

**IMPACT OF TELEVISION ADVERTISING ON FOOD CONSUMPTION AMONG CHILDREN IN CHINHOYI DISTRICT OF ZIMBABWE**

**Henry Takudzwa Manuere ,Josphat Manyeruke and Lovemore Chikazhe**  
Chinhoyi University of Technology, Department of Retail Management

<https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2022.0367>

**ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of Television advertising on food consumption among children in Chinhoyi District of Zimbabwe. The Child Institute (1999) as cited in Dibia et al, (2019) define the concept of child as, 1) Infants or babies (0-2 years); 2) Toddlers or Pre-schoolers (2-5 years); 3) School Age Children (6-12 years), and 4) Adolescents Teenagers (13-17 years). Therefore the following objective was created in order to meet the needs of the study; 1) To explore the impact of television advertising on food consumption among children. The survey research design was utilised by the study. To that end, a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 250 respondents (parents). The simple regression model was used to measure the strength of the given hypothesis. The results of the study showed that; 1) Television advertising has a significant impact on food consumption among children, and 2) Television advertising copy has a significant impact on food consumption among children, and 3) Television advertising setting has a significant impact on food consumption among children. Therefore this study recommends that parents should teach their children on how they should react to television advertising that relate to food consumption as this arrangement helps to reduce the negative effects of television advertisement on children. The literature on television advertising shows that children who watch television frequently learn strange behaviours, such as drinking, cheating, gambling, stealing and class bunking, (Klein et al, 1993; Comstock and Strzyzewskis, 1990).

**Key Words:** Television, advertising, food consumption, children and Chinhoyi District.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Advertisements are used by companies to encourage consumers to buy certain products and services (Hameed et al, 2014:246). For this reason, some advertisements require remarkable expenses compared to the marketing activities (Hameed et al, 2014). Most companies spend much of their time fighting adverts in various media, such as, the television, the radio, the magazines and the billboards, (Datta , 2008). According to Datta (2008) as cited in Hameed et al,(2014), advertising refers to, “the non personal message, containing the information, frequently paid for and credible in nature, about products”. Therefore the basic aim of advertising is to popularise the products of the company in question (Ramaswani and Namakumari, 2004). Marketers use the mass media to ensure that their marketing messages are well communicated to the consumers (Ramaswani and Namakumari, 2004). Thus the choice of the media depends on the quantity and quality of the message and the desired target audience (Ezel et al, 2008). To that end, Television advertising has become the most preferred media by both companies and individual people (Hameed et al, 2014). Kavitha (2006) as cited in Hameed et al, (2014:247) argues that “the

advantage of Television over the other mediums is that it is perceived as a mixture of audio and video features, as it provides products with instant validity and fame and offers the greatest chance for creative advertising” Shah and D’Souza (2008) believe that the Television set is mostly used by both middle and upper class families and unfortunately the television is not common among the poor people living in both rural and urban areas. The improvement in literacy levels has made it possible for marketers to adopt the television to communicate with customers, (Ciochetto, 2004). Television advertising affects the emotions of consumers by providing exciting messages and musical tunes that are related to the culture of the people (Kotwal et al, 2008).

Unfortunately companies make use of television advertisements to attract children in order to promote those brands that are mostly loved by children (Hameed et al, 2014; 39). The Child Development Institute (1999) defines the concept of children as follows:

- i. Infants or babies (0-2 years);
- ii. Toddlers or Pre-schoolers (2-5 years);
- iii. School Age Children (6-12 years);
- iv. Adolescents Teenagers (13-17 years).

