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# THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN CHOCOLATE MARKET SRI LANKA

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# ABSTRACT

Article History

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Keywords Television advertising Children buying behavior Advertisement. The main purpose of this study was to identify the impact of Television Advertising on Children Buying Behavior in the chocolate market in Sri Lanka. The data was gathered from 150 respondents in Kurunegala district in Sri Lanka using multistage sampling technique. SPSS software package was used to analyze the data. It was found that most of the children in 6-10 age in Sri Lanka watch television more than 3 hours per day. And they also watch advertisement during the period. Most of the children willing to purchase and consume Ritzbury Chocolate among several chocolate brands in the Sri Lankan market. According to the findings, the most significant television advertising dimension is Information focused advertising. In addition to that, it was found that the Emotion-focused and Imagery focused advertising also significantly influence on children buying behavior in the chocolate market. The study concluded a positive relationship between Television Advertising and Children Buying Behavior.

**Contribution/ Originality:** This study was to identify the impact of Television Advertising on Children Buying Behavior in the chocolate market in Sri Lanka.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most easily achievable groups for marketers is children. Therefore marketers invent children base product and use television advertising to attract the children mind. A large number of ads are aimed during the times when children watch Television. They try to influence the children behavior about the product and include the content according to the children age, mind and interest of the product. Children normally watch television in evening cartoon hours, reality show hours and also in family time. To reach the target group of children, television advertising normally aired during the evening hours. In Sri Lanka there are more than twenty television channels are available. In addition to them, there is a number of cartoon channels are also available. Food advertising is one of the most generous promotions on these channels. Large numbers of food advertisements such as Biscuits, Fruit drinks, snack, and chocolate etc. are aired every day.

Chocolate is a most popular, attractive product in the Sri Lankan market, there is a number of chocolate products such as Ritzbury, Kandos, Edna, Diana, Kinder Joy, etc. are available in Sri Lanka. Chocolate companies introduce a variety of chocolates to the market often and continue their promotion through television daily.

# 2. QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

#### 2.1. Research Questions

- 1. What is the impact of television advertising on children buying behavior?
- 2. What is the relationship between the different dimension of television advertising and children buying behavior?
- 3. What is the most significant influential variable of television advertising on children buying behavior?

#### 2.2 Research Objectives

- 1. To identify the impact of television advertising on children buying behavior.
- 2. To identify the relationship between the different dimension of television advertising and children buying behavior.
- 3. To identify the most significant influential variable of television advertising on children buying behavior.

# 3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1. Children Buying Behavior

Children are known to be an important part of a family and thus, have a strong influence on parent's decisions. 'The buying process in a family by large involves a concurrent decision taken by all'. Therefore the marketing and media communicators' interest in child consumers has been increasing recently. It is not an exaggeration to say that child consumer plays a great role as same as the adult consumer in the family shopping. Children do not earn money to buy what they want but they are an economically powerful group who can convince and persuade their parents. As some researchers have shown, firstly, today's children in western societies have considerable amounts of money to spend on needs and wants of their own, which qualify them as an important primary market Second, children are also a future market It has been demonstrated that children develop brand loyalty at an early age, and that favorable attitudes toward brands last well into adulthood (McNeal, 1992). Finally, children are an important market of influencers. Therefore marketers in many countries focus on children and are aware of the increasing children's power of their buying behavior.

## 3.2. Television Advertising on Children Buying Behavior

Advertising is the non-personal message containing the information frequently paid for and credible in nature about products, services or ideas by recognized sponsors through the various media (Srinivasa, 2008). The choice of media is dependent upon the nature of the message and the intended target viewers (Etzel et al., 2008) Television advertising is the best viewed and economical media ever invented. It has a possible advertising impact matchless by any other media (Saxena, 2005). The advantage of television over the other mediums is that it is perceived as a mixture of audio and video features; it provides products with instant validity and fame and offers the greatest chance for creative advertising (Kavitha, 2006). Kaiser Family Foundation, 2007 stated that TV advertising has a strong influence on children buying behaviors hence researchers strongly recommend the idea to regulate TV advertisers in order to control obesity and overweight tendency. Children's consumer behavior has often been studied within the paradigm of consumer socialization, Ward (1974). Consumer socialization is seen as a rather effortless process by which children learn the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to function as consumers (Ward, 1974). Although there is no single definition of consumer behavior, those that have been employed seem to entail similar characteristics. A consumer is able to (a) feel wants and preferences, (b) search to fulfill them, (c) make a choice and a purchase, and (d) evaluate the product and its alternatives (Mowen and Minor, 1998). Piaget (1999) shows child economic development as a consumer and economical socialization in his theory. A child in the concrete operational period (age 7-11) understands that other people may have different views on things. Thinking is in a concrete and demonstrative position. The child starts to apply negotiation and persuasion in social interaction with

