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**Negative Influence of Electronic  
Advertising - Specifically Television in  
Shaping the Behavior and Preferences of  
Children in Ages (10-14)**

Ali, Emmad

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## CHAPTER # 1

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

#### **Broad Problem Area**

An advertisement is successful when a consumer goes to buy a certain product and after seeing lots of variety if he lingers onto one product and if the advertisement refreshes in his mind then he buys that product and here the advertisements success emerges.

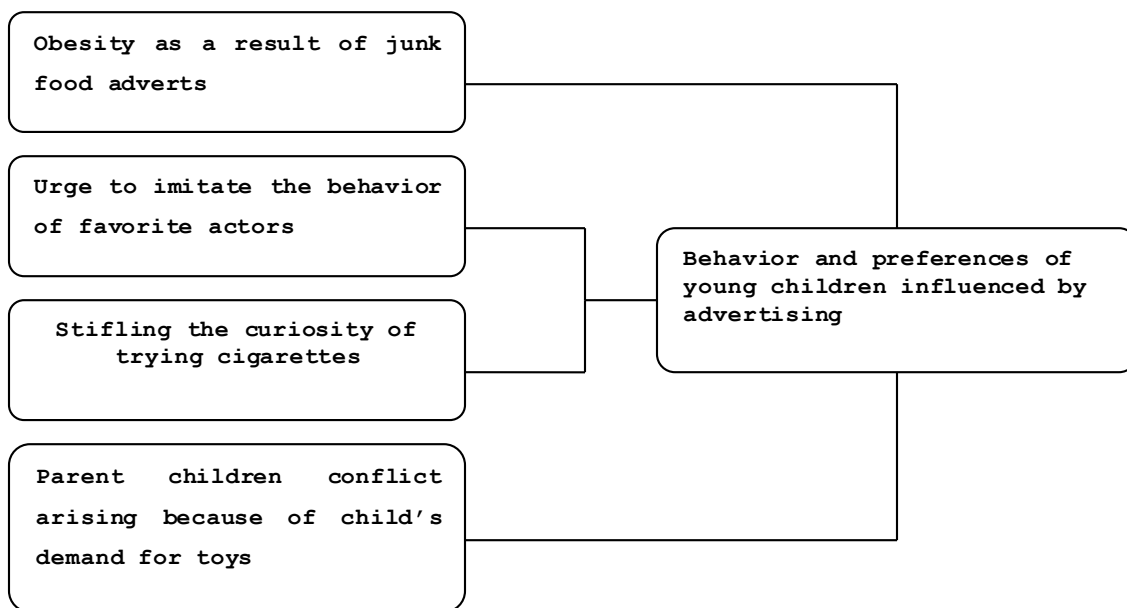
In today's advertising world it doesn't matter if you are a child who is a mere toddler and has the opportunity of going shopping with his mommy while still being in the cart, whether you are a teen who has the urge to do the impossible so that you can create a place for yourself in your peers or even if you are a working woman a housewife or a male blue or white collar worker. What matters to advertisers is that they reach you effectively and boggle your mind till you are convinced that your life is incomplete without their product and you buy it.

Children's reactions to advertisement can be very different from grown-ups. If adults see a product advertised and don't find it when they go shopping they forget about it. As children develop the ability to recognize and understand ads and their purpose they start making demands. If these demands are not fulfilled they might start screaming or throwing themselves to the floor. It is difficult to explain to young children the reasons why they cannot have everything that - according to advertising - is 'for them'.

Television shows no longer just provide entertainment for children. But also they are a showcase for "must have" items that parents are expected to buy, teaching our children to become consumers before they've even reached the age of 3. So the focus of this research is to evaluate the extent to which television advertisements influence the behavior and preferences of kids between the mere ages of 10-14.

There are a lot of factors that affect the children's preferences and behavior but this research only considers the following variables:

- Obesity as a result of junk food adverts
- Urge to imitate the behavior of favorite actors
- Stifling the curiosity of trying cigarettes
- Parent children conflict arising because of child's demand for toys



This study is conducted to find the influence of advertisements on children's preferences and behavior; the target market will be of children between the ages of 10-14. Advertisements are everywhere in our life like on television, radio, newspaper and billboards are common medium's through which advertisement reach to us. Advertisers use these mediums to convey their message to large number of people. We daily watch

lots of advertisements of consumer goods/product/services on different medium. Media sell space-time to the advertiser so they can tell the audience about their products available for consumers.

Intention for conducting this study is to find out influence of advertisement on a child that gets exposed to television and the various negative influences on behavior and preferences that start taking place in the child.

Although a lot of variables could be underlined for such studies but my main objective is to check whether the children really do get influenced by television advertising that they start consuming a lot of junk food, imitating their favorite movie stars, trying out for cigarettes or getting into a fight with their parents if their shopping demands are not met.

There are not many researches on this discipline. So to choose this topic for research is to make some contribution on this topic and to provide base for further researches.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

The problem statement is defined as follows:

*“Negative influence of electronic advertising, specifically television in shaping the behavior and preferences of children ages (10-14).”*

Other key objectives of the study:

1. To measure and conclude the influence of television advertising on children between the ages of 10-14
2. To identify how obesity in children is related to television advertising
3. To highlight how children like to imitate their favorite stars after viewing advertisements.
4. To find how children indulge in conflicts with their parents when gone for shopping
5. To give recommendations to minimize the negative influence borne because of high exposure to television adverts

6. To see whether parents approve of advertising to the children of 10-14 age groups.
7. To see how children start smoking when exposed to advertisements that portrays smokers in roles that urge youngsters try a cigarette.

### **Hypothesis Testing**

**H<sub>A</sub>:** television advertising has a negative influence on children's behavior and preferences

**H<sub>0</sub>:** television advertising has no negative influence on children's behavior and preferences

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Pakistan does not really have any legal regulations that may bind the advertisers to not target young children with impressionable minds. So by my study the advertisers and marketers can benefit and may define some regulations to help ease such negative influences and some strict measures may be adopted that may be included in televisions regulations to help children from getting their minds run by what the advertisers want.

My study may help parents who after reading it may comprehend that such advertisements on television that promote smoking, junk food and attractive toys may lead to some negative changes in a child's behavior and preferences. And thus maybe change the way TV is watched in their households and take some actions to instill positive behavior in their kids. e.g. by protesting and making sure those advertisers start refraining from directly advertising to young children.

## 1.4 SCOPE

There is an extremely large population out there who gets exposed to television everyday from farmers to executives. My study took into account the age group of 10\_14 therefore a lot of potential lies out there for other researchers to probe into.

The **time horizon** for the study, analysis and completion of the project is four months in which the research works and the primary and secondary data will be collected and the samples will be taken and statistical tests are going to apply.

## 1.5 DELIMITATIONS

As the questionnaire method will be used for conducting the research, it will provide an insight to the study at hand. However results may have a small chance of being **biased** because of parent's pressure, lack of seriousness of the child etc.

Another limitation is the **human and the financial resources** to distribute and to retrieve the questionnaires and the reluctance of the consumers to fill in the questionnaires and the difficulty in retrieving questionnaires.

As mentioned above only those children will be questioned who are between the **ages of 10-14**, which constitutes for a very small portion of people who are exposed to television advertising?

Also this study will be held in Karachi thus only the kids of Karachi are going to be questioned.

