching advertisements as a whole

the chi-square value 16.478 is less than the Table value of chi-square at 5%(18.307) level of significance, and hence it can be concluded that there is no association between the attributes; i.e. having a TV at home and watching advertisements along all the categories of the students are independents.

Factors attracting students towards advertisements

One watches advertisements because he/she lives something in it. Sometimes, it may be the colour, model or appeal or even vulgarity. To find out what attracted the students towards advertisements; data were collected on who watches advertisements and what attract them towards advertisements. The collected data were tested with chi-square and results are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. Attracting Students towards advertisements

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp-sign(2 sides)
Male	18.769	3	0.000
Female	14.329	3	0.002
Urban	43.366	3	.000
Rural	1.988	3	0.447
North	27.806	3	0.000
West	9.876	3	0.011
SSC	21.988	3	0.00
HSC	6.999	3	0.043
Graduate	28.111	3	0.000
Post Graduate	-	-	-
Total χ^2	117.364	27	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	40.113	27	
Total $\chi^2 > X^2$ at 0.05			

Association between TV at home and factors attracting towards advertisements
Significant at 5% level of significance

Table 2 indicates that students with different backgrounds were not influenced by the vulgarity in the advertisements. It implies that the students were aware of very purpose of advertisements and the gimmicks that were used in the advertisements to lure the consumers. On an average it can be seen from the data that Appeal is the influencing factor followed by the Model in the advertisements. Overall it is the Appeal followed by the Model which influences the students to watch the advertisements. This means that the choice of appeal displays the matured thinking of the students towards advertisements.

The results of chi-square test suggests that there is a significant relation between these two in terms of Gender, Location, Region and education as all the P values are smaller than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. In case of student from rural areas, the P value is 0.447, which is greater than the Table value at 5% level of significant, which means that there is no significant association between watching TV and factor attracting the students towards advertisements. Overall, there is an association between the availability of a TV at home and factors attracting the students towards advertisements. As a whole the chi-square test value (117.364) is greater than the Table value at 5% level of significance, and it can be concluded that there is an association between the factor-availability of TV at home and factor attracting all categories of the students towards advertisements.

Time spent in front of TV and watching Advertisements

The students today spend the maximum amount of time in front of TV watching different types of programmes, including the advertisements. In order to find out if there is any relationship between time spent and the students watching advertisements the data were collected, classified and tested-with the help of chi-square test. The results are depicted in Table 3.

Table 3. Time spent in front of TV and watching advertisements

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp-sign(2 sides)
Male	1.119	3	0.748
Female	6.689	3	0.053
Urban	3.885	3	0.274
Rural	3.337	3	0.324
North	6.043	3	0.107
West	0.898	3	0.803
SSC	0.386	3	0.941
HSC	3.656	3	0.285
Graduate	5.123	3	0.167
Post Graduate	4.001	3	0.264
Total χ^2	35.137	30	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	43.773	30	

It can be seen from the above table that there is no significant association between time spent in front of the TV and watching advertisements with reference to all categories of the students, at 5% level of significance.

Pocket Money and Consumption of Selected Products

Generally students receive the pocket money in the beginning of the month. In present time, students also earn their pocket money by doing part time jobs. They use their earned money to meet their recurring expenses. Students have the choice to spend their money on the products of their choice. For the purpose of analysis data were collected, classified and tested statistically with the help of chi-square, and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Person Chi-square Test for pocket money and Consumption of Selected products

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp-sign(2 sides)
Male	19.328	9	0.015
Female	9.001	9	0.436
Urban	24.999	9	0.003
Rural	7.632	9	0.558
North	20.282	9	0.016
West	10.321	9	0.312
SSC	17.111	9	0.032
HSC	12.128	9	0.153
Graduate	6.406	9	0.494
Post Graduate	13.499	9	0.079
Total χ^2	140.707	90	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	113.15	90	

Chi-square results show that in case of Male, Urban, North and SSC students, the P value is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance, which implies that in case of these students, there is a significant association between the pocket money they get and spending it on consumption of their favourable products. Whereas, in case of female, rural, south, HSC, Graduates and PG students, the P value is more than 0.05 at 5% level of significance, which signifies that there, is no significant

association between the pocket money received by the students and consumption of students' preferred products. The additive property of the chi-square test shown at the end of the Table-4 suggests that overall; there is an association between the pocket money the students receive and spending it on selected products by all categories of the students.