others. Children are critical and distrustful of advertisements (Śramová, 2014). According to numerous statistics, marketing focused on children is very financially lucrative. Income from the products designed for children and youth ranges in billions of dollars in the USA and pounds in the UK (Schor, 2006; Mayo and Nairn, 2009) The American Psychological Association (APA) has found that the task Force on Advertising and Children confirm that commercial advertising has a significant impact on the purchasing preferences of children.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

There were four independent variables and one dependent variable has been used in this study.

In the operationalization of the research, the researchers have attempted to identify key dimensions under each concept. Moreover, it demonstrates the independent variables and the dependent variable have been utilized to the research purpose. Mainly the linear regression analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression methods have been used to confirm the research objectives. Those dimensions have been taken as the basis for measuring key constructs and for developing hypothesis.

## 4.1. Population

This research has been conducted through the whole population (1618465) in Kurunegala district.

## 4.2. Sample Size

A sample of 150 respondents in kurunegala district was selected in age 6-10. Data was collected using convenient sampling method. Primary data represented by the results and findings through questionnaires that acquired from the respondents. Those questions are created based on the Five Point Likert Scale. The secondary data collected from various secondary sources like journals, newspapers, Books, and websites. Secondary data was needed for the study when selecting sample size, sample area and for the data analysis purposes.

# 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In the research study, television advertising dimensions mainly, action-focused advertising, information focused advertising, emotion -focused advertising and imagery -focused advertising was recognized as the independent variables. Statistical analyzing methods such as correlation analysis and regression were used to test the variables in accordance with the objectives taken in the study. The data were analyzed by using SPSS 21 version.

### 5.1. Reliability Analysis

In order to measure the internal consistency of the Likert scale questions of each dimension measured by the reliability analysis. Therefore Researchers tested internal consistency using Cron Bach's alpha. According to Table 1, all the Cron-Bach's alpha values are more than 0.6. This indicates that there is an internal consistency among the items used in the questionnaire. Therefore, these items were combined to create corresponding variables.

Table-1. Reliability of Statistics.				
Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
0.954	28			

Source: Field Survey Data.

#### 5.2. Age of the Children

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Age 6	12	8%
Age 7	17	11.33%
Age 8	30	20.00%
Age 9	41	27.33%
Age 10	50	33.33%

Table-2. Age of Children

Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

This Table 2 interprets those age frequencies in the children's profile. When children are  $4\pm 5$  months of age, they start to develop an interest in television programs. Observational studies have shown that they are most interested in children's programs, such as Sesame Street and The Teletubbies, that have brightly colored fantasy figures, and in commercials (Lemish, 1987). Both children's programs and commercials specialize in drawing attention by visual and auditory means, and babies are very sensitive to these kinds of stimuli (Lemish, 1987). During the early elementary school years, children also develop a preference for more fast-paced entertainment. They often find slower-paced programs with friendly characters and familiar contexts boring or childish (Acuff, 1997). Because they are able to make sense of far more information, they show persistence with content that is more difficult to understand (Anderson and Burns, 1991). According to Donohue *et al.* (1980) in the age of three years, children at the age of 5 but the attitude of the children could change about the advertisement according to their age by Kline (1995). Therefore we have collected data from the sample of 150 children, who are in 6-10 ages. According to the result of the study, the highest percentage of the profile is recorded as age 10 and it is 33.33% while the lowest percentage is recorded as 8 % of age 6.

#### 5.3. Gender Composition

Table-3.       Gender Composition.				
Gender	Frequency	Percentage		
Male	86	57.33%		
Female	64	42.67%		
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Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

This Table 3 interprets the frequency of the gender in the profile. Most of the respondents are male and the percentage is 57.33%.

# 5.4. Time Spend Watching Television

Table-4. Time Spend Watching Television.					
Time	Frequency	Percentage			
Less than one hour	25	16.7%			
1-2 hours	28	18.7%			
2 <b>-</b> 3 hours	45	30.0%			
More than 3 hours	52	34.7%			

Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

According to above Table 4, most of the children watch television more than 3 hours per day. It is 34.7% of the sample. 28 of children are watching television for less than one hour. It is 18.7% of the sample. As Bernard et al state, If children watch more TV then they purchase more advertised things (Bernard *et al.*, 1995). In the Sri Lankan context, children watch television mostly evening hours as cartoon times and family times.