## **CHAPTER # 2**

### **2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The purpose of my study is hypothesis testing, as it is explaining the influence of television advertisements on young children's behavior and preferences and studying the impact of different variables influencing the children. So the suitable design for the research is exploratory.

This research is qualitative as well as quantitative. The method of conducting this research is based on primary as well as secondary data. The emphasis will be both on the primary and secondary data.

### **2.2 RESPONDENT OF THE STUDY**

The sample size that I'll choose for my research will be 45. This includes 30 children between the ages of 10-14 all of them from Karachi and includes girls and boys as well as 15 sets of parents. I'll choose parents to be my respondents because I feel that they would be much precise in answering what changes they see in their child's behavior and preferences. I will interview some of the advertisers about their opinion for the above mentioned topic. This interview will be unstructured and face to face.

### **2.3 INSTRUMENTS**

My study is of co-relational type, as it is studying the impact of four independent variables on the dependant variable that is; behavior and preferences of young children influenced by advertising and also finding, the four dependent variables i.e., Obesity as a result of junk food adverts, Urge to imitate the behavior of favorite actors, Stifling the curiosity of trying cigarettes, Parent children conflict arising because of child's demand

for toys are negatively or positively associated with the behavior and preferences of children instilled due to television adverts.

I'll choose questionnaires as my research instrument since Questionnaires are an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents. Often they are the only feasible way to reach a number of reviewers large enough to allow statistically analysis of the results. A well-designed questionnaire that will be used effectively would gather information on both the overall performances of the test system as well as information on specific components of the system.

## **2.4 TREATMENT OF DATA**

Throughout my research I will apply likert and dichotomous scales and for those questions in which likert scale will be applied I will interpret my results through pie charts as well as weighted mean. The time dimension of my study is cross-sectional, as it will be done with great depth; however it will be done as a one time study. All the research material that is going to present will be gathered from internet, journals, reports, newspapers, magazines and the previous held researches on the same topics.

## **2.5 PRESENTATION ANALYSIS**

The data that I will collect will be raw and I will analyze the data in form of quantitative framework and also present the tables, graphs and charts.



## CHAPTER # 3

### 3.1 LOCAL LITERATURE

The topic that I have chosen for my study is not very general. It's a very specific topic, so I haven't found any local literature on this subject. But there have been several studies done on the topic of negative influence of advertising but not on the children aged 10 to 14.

### 3.2 FOREIGN LITERATURE

The advertising man is the modern missionary: "Give me your children before they are five and they are mine forever!!!" (Turner, p.15, 1953).

Mike Searles, President of Kids 'R' US, "If you own this child at an early age, you can own this child for years to come. Companies are saying, 'Hey, I want to own the kid younger and younger'" (Jacobson and Mazur, 21).

"Research indicates that six-month-old babies are already forming mental images of corporate logos and mascots. By the time they are three years old, most children are making specific requests for brand-name products" (Jacobson and Mazur, 21). Children are surrounded by advertising. On television, in magazines, at the movies, on-line and on billboards, children are encouraged to consume. And consume they do. Not only do children influence the purchases their parents make, they also spend lots of their own money - from allowances and part-time jobs - on the latest fashions, the coolest new video games and their favorite snacks.

No doubt, this is music to advertisers' ears. After all, they advertise in the hope that they will be able to shape desires, influence preferences, change buying habits and create brand loyalty. But are advertisers aware that their ads also have an impact on children's health? In a number of key areas, research exists linking ads to serious health concerns for children.

From smoking to body image there is strong evidence that advertising influences children's habits and behavior.

Because children may likely be in the company of a television more often than a friend, family member, or school teacher, the persuasive power of television's 'perfect world' can

become the most dominant force in their early socialization process. In watching television, children "absorb more than a desire for specific items. Taken as a whole, the collective body of advertising sells a vision of the world, a way of life" (Jacobson and Mazur, 25).

Generally, television commercials aimed at children pitch an assortment of products, from junk food to toys, by utilizing thirty second spots filled to the brim with fast-paced action and voice-overs, interlaced with cartoon characters, computer imaging, and overly excited kids. Viewed by many young children as an entertaining depiction of reality, such advertisements indeed become a strong, prevalent voice in children's lives. This becomes problematic in several respects. Children, especially those of pre-adolescent ages, are often not yet equipped with the experience or knowledge necessary to critically analyze and decipher the inherent messages of consumption promotion and even more subtle presentations of strategically orchestrated patterns of behavior and demeanor. This concern is shared by many, especially those with vested professional and academic interest in understanding the issue.

In response to these cumulative affects of television advertising on the nation's youngest generation, the National Science Foundation published a research report in 1977 (Kunkel and Roberts, pp.62-64, 1991) which outlined three key aspects of the issue, which still hold true today...

Young children experience difficulty distinguishing perceptually between programs and commercials.

A substantial proportion of children, particularly those below age 14, express little or no comprehension of the persuasive intent of commercials.

Younger children who are unaware of the persuasive intent of television advertising tend to express greater belief in commercials and a higher frequency of purchase requests.

Advertisers are forming our children's value systems, giving them uniform and corporate views of class, sexuality, gender roles, race, consumption patterns, family, and morality/value systems.

Research shows that children under the age of fourteen are unable to critically comprehend televised advertising messages and are prone to accept advertiser messages

as truthful, accurate and unbiased. This can lead to unhealthy eating habits as evidenced by today's youth obesity epidemic. It is estimated that advertisers spend more than \$12 billion per year on advertising messages aimed at the youth market. Additionally, the average child watches more than 40,000 television commercials per year.

"While adults understand the inherent bias of advertising, children do not, and therefore tend to interpret commercial claims and appeals as accurate and truthful information," said psychologist Dale Kunkel, Ph.D., Professor of Communication at the University of California at Santa Barbara and senior author of the task force's scientific report.

"Because children do not understand persuasive intent in advertising, they are easy targets for commercial persuasion," said psychologist Brian Wilcox, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Director of the Center on Children, Families and the Law at the University of Nebraska and chair of the task force. "This is a critical concern because the most common products marketed to children are sugared cereals, candies, sweets, sodas and snack foods. Such advertising of unhealthy food products to children contributes to poor nutritional habits that may last a lifetime and be a variable in the current epidemic of obesity among kids."

The research on children's commercial recall and product preferences confirms that advertising does typically get young consumers to buy their products. From a series of studies examining product choices, say Drs. Kunkel and Wilcox, the findings show that children recall content from the ads to which they've been exposed and preference for a product has been shown to occur with as little as a single commercial exposure and strengthened with repeated exposures.

Furthermore, studies reviewed in the task force report show that these product preferences can affect children's product purchase requests, which can put pressure on parents' purchasing decisions and instigate parent-child conflicts when parents deny their children's requests, said Kunkel and Wilcox.

While companies such as McDonald's are being cited individually for their moves to lower sugar levels in buns and include nutritional information directly on packaging, there remain concerns within the advertising and marketing industry that the industry as a whole "is not winning the battle".

The Commons report noted the use of "premiums" – prizes and toys aimed at driving interest in food products and creating repeat business. An assessment of McDonald's Happy Meals showed that children had the opportunity to collect 98 toys within the space of a year. "If a child were to collect all the toys they would require a Happy Meal every 3.7 days," the report says.

