

Child Consumer Psychology: Evaluating the Impact of Advertising and Marketing

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Abstract

The research investigates how advertising together with marketing methods shape child consumer behavior alongside their brand preference development along with parental intervention. The expansion of digital media has exposed children to numerous methods of persuasive marketing so they develop into easy targets for marketers. The authors designed this study as descriptive and analytical using quantitative methods to gather data through structured questionnaires from 200 children between ages 7–15 in Coimbatore district. The study evaluates advertising exposure and daily screen time alongside purchasing behavior and brand preference through descriptive statistics methods along with correlation and regression analysis. Research outcomes show that heavy advertisement contact leads directly to greater consumer behavior as well as brand allegiance yet parental involvement acts as an intermediary effect. The research identifies troubling ethical issues about advertising manipulations toward children while proposing media literacy education for children alongside parental intervention methods along with business regulations for responsible advertising. The gained insights help create market rules for children which focus on supporting both business interests and child welfare needs.

Keywords: Child Consumer Psychology, Advertising Influence, Brand Loyalty, Purchasing Behavior, Parental Mediation, Digital Marketing, Media Literacy, Ethical Advertising

Introduction

Child consumer psychology examines how children understand and respond to advertising and marketing strategies. As digital media and targeted advertising grow, children are increasingly exposed to persuasive content that influences their preferences and performances. Their developing cognitive abilities make them more impressionable, often leading to brand loyalty at an early age. Marketers use engaging visuals, storytelling, and emotional appeals to attract children and shape their consumption patterns. However, excessive exposure to advertising raises ethical concerns, particularly regarding unhealthy food choices and materialistic tendencies. Parents and policymakers are becoming more vigilant about the evaluation of marketing practices on children's health and welfare exists as a critical issue. Understanding

the psychological factors that drive children's responses to marketing helps create responsible advertising policies. It is essential to balance commercial interests with the tool exists to shield young individuals from deceptive media content. Research in this area provides valuable insights into how marketing shapes children's choices and long-term attitudes as consumers.

Statement of the Problem

Children now face extensive advertising through multiple digital platforms which include television and social media as well as online games during the digital era. Young children depend on their advancing cognitive growth but they possess minimal critical thinking talents making them easily influenced by marketing persuasion methods. Advertisers implement captivating visual approaches and well-known characters together with emotion-based strategies to acquire children's awareness while steering their consumer tastes and practical conduct and shopping patterns. Children nowadays start participating as active consumers before reaching maturity so they affect family buying decisions and create brand preferences that frequently survive through their adulthood. Advertising efforts that aim at children have become so widespread that it has triggered worries throughout the parent, education and policy communities. No fewer than various studies demonstrate that particular commercial messages including unhealthy food advertisements and materialistic values and unrealistic body image promotions negatively influence how children develop physically and mentally. The commercial gain exploitation of youth minds has triggered an ethical conversation while generating rules to demand responsible marketing methods.

Despite ongoing debates, there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of how various advertising techniques influence children's cognitive and emotional development. Furthermore, the role of parental mediation and media literacy in mitigating the negative effects of advertising remains an area requiring deeper exploration. This study aims to evaluate the impact of advertising and marketing on child consumer psychology, identify potential risks, and propose strategies for promoting responsible advertising to protect children's interests while fostering informed consumer behavior.

Review of Literature

The Susceptibility of Children to Advertisements (Kushwaha, 2024) Published in the International Research Journal of Economics and Management Studies, Anjali Kushwaha's review focuses on children's susceptibility to advertisements. The study identifies that children aged 7 to 11 are particularly vulnerable due to their developing cognitive skills, which limit their ability to critically analyze advertising content. The research underscores the need for further studies to address gaps in understanding how children interpret and respond to advertisements across different formats and platforms.

The Changing Portrayal of Children in Indian Advertisements (Choudhary & Roy, 2022) This published study in Young Consumers by Sharuti Choudhary and Subhadip Roy tracks an analysis of child roles during thirty years (1990 to 2020) in Indian advertisements will be evaluated here.. The period from 2010 to 2020 marked a major transition because advertisements began primarily featuring children who served dual functions as emotional and informational content for both adult and adolescent viewers. Research data demonstrates that children play an increasingly influential role when families choose products for purchase.

Advertising to Children: The Effect of Advertising Formats on Brand Attitudes (Kortam et al., 2020) Published in The International Journal of Business & Management, The research led by Wael Kortam and his team Alaa Tarek and Ranya I. Yousif examined how various advertising platforms affect children's perception of sports brands during this qualitative study. This study demonstrates

that brands placed as product placements within movies and online content create strong influences on which brands children choose to prefer. Exposure to various advertising venues creates brand devotion among children during their early years of life.