Pocket Money and Vices

College students are vulnerable to various harmful products such as cigarettes, gutka etc. Data was collected to find out about the menace, and the chi-square test was applied to find out whether there is any association between the pocket money the student's get and the various vices. The values are presented in Table 5

Table 5. Person Chi-square Test for Pocket money and Vices

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp-sign(2 sides)
Male	33.389	9	0.000
Female	7.429	9	0.574
Urban	51.444	9	0.000
Rural	5.894	9	0.665
North	47.133	9	0.000
West	5.876	9	0.738
SSC	10.001	9	0.333
HSC	16.889	9	0.039
Graduate	21.325	9	0.010
Total χ^2	199.38	81	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	103.01	81	

According to the analysis, it can be inferred that smoking, chewing of gutka was negligible among the students on the campus. The study revealed that a very low percentage of students, which is irrelevant, were under the influence of various vices.

The test revealed that there is an association between the pocket money the students set and the vices. In this case, the whole of the chi-square test value (199.38) is greater than the Table value (103.01). This means that the possession of money does influence the purchase of harmful products like gutka and cigarettes.

Watching Advertisement and consumption of selected products

The chi-square test was applied to find out whether there is any association between the attributes i.e. watching advertisements and consumption of products considered to be harmful for the health. The results are given in Table 6. It can be seen from the data that the students who watched more advertisements consumed more cold drinks. Interestingly, it was the PG students who watched more advertisements among the different categories of the students. Thus, from Table 6 we can see that watching of advertisements and consumption of products is related to each other. It can be seen from the chi-square value that there is no significant association between watching advertisements and purchase of products considered as harmful for the health with reference to Gender, Location, Region and Education as P value in this case is more than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. However, in case of Male, North and PG students, it was found that there is an association

between the attribute watching advertisements and purchase of harmful products.

Table 6. Person Chi-square test for Watching Advertisements and Consumption of Selected Products

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp. Sign (2 sides)
Male	10.124	3	0.10
Female	1.984	3	0.570
Urban	6.988	3	0.069
Rural	4.009	3	0.260
North	12.696	3	0.004
West	1.391	3	0.679
SSC	4.189	3	0.235
HSC	4.844	3	0.177
Graduate	1.297	3	0.706
Post Graduate	12.876	3	0.003
Total χ^2	55.554	30	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	43.77	30	

Further the additive property of the chi-square was applied to test the overall association between the attributes. It was noticed that there is an association considered to be harmful for the health. The chi-square value in this case is 55.554 against the Table value of 43.77.

Watching of Advertisements and Vices

In order to find out whether there is any association between watching of advertisements and the vices, the collected data were classified, cross tabulated and the chi-square test was conducted. The values are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Person Chi-square Test for Watching Advertisements and Vices

Category	Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymp-sign(2 sides)
Male	0.813	3	0.842
Female	1.333	3	0.742
Urban	1.699	3	0.620
Rural	3.874	3	0.266
North	0.695	3	0.871
West	1.111	3	0.782
SSC	8.018	3	0.041
HSC	1.696	3	0.629
Graduate	2.158	3	0.522
Post Graduate	0.312	3	0.958
Total χ^2	21.709	30	
Total χ^2 at 0.05	43.77	30	