## **FOOD**

Pediatricians and nutritionists agree that rising obesity among young people is closely linked to an increasingly sedentary lifestyle in which TV, videogames and computers are fast becoming the leisure activities of choice. Of course, a lack of physical activity is just one side of the weight gain equation. The other is an unbalanced diet that's heavy on high-fat foods. Advertising plays a role in expanding children's waistlines in three primary ways: 1) the types of products targeted at kids; 2) the influence of ads on children's food preferences; and 3) the extent to which these preferences actually impact children's food consumption.

Studies have found that the vast majority of television ads targeted at children are for food products and services (Barcus, 1975; Ogletree et al, 1990). Of those ads, most are for candy, sweetened cereals and fast-food restaurants. But does exposure to such ads translate into requests for those foods?

The research indicates that it does. Ads for junk food and sweets have been found to influence children's short and long-term food preferences (Atkin and Gibson, 1978; Goldberg et al, 1978). Furthermore, there is evidence that children's television viewing (and therefore their exposure to commercials) is positively related to their consumption of candy and snack foods (Atkin, 1975). The more TV kids watch, the less active they are, the more commercials they see and the more they ask for - and eat- foods that are high in fat and low in nutritional value.

## **TOBACCO**

Recent disclosures of internal tobacco company memos have revealed what public health experts and tobacco control advocates have long suspected - for years, cigarette

advertising has specifically targeted young people. And the research suggests that these ads have contributed to the initiation of many teen smokers.

A 1994 Centers for Disease Control study concluded that cigarette advertising appears to increase adolescents' risk of smoking by glamorizing smoking and depicting smokers as self-assured, healthy, youthful, sexy and cool. Not coincidentally, the two most heavily advertised brands - Camel and Marlboro are also the most popular among teen smokers.

But the allure of cigarette ads is not confined to adolescents. Studies have found that younger children who pay closer attention to cigarette ads are much more likely to view smoking favorably and to become smokers. In fact, one study found that twice as many children as adults were able to associate Joe Camel with Camel cigarettes and found the ads appealing (DiFranza et al, 1991).

Why do kids smoke? Researchers find that kids give three main reasons

- Kids feel that they are invulnerable--that they will never die.
- Kids think that they will "quit smoking before anything bad happens to them."
- Kids are very image conscious. They think that smokers look sexy, cool, daring and adventurous (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare).

Direct advertising and promotions by tobacco companies appealed to the desire by youth to enhance their self esteem.

Getting the gifts did not directly make kids smoke, but handling cigarette packs increases kids familiarity with tobacco (and tobacco brands), and it therefore may lower their own resolve not to smoke

Imitating movie stars

According to a 1997 study by the University of California at San Francisco, half the top-grossing films released between 1990 and 1995 contained scenes in which a lead character smoked, up from 29% in the 1970s. A study by the American Lung Association found that 77% of 133 movies released in 1996 contained at least one scene in which someone smoked.

Like advertisements for cigarettes, the way smoking is depicted in movies sends young people the message that smoking is sexy, rebellious and cool. Movies rarely show the health consequences of smoking - no lung cancer, heart disease or emphysema. Likewise,

cigarette-puffing action heroes aren't shown gasping for breath as they chase down bad guys. And attractive young lovers aren't shown suffering with bad breath and stained teeth.

## **PURCHASE REQUEST BEHAVIOR**

Since advertising's ultimate goal is to elicit a behavioral response, it is not surprising that some researchers have identified purchase request behavior as a natural, but problematic, response to advertising. The problem arises because children typically request products they find desirable without realizing the financial consequences of their requests. Thus parents may find themselves unable or unwilling to fulfill these requests because of the hardship that may result or because they view the item as undesirable. Such refusals can result in conflicts between parent and child and, ultimately, may even undermine their relationship (Robertson, 1972; McNeal, 1987). Indeed, Paine (1993) argues that advertising is guilty of unethical behavior in creating these situations of conflict: "without child focused advertising, parents would less frequently face the necessity to choose between their children's consumer requests and their own consumer judgment" (p. 680).

Research has confirmed the influence of the media upon the close conformity between children's tastes and perceived needs and the content of the programmers they watch. Teachers say they know what has been on TV the night before by the games the children play the next day. Advertisements today are not so much about the products but rather about the character of the consumers and how they should feel when they use or possess the advertised product. Messages to children are all about the happiness, social status or success which accompanies the possession or consumption of a certain toy or food.

### **3.3 GAPS TO BE BRIDGED BY THE STUDY**

This study will help people to understand that how the advertisements influence the behavior of the children. My study may help parents who after reading it may comprehend that such advertisements on television that promote smoking, junk food and

attractive toys may lead to some negative changes in a child's behavior and preferences. This research will also provide the variables that affect the children's behaviors and their preferences. One thing that I have already mentioned that there has not been such particular study done so I have got a good chance to extract some interesting facts and figures about the topic.

## CHAPTER #4

### 4.1 RESULTS AND RESPONSES OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The 45 questionnaires which were dully filled by children between the ages of 10-14 and parents respectively were tallied and interpreted through pie charts and the questions which had likert scales applied to them were rated by weighted mean method and interpreted by its rating scale.

The options of the likert scaled questions are rated as follows:

Rating scales	
Always	4
Mostly	3
Often	2
Never	1

The ranges by which the results of weighted mean are compared are as follows:

RANGES	
1 - 1.80	Never
1.81 – 2.60	Less
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
3.41 – 4.20	Important
4.21 – 5.0	Very important

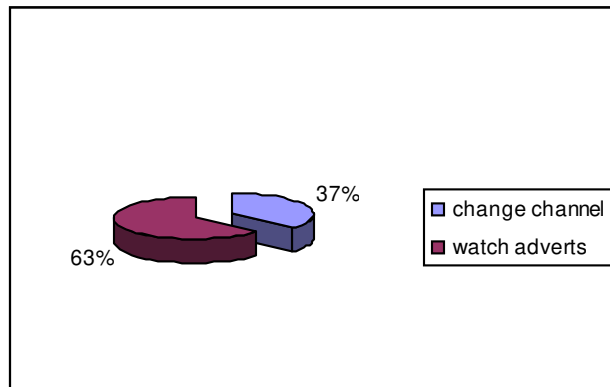


Table 4.1

Percentage and Frequency Distribution With Respect To Watching Advertisements On Television Or Changing The Channel (n=30)

(x)	Change channel	Watch adverts
Frequency (f)	11	19
Percentage (%)	37	63

Figure 4.1  
Pie Chart With Respect To Watching Advertisements on Television or Changing The Channel (n=30)



63% of children between the ages of 10-14 like to watch advertisements on television, while 37% of such children change the channel when advertisements come.

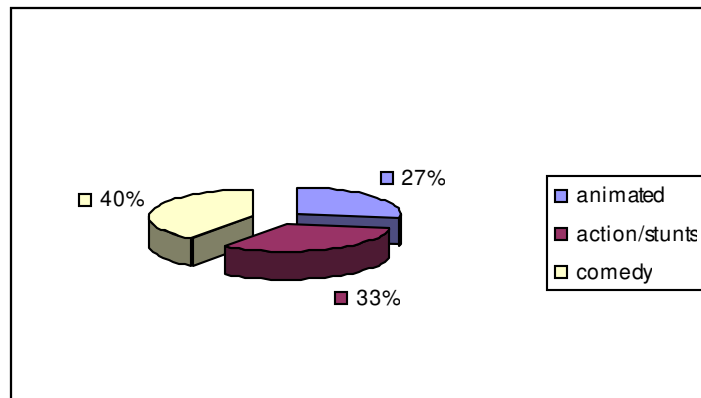
Table 4.2

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To advertisements liked best (n=30)

(x)	Animated	Action/stunts	Comedy
Frequency (f)	8	10	12
Percentage (%)	27	33	40

Figure 4.2

Pie Chart With Respect To Advertisements Liked Best (n=30)



27% of the children between the ages of 10-14 like to see advertisements with animation in it. 33% like to see adverts that feature some stunts or action sequences and 40% of the children like to see comedy or funny adverts.