#### 5.5. Favorite Chocolate Brand

Acceding to the findings the most favorite chocolates consumed by the sample was Ritzbury chocolate produced by CBL (ltd). From premium hand-molded chocolate boxes, slabs of individually wrapped coated biscuits, wafers, beans, candy bars, are the products of their widest chocolate selection in Sri Lanka. The second most favorite chocolate brand was Kandos. According to research done by Kandos Company, 100 units of Kandos chocolates are consumed every minute in Sri Lanka. Third favorites were kinder joy and Edna product. Kinder Joy or Kinder Merendero was chocolates made by Italian confectionery company 'Ferrero' as part of its kinder brand of products. It Comes with a Surprising Toy in Each Package. EDNA is one of the leading manufacturers of Chocolates & Confectionery in Sri Lanka. They make coated chocolates; which include cocoa butter, compound and white chocolates, wafers, hard boiled deposited candies, along with Dark and, Cooking chocolates.

#### 5.6. Regression Analysis

## 5.6.1. Testing the Assumptions of Regression Model

If there is no systematic pattern in Scatterplot, there is homoscedasticity and when there is a systematic pattern shown in the scatter plot, it means there having heteroscedasticity problem.



Using the above scatter plot, Figure 1 researcher tested standardized residual against standardized predicted value. Residuals are randomly distributed without having any predictable pattern. Therefore, the variance of residual is constant. Regression result is free from heteroscedasticity problem and model is highly valid.

#### 5.7. Independent of Residual (Auto Correlation, Serial Correlation)

If the residuals are correlated, that is called autocorrelation. That means that residuals are not independent. If they are independent regression, results are more valid. This can be tested Using Durbin Watson test statistics. Value will be between 0 and 4.If value is close to 2, residuals are independent.

#### 5.8. Normality of Residual

According to the assumption of errors are normally distributed, regression assumes that variables have a normal distribution. P-value showed data were normally distributed. Since the P-value was 0.000.



# Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Figure 2 plotting the empirical distribution of residuals against normal counterparts can reveal departures from normality. This can be examined from the above figure. There is a normal distribution in the standardized residual of the multiple regression analysis. Hence, the assumption of normality is satisfied.

#### 5.9. Multi Co Linearity

If independent variables are highly or perfectly collinearity that is called Multi-collinearity and it is measured through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF).Using VIF or tolerance multicollinearity can be tested. If VIF less than 10 or tolerance is more than 0.1, no multicollinearity problem According to the output, VIF value was 1.000 and tolerance is 1.000. This ensures that the regression model does not have any multi-collinearity problems. Therefore, the model is highly valid Table 5.

 Table-5. Multi Co linearity.								
Coefficients								
Model	Unstan	dardized	Std. Coeffi.	t	Sig.	Collinea	rity	
Coefficients Statistics								
	В	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
 		.203						
	.119			.585	.559			
(Constant)								
Tv_advertising	1.004	.050	.854	20.009	.000	1.000	1.000	

Dependent Variable: Children buying Behavior Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

#### 5.10. Model Summary for Regression Analysis

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1 able-6. Model	summary	tor	regression	analysis.

Figure	Value
R	0.900
R Square ( $R^2$ )	0.810
Adjusted R Square	0.805
Std. Error of the Estimates	0.23220
Durbin-Watson	2.038
Dependent variable-Children buying behavior	

**Source:** Field Survey Data 2017.

Durbin Watson test is provided by model summary. Value is 2.038 this is between 1.5, and 2.5. Therefore, residuals are independent. Regression Model is highly valid Table 6.

#### 5.11. Simple Regression Analysis

Based on the primary research objective the simple linear regression model is derived as follows, Regression analysis equation is

$$CBB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (TA) + \varepsilon$$

Where

CBB = Children Buying Behavior,  $\beta_0$  = Intercept term,  $\beta_1$ = Slope coefficient for the independent variable, TA = Television Advertising,  $\varepsilon$  = Error term

# 5.12. Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Table-7. Simple Linear Regression Analysis.						
Model	В	Standard Error	t-value	p-value		
Constant	0.119	0.203	0.585	0.559		
TA	1.004	0.050	20.009	0.000		

Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

Based on the regression analysis Table 7 information given in above the regression equation can be articulated as follows:

$$CBB = 0.119 + 1.004 (TA) + \varepsilon$$

Where

CBB = Children Buying Behavior,  $\beta_0$  = Intercept term,  $\beta_1$ = Slope coefficient for the independent variable, TA = Television Advertising,  $\epsilon$  = Error term

Scatter plot related to the regression analysis was as follows.