The interesting and satisfying fact disclosed by the study was that in no way the students were carried away by any of the vices- smoking or chewing of gutka. A detailed analysis showed that a negligible percentage of students were under the influence of the vices after watching the advertisements. The P values of different categories of students, Gender, Location, Region and Education is more than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. This shows that there is no significant association between watching advertisements and various vices such as smoking, chewing gutka, etc. the students from SSC showed a different picture. In case, there is a significant association between the attributes- watching advertisements and the vices. Further, the additive property of the chi-square is also supported the above claim. In this case, the whole of the chi-square value (21.709) is less than the Table value (43.77). This

shows that as a whole, there is no significant association between watching advertisements and the various vices.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Advertising has an influence on the purchase behavior and advertising does affect the viewers. If a message is repeated often enough, people will increasingly accept it (Goldstein, 1998). Gandhi ET. Al. (1994) in their study on consumer behavior among adults found that TV is of paramount importance in influencing consumer's choice. For 46% of the respondents, TV is responsible for making a purchase decision and 48% of TV advertisements actually led to a purchase. This study shows that advertising influences the purchase behavior of adults. In case of children, the study is altogether different. Children in US watch so much TV that they watch 5, 00,000 commercials by the time they reach 18 years of age. Every one of these commercial is front loaded with attention getters of sexual images. Over 1, 00,000 of the Radio, TV and Newspaper advertisements children see by the age of 18 years are for alcohol (De Benedittis, 2003). Liebert (1979) pointed out that a major concern regarding TV commercials is that children are being sold products that are not good for them. Furthermore, children are learning to accept ideas imposed on them by TV advertising and are not equipped to protect themselves from these influences. A child represents a future adult consumer market, which the advertiser strives to develop through brand loyalties and consumer buying habits at an early age (Silverblat, 1998). They are successfully breeding a generation of consumers ready to respond to the call of consumerism (UnniKrishan *et al.* 1996). Children are initiated into the consumerist culture from their birth (Joshi, 1989).

According to Trivedi (1991), 34% of the households reported that advertisements created an adverse impact on the demand among children for new goods and items for them, and their households. Children are increasingly used and made instrumental in compelling people to buy the advertised product. Parents are forced to buy advertised products to pacify the children's needs; through they may be unwilling to buy the same (Chauhan, 1995). Not all families in a developing country like India can afford all that their children demand. When the desire inspired by commercials are not satisfied and fulfilled, they result in resentment and frustration among children. Children pressurize parents for many things they see on TV, and parents feel inadequate if they don't provide them with the same (Liebert, 1979). Yadava (1994) pointed out that advertisements stimulate the psychological need and desire of the audiences. However, in context of the Indian economy, how far the lifestyle and consumption pattern reflected in many consumer advertisements relevant to a majority of the Indian population is what needs to be questioned. Children in rural areas and urban slums watch advertisements of children gleefully eating chocolates or noodles or enjoying soft drinks when they do not even have access to clean drinking water. Children with stimulated but unsatisfied desire develop resentment against their parents and the existing social set up. Consumerism is a result of large-scale advertising. It is nothing but a mechanism that creates an insensible urge to possess or acquire goods and services. A constant barrage of advertisements finds a willing audience among teenagers, who

spend a lot of time watching T.V. Consumerism today is flourishing, thanks to the advertising industries.

Among the students, ownership of T.V is not a deciding factor for them to watch advertisements. Irrespective of whether they have a T.V at home or not, students from all walks of life do like to watch advertisements further an urge to watch more and more advertisements also increases with the students acquiring more and more qualification. Thus, it can be said that there is no association between the ownership of T.V and student's watching advertisements. Further it was seen that students like to watch advertisements because of the message/appeal presented in the advertisements. Surprisingly the vulgarity in the advertisements has no place in the minds of the surveyed students. This shows the matured thinking and broad-minded approach towards advertisements. On an average student spent around one hour in front of the TV; except the students from P.G. courses, who spent more than two hours in watching the TV programmes along with advertisements. It was seen from the study that the pocket money and consumption of products considered harmful are associated with each other. It means that the quantum of money determines what to purchase. The study also reveals that students in any way were not influenced by any form of vices on the campus. Overall, it was clear from the analysis that there is an association between watching advertisements and the consumption of products. Further, it was seen that there was no association between the students watching advertisements and various vices. In fact, the survey disclosed a satisfying fact that on the campus the menace of smoking and chewing gutka were negligible.

Thus, from the above analyses, it can be concluded that advertisements do not influence the spending pattern and buying behavior of the students, and thus, the hypothesis formed for the purpose is accepted.

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