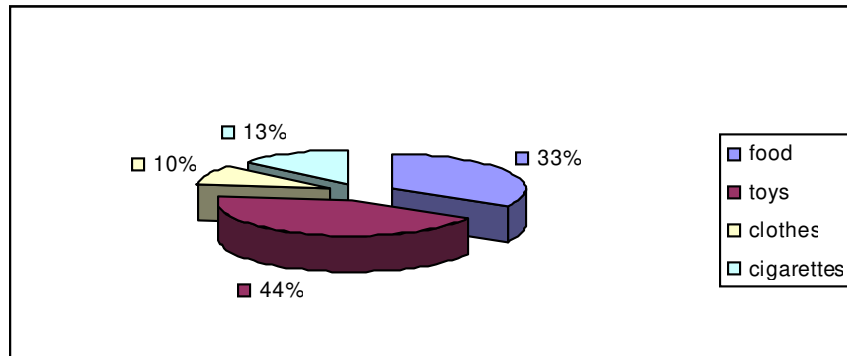
Table4.3

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Product Advertisements Liked Best On TV (n=30)

(X)	Food	Toys	Clothes	Cigarettes
Frequency (F)	10	13	3	4
Percentage (%)	33	44	10	13

Figure 4.3

Pie Chart With Respect To Product Advertisements Liked Best On TV (n=30)



10% of the children during the research stated that they like advertisements about clothes, 13% preferred cigarette adverts, 33% food whilst 44% were more likely to be engrossed in advertisements featuring toys.

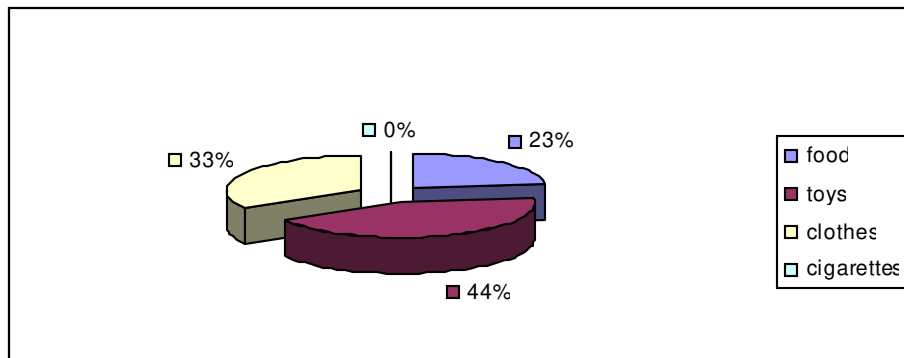
Table4.4

Percentage And Frequency distribution With Respect To Product To Buy Most When Out To Shop (n=30)

(X)	Food	Toys	Clothes	Cigarettes
Frequency (F)	7	13	10	0
Percentage (%)	23	44	33	0

Figure4.4

Pie Chart With Respect To Product Asked To Buy Most When Out To Shop (n=30)



From the above pie chart's results we can deduce that of all the 30 children asked 0% of them ever asked their parents to buy a cigarette for them. 23% asked for food items to be bought, 33% pleaded for clothes whilst 44% of 10-14 year old kids begged their parents to buy them toys.

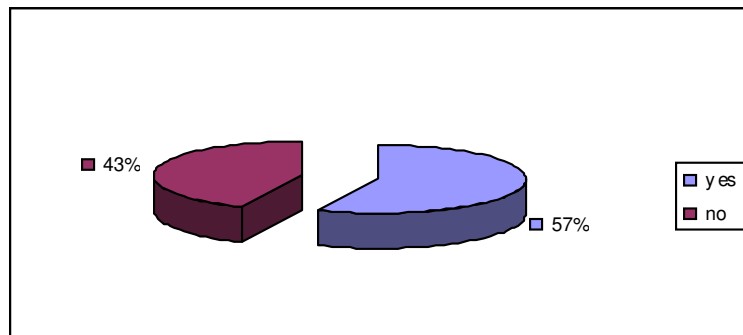
Table4.5

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Trying To Buy Nearly All The Candies And Toys And Clothes They Show In Advertisements (n=30)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	17	13
Percentage (%)	57	43

Figure4.5

Pie Chart With Respect To Trying To Buy Nearly All The Candies And Toys And Clothes They Show In Advertisements (n=30)



When asked from the children whether they get so influenced by adverts that they try to use the products shown in advertisements 57% replied in affirmative whilst 43% said that they weren't into trying nearly all the products shown in adverts.

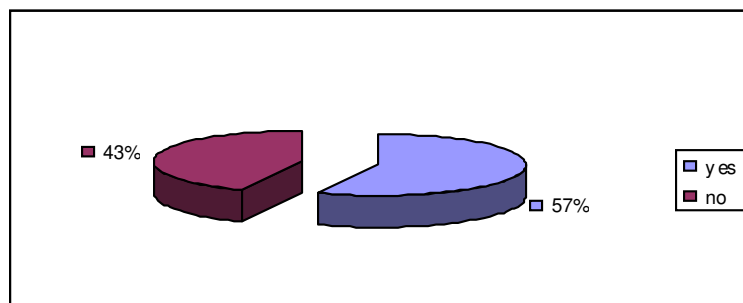
Table4.6

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Trying To Imitate Favorite Advertisement Character (n=30)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	17	13
Percentage (%)	57	43

Figure4.6

Pie Chart With Respect To Trying To Imitate Favorite Advertisement Character (n=30)



57% of the children claimed that they most certainly tried to imitate their favorite character in an advertisement, while 43% of the kids said that they just liked to watch ads and copy them.

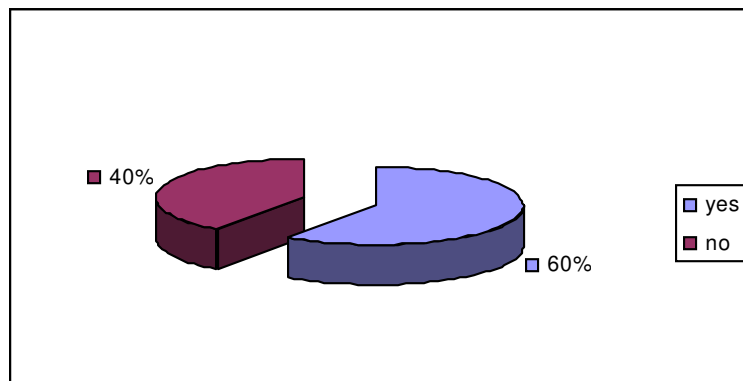
Table4.7

Percentage And Frequency distribution With Respect To Singing Along Favorite Advertisement (n=30)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	18	12
Percentage (%)	60	40

Figure4.7

Pie Chart With Respect To Singing along Favorite Advertisements (n=30)



60% of the respondent kids replied in affirmative when asked whether they sang along the advertisement jingles whilst 40% replied in negative.