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Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

In accordance with regression equation, Figure 3 the constant value is +0.119 It implies that the value of Children Buying Behavior, when Television Advertising is equaled to the zero levels. Furthermore, the coefficient of television advertising is +1.004 It is the average change in Children Buying Behavior due to one unit change in children buying behavior. It suggested that when Television Advertising was increased by one unit, Children Buying Behavior increase by the 1.004 approximately 0.004 times. In addition to that, it's also implied that the positive impact of between Television Advertising on Children Buying Behavior.

Marketers advert children mind through Television advertising to purchase the product. A direct consequence is that effective television ads may lead viewers to seek out more information about these products and brands (Rubinson, 2009).

Results of the linear regression analysis were given in below table. And these results indicate the impact of Television Advertising on Children Buying Behavior. According to the outcome of the regression model, Television Advertising variable indicates the status of significance (p < 0.05).

# 5.13. Anova

Analysis of variance is presented in the following table and includes sum of square, degree of freedom, F value and P value and it presented to ensure the overall significance of the model.

	Tal	ole-8. Anova.			
	А	NOVA <sup>a</sup>			
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	30.052	1	30.052	400.360	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	11.109	148	.075		
Total	41.161	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Children buying behavior b. Predictors: (Constant), TV advertising

Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

If the regression ANOVA result is significant, the model is appropriate. As Table 8 shows, means that model is jointly significant. If the P value is insignificant, the model is invalid (Not Appropriate). Probability of F test statistic is 0.000. This is highly significant (P value < 0.05). It says that the model is appropriate.

## 5.14. Correlation Coefficient Analysis

	P–Value <significance Level</significance 	Null Hypothesis (H0)	Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)
Action focused advertising and CBB	0.000 < 0.197	Rejected	Accepted
Information focused advertising and CBB	0.000 < 0.829	Rejected	Accepted
Emotion focused advertising and CBB	0.000 < 0.763	Rejected	Accepted
Imagery focused advertising and CBB	0.000<0.796	Rejected	Accepted

Table-9. Summery of Correlation Analysis with Hypothesis.

Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

According to the above Table 9, hypothesis analysis, the alternative hypothesis of all Action focused advertising and Children Buying Behavior, Information focused advertising and Children Buying Behavior, Emotion-focused advertising and Children Buying Behavior, and Imaginary focused advertising and Children Buying Behavior are accepted.

# 5.15. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

In this research, the dependent variable is Children Buying Behavior and the independent variables are Action focused advertising, Information focused advertising, Emotion-focused advertising and Imagery focused advertising. Based on these variables multiple regression equation was developed.

 $CBB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (AF) + \beta_2 (InF) + \beta_3 (EF) + \beta_4 (ImF) + \varepsilon$ 

CBB = Children Buying Behavior.  $\beta_0$  = Intercept term,  $\beta_n$ = Slope coefficient for each of the independent variable, AF= Action focused, InF= Information focused, EF= Emotion focused, ImF= Imagery focused,  $\epsilon$  = Error term

## 5.16. Results of Regression Analysis

Table-10. Regression Analysis.						
Predictor	<b>B</b> Coefficients	Std. Error	t-value	p-value		
Constant	.775	.193	4.016	.000		
Action focused	031	.038	796	.428		
Information focused	.407	.048	8.552	.000		
Emotion focused	.166	.055	3.035	.003		
Imagery focused	.307	.045	6.775	.000		

Source: Field Survey Data 2017.

 $CBB = 0.775 + (-0.031) (AF) + 0.407 (InF) + 0.166 (EF) + 0.307 (ImF) + \epsilon$ 

Table 10 shows the regression analysis output, constant ( $\beta 0$ ) is 0.775. It explains all the Television advertising dimensions remain zero, the dependent variable Children buying behavior remain 0.775. It implied that if there is no Television advertising, Children buying behavior is existing in the chocolate market. As its' P value is 0.000, it is significant at 0.05 level of significance. In addition to that, all the beta coefficient values show the positive figures and it implies that all the Television advertising dimensions have a positive relationship with the Children buying behavior.