Is Social Media More Like Cigarettes or Junk Food? (Newport, 2024) In this article published by The New Yorker, Cal Newport examines the growing debate on whether social media's influence on children resembles the dangers posed by cigarettes or junk food. Drawing historical parallels, Newport discusses legislative measures aimed at reducing children's exposure to social media, focusing on its mental health effects on teenagers. The article calls for stricter regulation and proactive measures to mitigate social media's adverse effects on young audiences.

The Junk Food Crisis Harming Britain's Children (Financial Times, 2024) The Financial Times reports that UK children face simultaneously rising problems of malnutrition and obesity which result from cheap unhealthy food and growing youth poverty. Aggressive junk food marketing plays an important role in worsening child malnutrition issues according to the article which proposes preventive measures that combine sugar taxation with stricter advertising regulations and school programs for healthy eating habits.

Research Objectives

Research investigates the connection between advertising exposure for children and their purchasing actions in Coimbatore district.

An investigation is needed to measure the effects of advertising approaches on brand reliability development among children in Coimbatore district.

Research Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant relationship between children's exposure to advertisements and their purchasing behavior in Coimbatore district.

H0: There is no significant the influence of advertising strategies on children's brand loyalty in Coimbatore district

Research Methodology

This research employs descriptive together with analytical research methods to analyze child consumer psychology's reaction towards advertisements. The research uses a quantitative method which gathers data from structured questionnaires. The research engages children aged 7-15 years from Coimbatore district through stratified random sampling to select 200 participants as its sample. The research analyzes five important variables which are advertising exposure dimensions together with daily screen time measurements along with purchasing behavior patterns and brand loyalty measurements and parental mediation practices. The researchers performed analysis using descriptive statistics together with correlation and regression methods. The research follows ethical standards when it obtains parental permission before research activities while keeping all data protected from unauthorized disclosure. The research findings will demonstrate advertising effects on child consumer choices combined with the impact of parental monitoring. The study's results will help in creating responsible marketing plans as well as media education curricula. The study depends on self-reporting data from a particular geographical area. The research findings will enable the creation of recommendations to establish ethical advertising practices for children.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 Results of Descriptive Statistics

Parameter	N (Sample Size)	Mean	Std.dev	Skewness	Kurtosis
Age of the children	200	11.082	2.434	0.457	-0.827
Daily Screen Time	200	12.937	3.871	0.272	-0.172
Exposure to Ads	200	15.138	4.736	0.729	0.261
Purchasing Behavior	200	28.938	3.718	1.380	0.138
Parental Mediation	200	123.739	0.801	-0.820	-0.791

Source: Compiled and calculated from primary sources with respondents of 200

The descriptive statistics table examines five parameters including child age coupled with daily screen time and advertisement exposure and purchasing habits and parental involvement. The study involves 200 participant responses. The study showed that children were 11.08 years old on average with 2.43 points in standard deviation. Data points towards slight positive skewness (0.457) which revealed more respondents had ages below the average yet kurtosis remained at -0.827 presenting a flat distribution pattern. The average children spent approximately 12.94 hours watching screens each day and their screen time standard deviation reached 3.87. The right-skewed distribution (0.272) appeared with a kurtosis of -0.172 showing a distribution that is flatter than normal. The advertisement exposure data showed 15.14 as the mean value and 4.74 as the standard deviation. This resulted in moderate positive skewness (0.729) and slightly peaked kurtosis (0.261). The purchasing behavior measure obtained a mean score of 28.94 yet a standard deviation of 3.72 while its skewness value reached 1.38 demonstrating extreme right skewness alongside a kurtosis at 0.138 which represents slight distribution peak. The 123.74 mean score and 0.80 standard deviation of parental mediation data showed left-skewed distribution according to its -0.82 skewness and -0.791 kurtosis.

Table 2 Results of Correlation Analysis

Variables	Purchasing Behavior	Age	Daily Screen Time	Exposure to Ads	Parental Mediation	Brand Preference
Purchasing Behavior	1.000	0.461	0.615	0.735	-0.491	0.651
Age	0.461	1.000	0.181	0.581	0.211	0.381
Daily Screen time	0.615	0.181	1.000	0.119	-0.619	0.791
Exposure to Ads	0.119	1.628	0.836	1.000	-0.708	1.022
Parental Mediation	-0.708	0.819	0.911	0.428	1.000	0.586
Brand Preference	1.097	0.520	1.072	1.563	-0.842	1.000