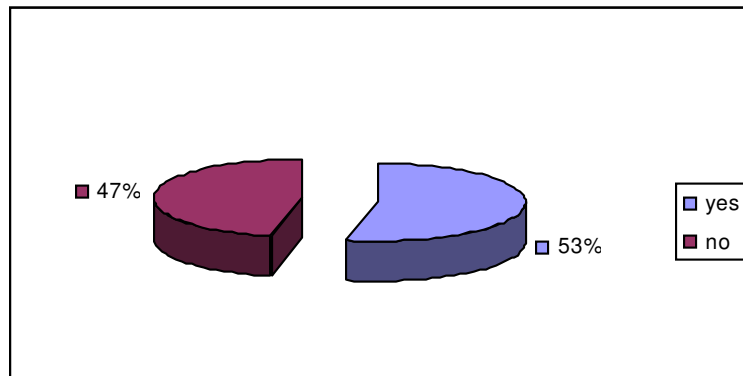
Table4.8

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Secretly Wanting To Try Cigarette After Seeing A Cigarette Advertisement (n=30)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	16	14
Percentage (%)	53	47

Figure4.8

Pie Chart With Respect To Secretly Wanting To Try Cigarette After Seeing A Cigarette Advertisement (n=30)



53% kids opted for an affirmative when asked if they secretly longed to try a puff of cigarette whilst 47% declined from having any such wishes.



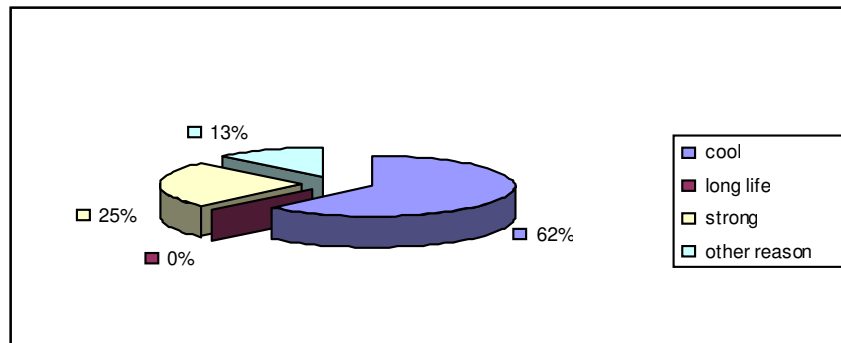
Table4.9

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To The Reason For Wanting To Try A Cigarette (n=30)

(X)	Cool	Long life	Strong	Other Reason
Frequency (F)	10	0	4	2
Percentage (%)	62	0	25	13

Figure4.9

Pie Chart With Respect To the reason for wanting to try a cigarette (n=30)



62% of the 16 kids who wanted to take a puff of a cig replied that their main reason for smoke was because they thought it was an IN thing to do, 25% felt that like shown In adverts it would make them strong and do heroic things while 13% put in a lot of reasons to take up a puff.

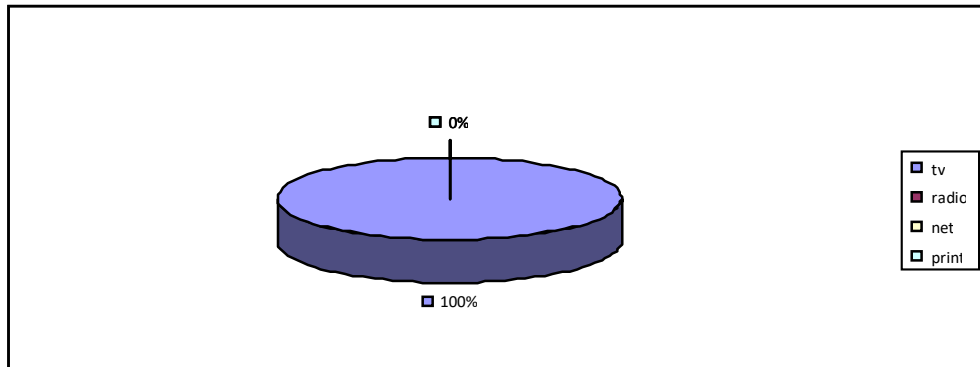
Table4.10

Percentage And Frequency distribution With Respect To Medium Child Is Most Exposed To (n=15)

(X)	TV	Radio	Net	Print
Frequency (F)	15	0	0	0
Percentage (%)	100	0	0	0

Figure4.10

Pie Chart With Respect To Medium Child Is Most Exposed To (n=15)



All the 15 parents that were presented with this questionnaire gave the same answer that the medium their child was exposed to most was television.

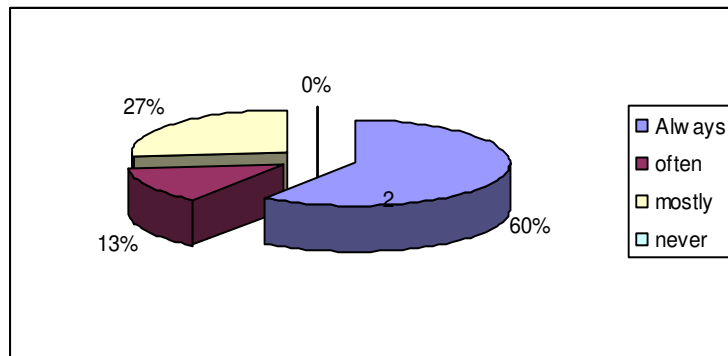
Table4.11

Percentage and Frequency Distribution With Respect To How Often Child Accompanies Parents For Shopping (n=15)

(X)	Always	Often	Mostly	Never
Frequency (F)	9	2	4	0
Percentage (%)	60	13	27	0

Figure4.11

Pie Chart With Respect To how often child accompanies parents for shopping (n=15)



$$\text{Weighted mean: } 36+4+12+0$$

$$15$$

$$= 3.46$$

13% of the parents said that their children often accompany them to the shopping trips, 27% said that they take their children along with them mostly, 0% said that it's out of the question if their kids ever accompany them and 60% said that they don't shop without their kids. And from the ranges assigned to the weighted mean we know that nearly all of the parents questioned took their kids along them and thus its an important variable.

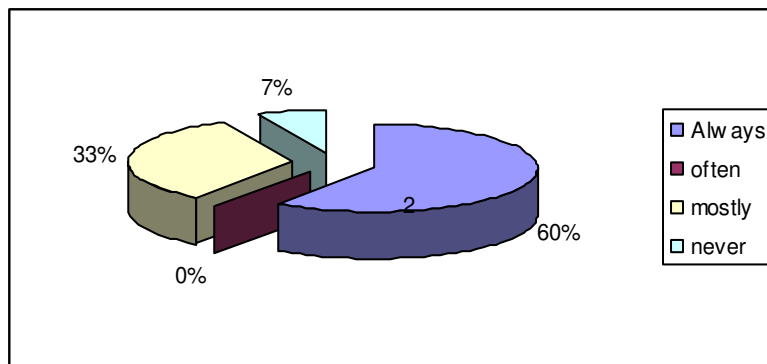
Table4.12

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Shopping Conflict (n=15)

(X)	Always	Often	Mostly	Never
Frequency (F)	9	0	5	1
Percentage (%)	60	0	33	7

Figure4.12

Pie Chart With Respect To shopping conflict (n=15)



$$\text{Weighted mean: } \frac{36+0+15+1}{15}$$

$$= \frac{52}{15}$$

$$= 3.46$$

0% said that they often have shopping conflicts with their kids while shopping, 7% said that they have never experience any such thing, 60% said that they always bicker over everything while shopping and 33% said that they through this experience most of the time. And from the weighted mean as well we know that shopping conflict is an important variable and experienced by a lot of parents.