This study focussed on children (6-12 years) who are able to make decisions about the products they want to buy (Child Development Institute,1999). Children have unique behaviours in that they are socially active and are able to respond to television adverts, especially when food adverts, are made , (Douglas, 1998).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on television advertising shows that children who watch television frequently learn strange behaviours, such as drinking, cheating, gambling, stealing and class bunking, (Klein et al, 1993; Comstock and Strzyzewskis, 1990). Singer et al (1995) conducted a research study to investigate the effect of television viewing on children and the findings showed that children who watch “action and fighting videos on television” become violent in their attitude. Several authors agree that there are three factors that influence children’s buying behaviour and these factors include; parents, friends and the media (Gunter and Furnham, 1998; Nielsen Media Research 1998; Doston and Hyatt, 2005). Numerous studies have shown that television advertisements are able to change the attitudes of children so that they develop a preference of certain types of food products (Kavitha, 2006). Sergeant et al (1997) conducted a study to investigate the effect of television viewing on children. The structured questionnaire was used to collect data on a sample of 1265 youth aged between 10-19 years old. The results of study showed that smoking among the youths is caused by watching Television advertisements. Collin, (1990) and Maher et al (2006), argue that, “children are attracted towards advertisements that make them happy”. Several studies have also shown that television advertisements can change children’s choice for certain food products (Halford et al, 2004). Television advertisements are capable of persuading children to buy certain food products and to change their consumption behaviours (Halford et al, 2004). The literature on Television watching shows that there is a positive relationship between watching television and appreciating the products that are advertised on television, (Bernard et al, 1995). Several authors argue that television watching, “causes more food purchase and more food purchase means more fatness among children (Bernard et al, 1995 as cited in Hameed et al, 2014:248). There is a positive relationship between television watching and obesity (Lobstain and Dibb, 2005; Hameed et al,

(2014). Furnham et al (1997), in Hameed et al (2014), argue that most of the food products advertised on Television are not healthy food products. Most of the food products advertised on television include, “27,6% cereal, 17,7% sweets, 12, 2% snacks, 12% fast foods , and 8.8% beverages”, (Hameed et al, 2014:248). Fedler et al , (1982) argue that children in developed countries are affected by music advertisements on Television. Arnett (1994) further observes that listening to music on Television drives children to appreciate drugs in the long run. Studies have shown that a good number of children who appreciate music movies have difficulties in doing well at school (Took and Weiss, 1994).

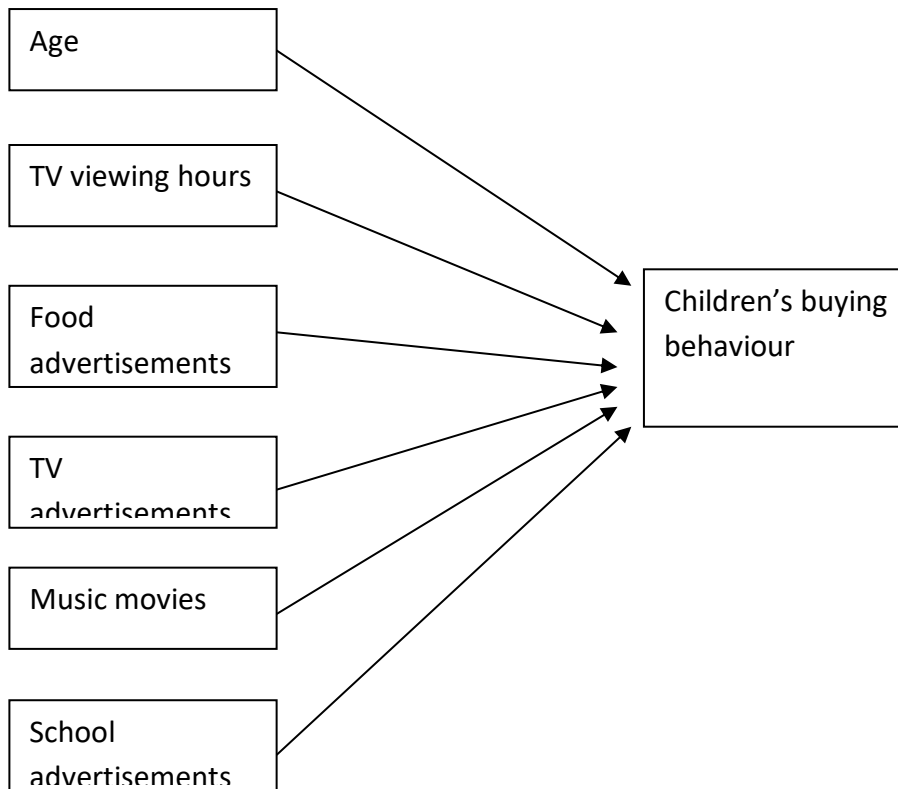
**Objective of the study**

- a) To find out the effect of Television watching on children’s buying behaviour.