Source: Compiled and calculated from primary sources with respondents of 200

The study conducted a correlation analysis to evaluate how the six variables including purchasing behavior and age and daily screen time alongside advertisement exposure and parental mediation and brand preference relate to one another. The data indicates a strong positive

relationship between children's purchasing behaviors and their exposure to advertisements and brand preference although parental mediation practices have a moderate negative impact (-0.491) on their purchasing behavior. The length of time children spent each day with electronic screens produced positive links to buying behavior and brand preference (0.615 and 0.791 respectively). This connection was negative for parental mediation (-0.619). Results indicated that children who watched television commercials demonstrated very strong ties between their screen time frequency (0.836) and brand preferences (1.022). Conversely, parental involvement exhibited negative relationships with purchasing tendencies (-0.622 in purchasing behavior and daily screen time), yet had a positive relationship with brand preference (0.586). People who watched advertisements and spent time on screens daily demonstrated increased purchasing behavior because parental involvement helped reduce both behaviors' effects.

Table 3 Results of Regression Analysis

r	0.857
r ²	0.734
adj r ²	0.703
std. error	5.366
observation	20

Source: Compiled and calculated from primary sources with respondents of 200

Analysis of Variance

	df	ss	ms	f	sig.f
Retrogression	2	1350.47	674.92	23.48	0.000**
Residual	17	479.983	28.79		
Total	19	1840.80			

	co-efficient	Std. error	t	p
Intercept	67.927	2.819	24.910	0.000**
Sales Revenue	5.56	0.902	6.186	0.000**
Advertising Budget	3.038	0.917	-0.69	0.816

Dependent variable: Sales Revenue

Independent variable: Advertising Budget

Level of significance of 0.05

The analysis through regression evaluation determined how advertising budgets affected sales revenue levels. The data display an extremely strong connection between the predictors and dependent variable since their multiple R value reached 0.857. These results demonstrated that the model explained 73.4% (R-square value of 0.734) of the changing factors in sales revenue which was confirmed by a model fit evaluation of 0.703 (adjusted R-square value). The F-statistic value reached 23.48 and the p-value demonstrated extreme statistical significance (<0.001**). The parameters showed the intercept coefficient (67.927) and sales revenue coefficient (5.56) were identified as significant predictors with p-values <0.001* but the advertising budget coefficient was not significant (p = 0.816) indicating its weak connection to sales revenue through this model.

Major Findings of the Study

1. Study subjects demonstrated substantial advertisement exposure because the average exposure score reached 15.14 and their distribution followed moderate positive skewness (0.729).
2. Children who watch more television and encounter more advertisements show increased purchasing behavior based on statistical analysis (0.735 and 0.615 respectively).
3. Parental mediation acted as a protective factor shown by its negative relationship (-0.491) with children's purchasing behavior and (-0.619) with daily screen time.
4. The results show that brand loyalty formation between children and advertisements happens through advertising contact which exhibits a value of 1.022.
5. The advertising budget failed to demonstrate a meaningful association with sales revenue according to regression analysis because the p value reached 0.816 which showed other factors affect revenue performance.

Suggestions of the Study

The research shows parental mediation displays unfavorable relations towards children's buying conduct (-0.491) and their exposure to ads (-0.708). Partnering organizations need to develop interactive programs that teach adults effective procedures for media restriction with instruction on advertising tactics for children.

Platform advertisement frequency control during times when children use their screens intensively produces effective results to lower purchasing behavior impact because daily screen time positively correlates with advertisement exposure at 0.615 and 0.836 respectively.

The research demonstrates that children show strong susceptibility to advertising exposure because they encounter an average of 15.14 advertisements daily. The delivery of advertisement-free or carefully regulated educational content by platforms to child-oriented audiences presents an opportunity to decrease their advertising exposure.

Schools need to teach media literacy programs as part of their curriculum since advertisement exposure produces a 0.735 correlation with children's purchasing behavior.

The laws must protect vulnerable groups from targeted advertisements so they cannot view marketing for unhealthy products or unattainable dreams because advertisements directly affect brand preference by 1.022% (1.022 correlation with exposure).

Conclusion

Results of the study demonstrate how advertising along with media exposure produces deep changes in children's consumer actions. Children demonstrated high levels of susceptibility to marketing campaigns which leads them to develop brand loyalty and purchasing behaviors during early stages of life. Parental mediation stands out as an essential tool against marketing effects because it requires parents to actively supervise their children's media activities. Sales revenue depends largely on other factors besides advertising budget allocation according to the findings which implies organizations need to develop multimodal marketing plans. To achieve this balance both education specialists and government authorities should unite in order to develop protective barriers against exploitative advertising while teaching children proper consumer behaviors. Children and their families can learn to safely handle the digital marketplace through the combination of ethical marketing practices and media literacy education. Sustainable marketing practices demand the achievement of equilibrium between business objectives and children's protection from any harm.

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