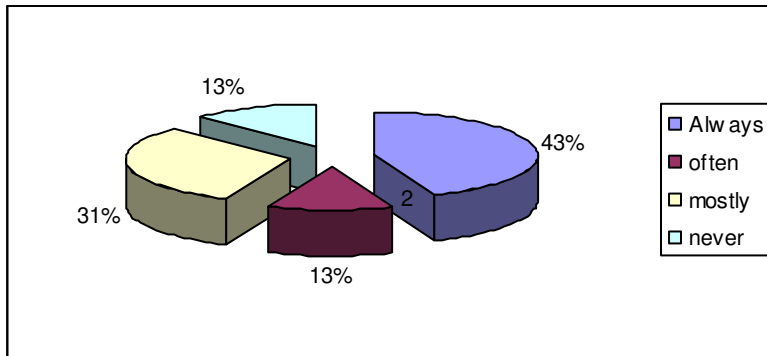
Table 4.13

Percentage And Frequency distribution With Respect To Child Trying To Imitate Advertisement Character (n=15)

(X)	Always	Often	Mostly	Never
Frequency (F)	7	2	5	2
Percentage (%)	43	13	31	13

Figure4.13

Pie Chart With Respect To Child Trying To Imitate Advertisement Character (n=15)



$$\begin{aligned} \text{Weighted mean: } & \frac{28+4+15+2}{15} \\ & = 3.26 \end{aligned}$$

When asked if their kids took so much influence from the advertisements that they imitated their favorite characters, 13% said often, 43% said always, 13% said never and 31% said mostly. And from the ranges of weighted mean we know that most of the children imitate their favorite advertisement characters.

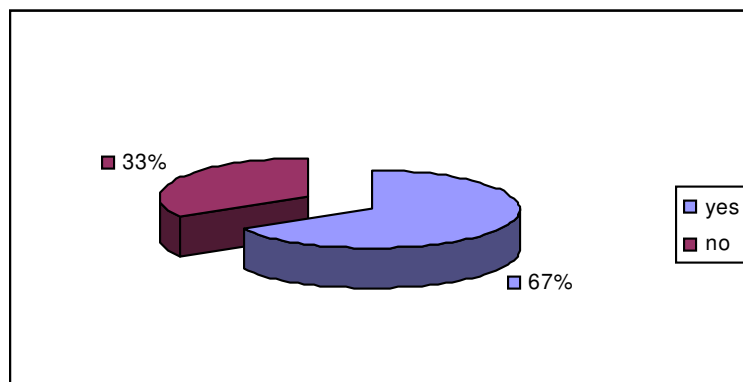
Table4.14

Percentage And Frequency distribution Food Advertising With Respect To Leading Children Towards Obesity (n=15)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	10	05
Percentage (%)	67	33

Figure4.14

Pie Chart With Respect To Food Advertising Leading Children Towards Obesity (n=15)



When asked if all these advertisements of gooey cheesy burgers and other fast foods and junk foods is leading towards increasing obesity 67% of the parents voiced their concerns and replied yes whereas 33% felt that it made no difference.

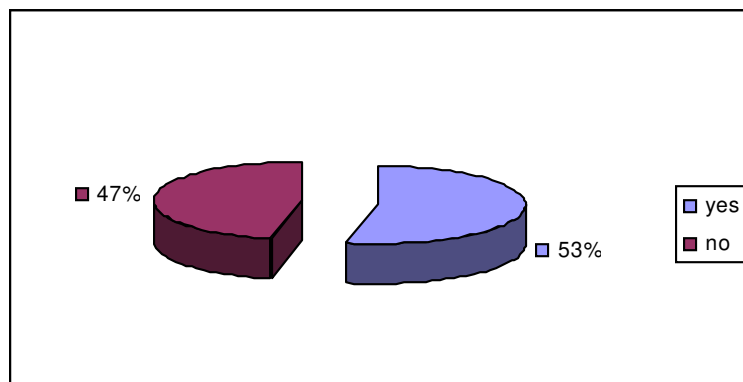
Table4.15

Percentage And Frequency distribution With Respect To Showing Aggressiveness After Viewing Action Sequenced Adverts (n=15)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	8	7
Percentage (%)	53	47

Figure4.15

Pie Chart With Respect To Showing Aggressiveness After Viewing Action Sequenced Adverts (n=15)



53% parents said that they usually see their children getting loose tempers and start talking in the hard language that is shown in some adverts whilst 47% felt that nothing of the sort happens.

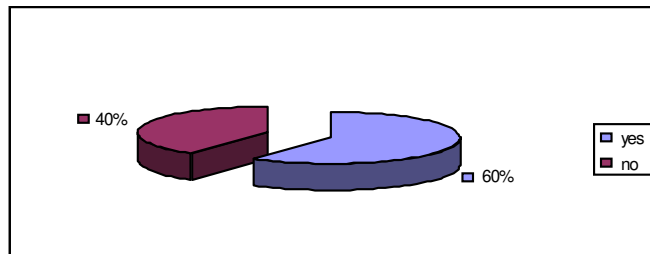
Table4.16

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Showing Inclination Towards Imitating Stunts Shown In Ads (n=15)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	9	6
Percentage (%)	60	40

Figure4.16

Pie Chart With Respect To showing inclination towards imitating stunts shown in ads (n=15)



60% parents said that their kids try to imitate the cyclists shown in the advertisements and even try to dress up like the characters in their favorite adverts whereas 40% felt that their kids weren't into imitating the stars.



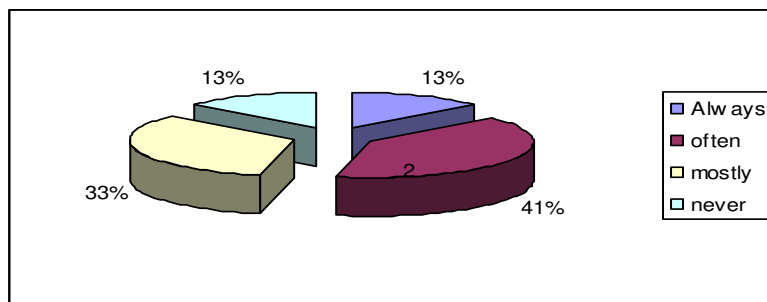
Table4.17

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Child Showing Curiosity Towards Trying A Cigarette After Seeing Its Advertisement (n=15)

(X)	Always	Often	Mostly	Never
Frequency (F)	2	6	5	2
Percentage (%)	13	41	33	13

Figure4.17

Pie Chart Child With Respect To Showing Curiosity Towards Trying A Cigarette After Seeing Its Advertisements (n=15)



$$\text{Weighted mean: } 8+12+15+2$$

$$15$$

$$= 3.13$$

From the weighted mean we find that most of the children get so influenced by cigarette ads that they have a desire of trying it.13% of the parents said that their children do ask them about cigarettes always and ask them if they can try it but they said that its only because the younger children of ages mostly between 10-12 cant really comprehend its adverse effects and don't even know how to quest their curiosity so they just ask about it straight out. Similarly 41% answered often,33% mostly and 13% never and they all said

that being children when they are told that something is bad for them they naturally want to try it to feel the thrill of it and to know why their parents are stopping them. Also quite a few parents said that they see their favorite characters in advertisements smoking so they assume that if they can smoke so can we.