When considering about the Action focused dimension, its  $\beta$  coefficient value is -0.031. It indicates that when Action focused advertising to increase by one unit, Children buying behavior is decreased by 0.031 units. That means it has a negative impact on Children buying behavior in the chocolate market from Action focused advertising. Further, it proved by the P value as its' P value is recorded as 0.428 and it is more than 0.05 level of no significance. From these information could determine that when a solicitation of specific actions, supporting information to encourage a decision and a response device or mechanism to facilitate action increase by one unit, the Children buying behavior is decreased by 0.031 units.

When considering the Information focused dimension, its  $\beta$  coefficient value is 0.407. It indicates that when Information focused advertising to increase by one unit, Children buying behavior is increased by 0.407 units. That means it has a positive impact on Children buying behavior in the chocolate market from Information focused advertising. Further, it proved by the P value as its' P value is recorded as 0.00 and it is less than 0.05 level of significance. It indicates that when Information of Product, price, brand, and offering increase by one unit, the Children buying behavior is increased by 0.407 units. According to some researchers, children also become aware of brands at this age (Schor, 2004).

When considering the Emotion- focused dimension, its  $\beta$  coefficient value is 0.166. It indicates that when Emotion -focused advertising to increase by one unit, Children buying behavior is increased by 0.166 units. That means it has a positive impact on Children buying behavior in the chocolate market from Emotion -focused advertising. Further, it proved by the P value as its' P value is recorded as 0.003 and it is less than 0.05 level of significance. When Creative stories, warmth, and humor of advertising increase by one unit, the Children buying behavior is increased by 0.166 units. When considering the Imagery- focused dimension, its  $\beta$  coefficient value is 0.307. It indicates that when Imagery focused advertising to increase by one unit, Children buying behavior is increased by 0.307 units. That means it has a positive impact on Children buying behavior in the chocolate market from Imagery - focused advertising. Further, it proved by the P value as its' P value is recorded as 0.000 and it is less than 0.05 level of significance. It indicates that when sensory inputs and visual of advertising increase by one unit, the Children buying behavior is increased by 0.307 units. According to the above analysis results of each dimension, the Information -focused, Emotion -focused and Imagery -focused dimension has the influence on Children buying behavior as their P values are less than 0.05. Among these three dimensions, Children buying behavior is highly influenced by the Information -focused due to it has the highest  $\beta$  coefficient value. And also Imagery focused has the highest influence as it record the second highest  $\beta$  coefficient value. Third and most significant dimension is Emotion-focused advertising due to it has the high  $\beta$  coefficient value. However, the other dimension of Television advertising as Action focused not individually influence on Children buying behavior.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this research, most of the children are in age 10 as the highest percentage of the profile. Most of the respondents are in grade 5. Most of the respondents are male and it is 57.33%. With the experiences of the authors during the survey, boys are inclining to buy something independently than girls. Most of the children watch television for more than 3 hours per day in the evening hours of cartoon times and family times. The all respondents were television advertisement viewers. Considering the participants' response, most favorite chocolates are Ritzbury chocolate which produced by CBL (ltd).

- Television advertising impact on children buying behavior positively. Marketers influence children mind through Television advertising for purchasing the product. A direct consequence is that effective television ads may lead viewers to seek out more information about these products.
- Pearson's correlation analysis overall result shows a strong positive relationship. It implies that television advertising and children buying behavior in Sri Lankan chocolate market has a strong relationship and market fluctuation can depend according to the advertising of a product.

- Among the four dimensions of television advertising, the information focused advertising has the highest correlation coefficient. That means information focused advertising has the strongest relationship with the children buying behavior. And it can strongly influence the children buying behavior in the chocolate market. The reason may be peers influence. Children decision depend on peers' decision. And children are more likely to share the information of the product, regardless of product is essential or not to them. Therefore marketers can consider the information-focused advertising when promoting the products.
- Television advertising is positively and significantly associated with the children buying behavior in the overall level of television advertising and each individual dimensional level.
- According to the regression analysis results, the most influencing television advertising dimensions are the Information focused, Emotion-focused and Imagery focused. It means these dimensions have a strong impact on children buying behavior in Sri Lankan chocolate market. If these dimensions are in satisfactory level it impacts to the high increment in children buying behavior in Sri Lankan chocolate market. And also these three dimensions have a significant influence. Its P value is less than the significant level. Therefore marketers can consider these factors when starting promotion as television advertising in the chocolate market. Only one dimension has a negative impact on children buying behavior as action focused advertising.
- In conclusion, the most significant television advertising dimension is Information focused advertising. In addition to that Emotion-focused and Imagery focused advertising also have a significant influence on children buying behavior in the chocolate market.

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