**Hypothesis**

- a) Age has a positive correlation on children’s buying behaviour.
- b) TV viewing hours has a positive correlation on children’s buying behaviour.
- c) Food consumption has a positive correlation on children’s buying behaviour.
- d) Music has a positive correlation on children’s buying behaviour.
- e) School advertising has a positive correlation on children’s buying behaviour.
- f) Television advertisements have a positive correlation on children’s buying behaviour.

**Conceptual framework**



**3. METHODOLOGY**

The quantitative approach was used to conduct this study. Therefore the descriptive survey research design was adopted. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 250 children in Chinhoyi District. Data was analysed using several instruments such as, descriptive statistics, the mean, standard deviation, correlation analysis and the ANOVA were used to measure the relationship between television advertisement and children’s buying behaviour.

**3. DATA DISCUSSION**

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics**

|                      | N   | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation |
|----------------------|-----|---------|---------|------|---------------|
| Food advertisement   | 250 | 1.7     | 5.00    | 3.76 | 0.633         |
| Age group            | 250 | 1.7     | 5.00    | 3.76 | 0.633         |
| School advertisement | 250 | 1.7     | 5.00    | 3.88 | 0.629         |
| Music movies         | 250 | 1.7     | 20.30   | 4.22 | 1.200         |
| TV advertisements    | 250 | 1.7     | 5.00    | 3.62 | 0.764         |
| Valid N (listwise)   | 250 |         |         |      |               |

**Table 1** shows the mean and standard deviation of 250 children who participated in the study. On food advertisement the mean is 3.76 whereas the standard deviation is 0.633. Therefore food advertisement is less effective because the standard deviation is high.

On age group the standard deviation is 0.633 while the mean is 3.76. Standard deviation is equally high, therefore less effective. On school advertisements, the mean is 3.88 and the standard deviation is 0.629. This means that the standard deviation is high, therefore less effective. On music movies, the mean is 4.22 and the standard deviation is 1.200 and once again the standard deviation is high. On TV advertisements, the mean is 3.62 while the standard deviation is 0.764 and once again the standard deviation is high.

**Table 2: Correlation analysis**

|                    | Food advert | Age group | School advert | Music movies | TV adverts |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Food advert        |             |           |               |              |            |
| Person correlation | 1           | 1,000**   | .472**        | .164**       | ,694**     |
| Sig (2 tailed)     |             | 0.000     | 0.000         | 0.010        | .000       |
| N                  | 250         | 250       | 250           | 250          | 250        |

|                    |  |   |        |        |        |
|--------------------|--|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Age group          |  | 1 | .471** | .163** | .695** |
| Person correlation |  |   | 0.000  | 0.010  | .000   |
| Sig (2 tailed)     |  |   | 250    | 250    | 250    |
| N                  |  |   |        |        |        |
| School advert      |  |   | 1      | .182** | .478** |
| Person correlation |  |   |        | 0.004  | 0.000  |
| Sig (2 tailed)     |  |   | 250    | 250    | 250    |
| N                  |  |   |        |        |        |
| Music movies       |  |   |        | 1      | .187** |
| Person correlation |  |   |        |        | 0.003  |
| Sig (2 tailed)     |  |   |        | 250    | 250    |
| N                  |  |   |        |        |        |
| TV adverts         |  |   |        |        | 1      |
| Person correlation |  |   |        |        | 250    |
| Sig (2 tailed)     |  |   |        |        |        |
| N                  |  |   |        |        |        |

There is a strong positive relationship between Food advertisement and age group, represented by 1.000 and at the same time the relationship between Food advertisement and school advertisement is moderate, represented by 0.42. There is a weak relationship between food advertisement and music movies, represented by 0.164. There is a strong positive relationship between Food advertisement and TV advertisement, represented by 0.694. There is a moderate relationship between age group and school advertisement which is represented by 0.471. There is a weak positive relationship between Age group and music movies, as represented by 0.163.