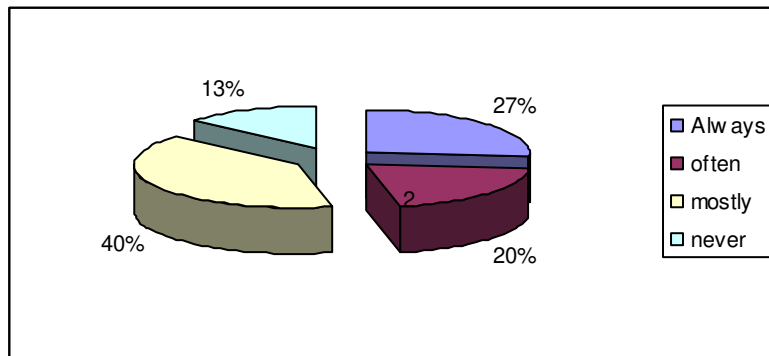
Table4.18

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Showing Curiosity When Exposed To Advertisements Of Sensitive Nature (n=15)

(X)	Always	Often	Mostly	Never
Frequency (F)	4	3	6	2
Percentage (%)	27	20	40	13

Figure4.18

Pie Chart With Respect To Showing Curiosity When Exposed To Advertisements Of Sensitive Nature (n=15)



$$\text{Weighted mean: } 16+6+18+2$$

$$15$$

$$= 2.8$$

20% of the parents said that they often have to answer embarrassing questions asked by their children when exposed to sensitive issues advertisements, 27% said that whenever

an advert of the sort comes their children do make a point of always inquiring about it.40% said that they mostly have to face such questions and 13% said that their kid hasn't ever asked them questions about sensitive issues. And from the weighted mean too we find that most of the children enquire about such advertisements mainly because it's out of their comprehension and they want to know about it.

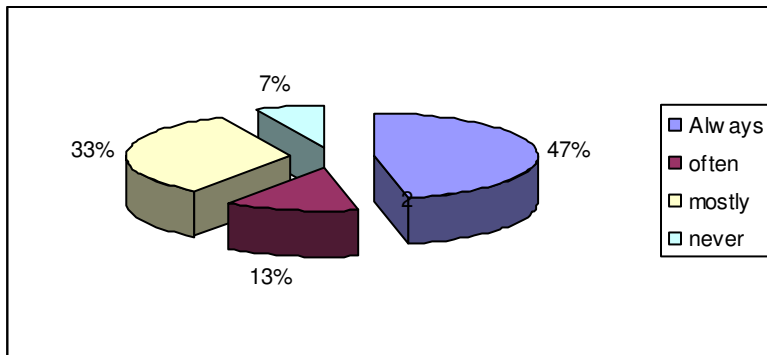
Table4.19

Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Changing Of Food, Toys And Clothes Preferences After Continuous Viewing Of Certain Advertisements (n=15)

(X)	Always	Often	Mostly	Never
Frequency (F)	7	2	5	1
Percentage (%)	47	13	33	7

Figure4.19

Pie Chart With Respect To changing Of Food, Toys And Clothes Preferences After Continuous Viewing Of Certain Advertisements (n=15)



$$\text{Weighted mean: } 28+4+15+1$$

$$15$$

$$= 3.2$$

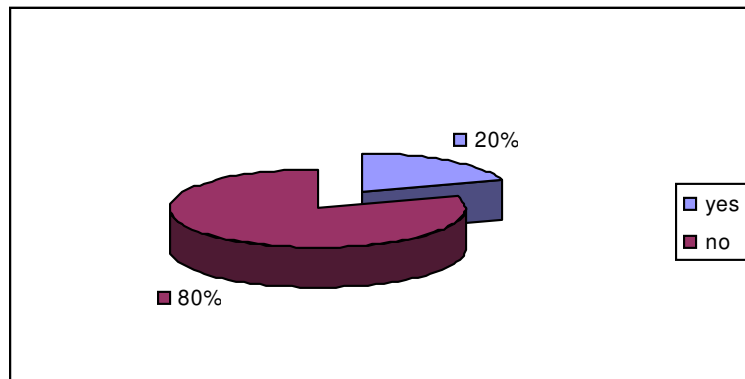
47% of the parents have said that always they find their kids candy and t-shirt choices changed after seeing advertisements, 13% said that when their child's interest gets glued

onto any single advertisement it often leads to their asking to have it. 7% said that their child has never shown any inclination and 33% said that they mostly find themselves in a such a situation. And from the ranges and ranking of weighted mean we find that mostly children plead their parents to buy them something that they like advertisements of.

Table 4.20  
 Percentage And Frequency Distribution With Respect To Whether Advertisers Should  
 Target Children Of Ages 10-14 (n=15)

(X)	Yes	No
Frequency (F)	3	12
Percentage (%)	20	80

Figure 4.20  
 Pie Chart With Respect To Whether Advertisers Should Target Children Of Ages 10-14  
 (n=15)



only 20% parents felt that advertisements provide information that can be vital for their kids so advertising to them at the ages of 10-14 is good but a majority of the parents I.e. 80% felt that this is not letting them get their minds developed on their own and is a constant attack on them to become direct targets at such a tender age when they can hardly differentiate between what's good and what's bad for them.

# FINDINGS

## 4.2 RESULTS OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

While talking with the advertisers I have found that there are some guidelines for the advertisers provided by the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) for making ads. And there are also certain guidelines provided for the Electronic media such as not to show the cigarette ads on television in Prime time. On the other hand the cigarette packets must contain captions of “Injurious to health” prescribed by the Ministry of Health.

Mr. Abdul Razzaq said that we also try to limit us, while making ads, for not to use slang language. For example there is an ad of KIDCO POP in which they have used a “MAKRANI” for entertaining kids towards that product. These things sometimes influence children to behave like the ads, which is not a good thing or considered to be as bad manners.

On the question about the ethical issues Mr. Abdul Razzaq said that it is unethical to make such ads but firms do this because of their personal gains. They want to earn from their clients and children now a days more attractive towards these kinds of things due to the increased pace of Cable TV and Internet.

Mostly the advertisers target kids in the ads of consumer products where most of the times it is not necessary that the product is directly related to kids. But they pick kids as an influencer for the parents. On this issue they said that it is all because of the thing that now a days the parents are more caring towards their children that are why they target kids to earn profits for their clients.

On the question that because of the involvement of cartoon characters like Superman, Spiderman in their ads they are changing the behaviors of kids towards more fantasy. In the answer Mr. Aamir Bari replied that they are just using different tools and techniques to create ideas and expand their business on the analysis of children’s psyche. Because they are watching Cable TV, Computer games and uses Internet. And what they like now days are things such as Spiderman, Batman, and Wave length.

On the question that how can we restrict these kinds of problems; Mr. Aamir Bari replied to me that it's not their matter. It's the duty of parents to teach their children about what is good for them or what is bad. We do things what our clients need and what is prevailing in the market.

While talking with the Media people about the subject, the sales manager of ARY digital Mr. Faisal Tammanna said that we have to sale our programs for which we advertise what our clients want but first we analyze the advertisement that does it contain any restricted material such as vulgarity or slang language because of the regulations of the PEMRA. He admitted that these ads have got a negative influence on the behavior of children but it's our business.

Mr. Raza Khan, Sales manager The MUSIK added that this is not a legal issue rather than it's an ethical issue. But the ethical culture is not present there in the industry, if we go for ethical advertising then we will go to' loose our business.

## CHAPTER # 5

### 5.1 CONCLUSION

It can be seen from the results of the questionnaires as well as the information that was gathered through literature review that most often children who are of impressionable minds and young ages that is between the ages of 10-14 regardless of their gender are very much influenced by television advertisements.

Though sometimes these influences can be positive but in my study I took into account the negative influences that are cast onto their preferences and behavior and the result shows that indeed young children are drawn towards the food items that they see so invitingly promoted in advertisements. Their cravings tend to increase also they start forcing their parents to buy them things that is in their opinion “cool” regardless of the fact whether their parents can afford it or not.

Apart from this they get so engrossed in the advertisements and they see the same adverts over and over again so many times that even the cigarette adverts attract them and their minds get the notion that if the model is gaining strength by puffing on the cigs so can they. They also get into the habit of imitating the way their favorite model swaggers or talks.

These casts a negative influence on children who get carried away and in their innocent minds think that whatever advertisements they are seeing are real thus they try to be like the models they see in the ads.

They are so much into cigarettes advertisements that most of the boys I questioned had a secret desire of puffing onto them as one boy aged 10 said” I want to smoke so that I can become strong and kill cockroach’s next time my mommy gets scared of them.”

When with parents these boys said they don’t want to smoke but when questioned without the presence of parents they said that they want to try it secretly which suggests that they know it’s a bad thing but still they crave for the thrill of smoking it.

From the questionnaires handed over to the parents I have found that in all of the households the children are mostly exposed to television. Also most of the parents thought that junk food adverts are leading their children to obesity and when a parent refuses to buy something that the kid is demanding, it results in a conflict. Apart from this

sensitive natured questions makes their kids pester them for answers which turn out to be embarrassing for parents. Similarly most of them also agreed that advertising and targeting such small children's often leads to negative behavior in their children.

All in all null hypothesis from my findings has been rejected and truly television advertisements makes a child more vulnerable and gradually an advertiser succeeds in making a child think they want them to. And it leads to negative influences on the child's behavior and preferences.

On the other hand the media related people and advertising agency personnel admit that there is negative influence of advertising of products like cigarettes, condoms, drinks and etc. They also said that it is not in their hands to have a control on children but they admit that it is unethical and parents must keep eyes on their children's' perceptions.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

According to the findings in the report, I have come up with a few recommendations that I think would be effective in safeguarding young children:

- Advertisers should investigate how young children comprehend and are influenced by advertising in new interactive media environments such as the internet.
- Advertisers should always take into account the level of knowledge, sophistication and maturity of the audience to which their message is primarily directed. Younger children have a limited capacity for evaluating the credibility of information they receive. They also may lack the ability to understand the nature of the personal information they disclose on the Internet. Advertisers, therefore, have a special responsibility to protect children from their own susceptibilities.
- Realizing that children are imaginative and that make-believe play constitutes an important part of the growing up process, advertisers should exercise care not to exploit unfairly the imaginative quality of children. Unreasonable expectations of product quality or performance should not be stimulated either directly or indirectly by advertising.



- Products and content which are inappropriate for children should not be advertised or promoted directly to children.
- Recognizing that advertising may play an important part in educating the child, advertisers should communicate information in a truthful and accurate manner and in language understandable to young children with full recognition that the child may learn practices from advertising which can affect his or her health and well-being.
- Advertisers are urged to influence children by developing advertising that, whenever possible, addresses itself to positive and beneficial social behavior, such as friendship, kindness, honesty, justice, generosity and respect for others.
- Care should be taken to incorporate minority and other groups in advertisements in order to present positive and pro-social roles and role models wherever possible. Social stereotyping and appeals to prejudice should be avoided.
- Children, youngsters and parents should be educated to develop skills to face the increasing flow of commercial information and pressure
- Children's viewing patterns of television and advertisements often reflect their parents patterns therefore parent should take care to view such adverts which do not put any wrong idea or notion into their child's mind.
- Parents should choose adopt the ritual of discussing the advertisements viewed on television with their kids and also make it clear to the children that what they see on television is not always true. Apart from this parents should try to develop such relations with their children that the kids feel encouraged to describe how advertisements on TV affect them.
- Also a legal body should be constituted which would bind the advertisers from blaring out advertisements which may lead to negative influences on a child's behavior and preferences.

## APPENDICES: QUESTIONNAIRES

### Appendix-A

#### Questionnaire (to be filled by children...Ages 10-14)

**Hi!! I'm a student of Bahria University & I need some of your precious time to fill out my questionnaire which is for my research "influence of advertising on young children". Please don't ask anyone to answer these questions except you as it may get biased. I assure you that your contribution is vital for my studies. Thank you!!!**

(Note: please tick only **one option**)

1) Name \_\_\_\_\_

2) Age \_\_\_\_\_

3) Do you like watching advertisements or change the channel when advertisements come?

A. change the channel    B. watch the advertisements

4) What sort of advertisements do you like?

A) Animated    B. action/stunts    C. comedy

5) What product advertisements on television do you like the most?

A. food    B. toys    C. clothes    D. cigarettes

6) When you go shopping with your parents what do you ask them to buy you the most?

A. food    B. toys    C. clothes    D. cigarettes

7) Do you try to buy nearly all the candies and toys and clothes they show in advertisements?

A. yes    B. no

8) Do you try to be like the character in your favorite advertisement?

A. yes    B. no

9) Do you sing along your favorite advertisement?

A. yes    B. no

10) Do you secretly want to try a cigarette after seeing an advertisement of it on television?

A. yes    B. no

11) If yes, why

A. do you think smoking will make u cool?

B. Do you think smoking won't kill you?

C. Do you think smoking will make you strong?

D. some other reason

**Thank you**

## Appendix B

### Questionnaire to be filled by parents

**Hi!! I'm a student of Bahria University & I need some of your precious time to fill out my questionnaire which is for my research "influence of advertising on young children". Please don't ask anyone to answer these questions except you as it may get biased. I assure you that your contribution is vital for my studies. Thank you!!!**

(Note: please tick only **one option**)

- 1) Name \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2) Which medium is your child exposed to most  
A. Television B. radio C. internet D. print
  
- 3) How often does your child (ren) accompany you to your shopping trips?  
A. always B. often C. mostly D. never
  
- 4) How frequently do u experience shopping conflict with your child (ren)?  
A. always B. often C. mostly D. never
  
- 5) Does your child after viewing some advertisement try to imitate his favorite actor, cartoon character?  
A. always B. often C. mostly D. never
  
- 6) Do you feel that advertising about food and goodies is leading children towards obesity?  
A. yes B. no
  
- 7) Have you noticed your child showing some aggressiveness after he's been exposed to advertisements that have action sequences?  
A. yes B. no

8) Has he/she shown inclination towards imitating the stunts shown in some advertisements?

A. yes    B. no

9) Has your child shown curiosity towards trying a cigarette after seeing an advertisement of cigarettes?

A. always    B. often    C. mostly    D. never

10) Is he/she curious when exposed to advertisements of sensitive issues (female hygiene, family planning)?

A. always    B. often    C. mostly    D. never

11) Have you ever noticed if your child's food, toys or clothes preferences have changed after continuous viewing of some food, toy or clothing advertisement?

A. always    B. often    C. mostly    D. never

12) Do you feel that advertisers should target children between the ages of 10-14?

A. yes    B. no