**4. CONCLUSION**

The results of the study show that there is a positive relationship between TV advertisements and children’s buying behaviour. The literature on television advertising shows that children who watch television frequently learn strange behaviours, such as drinking, cheating, gambling, stealing and class bunking, (Klein et al, 1993; Comstock and Strzyzewskis, 1990). Singer et al (1995) conducted a research study to investigate the effect of television viewing on children and the findings showed that children who watch “action and fighting videos on television” become violent in their attitude. Several authors agree that there are three factors that influence children’s buying behaviour and these factors include; parents, friends and the media (Gunter and Furnham, 1998; Nielsen Media Research 1998; Doston and Hyatt, 2005). Numerous studies have shown that television advertisements are able to change the attitudes of children so that they develop a preference of certain types of food products (Kavitha, 2006). Sergeant et al (1997) conducted a study to investigate the effect of television viewing on children. The structured questionnaire was used to collect data on a sample of 1265 youth aged between 10-19 years old. The results of study

showed that smoking among the youths is caused by watching Television advertisements. Collin, (1990) and Maher et al (2006), argue that, “children are attracted towards advertisements that make them happy”.

## REFERENCES

- Child Development Institute (1991). Know your child better by learning the ages and stages of child development. America: *GDI*, 1 – 8
- Dibie, V. M. (2017). Children's influence strategies on family purchase decision making in Umuahia, Abia State, and Southeast Nigeria. EBSU-Abakaliki, Ph.D Thesis Unpublished 1-205.
- Douglas, L. (1998). Children's food choice. *Journal of Nutrition and Food Science*, 1:14-18
- Furham, A., Abramsky, S., and Gunter, B. (1997). A cross-cultural content analysis of children's television advertisements. *Sex Roles*, 37:91 - 99
- Hameed, A., Wagas, A., Aslam, M. N., Bilal, M. and Umair, M. (2014). Impact of television advertisements on children's buying behavior. *International Journal of Humanities and I Social Sciences*, 4:241 - 258
- Hoeberichts, N. (2012). Music and Advertising: The effect of music in television commercials on consumer attitudes, Thesis, International Bachelor, Economics and Business Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business Marketing Entrepreneurship and Organization, Erasmus University, Rotterdam
- Arnett J (1992), The soundtrack of recklessness: musical preferences and reckless behavior among adolescents. *J Adolesc Res* 7:313-331
- Ciochetto, L. (2004), Advertising and Globalisation in India, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand. Cole TJ, Freeman JV & Preece MA (1995) Body-mass index reference curves for the UK, 1990. *Arch Dis Child* 73, 25-29.
- Collins, J. (1990), "Television and primary schoolchildren in Northern Ireland: the impact of Comstock J, Strzyzewski K (1990), Interpersonal interaction on television: family conflict and jealousy on primetime. *J Broadcasting Electronic Media* 34:263—282.
- Datta Srinivasa (April, 2008) "Advertisements Do They Match Consumer Preferences?" Marketing Mastermind, pp.59-62.
- Etzel Michael, Walker Bruce J., Stanton William and Pandit Ajay (2008), Marketing- Concepts and Cases, 13<sup>th</sup> Edition, Tata Macgraw, New Delhi.
- Fedler F, Hall J, Tanzi L (1982), Popular songs emphasizes sex, deemphasize romance. *Mass Commun Rev* 9:10-15.
- Furnham A, Abramsky S & Gunter B (1997) A cross-cultural content analysis of children's television advertisements, *Sex Roles* 37, 91-99.
- Gunter B, Gates C & Blades M (2005) Advertising to Children on TV. Content, Impact and Regulation. Mahwah, NJ:Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Halford JCG, Boyland E, Hughes G, Oliveira L & Dovey TM (2007) Beyond-brand effect of television (TV) food advertisements/commercials on caloric intake and food choice of 5 to 7 year old children. *Appetite* 49, 263-267.
- Halford JCG, Gillespie J, Brown V, Pontin EE & Dovey TM (2004) The effect of television (TV) food advertisements/commercials on food consumption in children. *Appetite* 42, 221-225.

- Kavitha G. (2006) "A Study On The Effectiveness Of The Advertising Techniques Used In The Personal Care Segment Of Women Consumers", *Indian Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 36, No. 8, pp. 12-16.
- Klein JD, Brown JD, Childers KW, Oliveri J, Porter C, Dykers C (1993), Adolescents' risky behaviour and mass media use. *Pediatrics* 92:24-31.
- Kline, S.( 1995), "Countering children's sedentary lifestyle", *Childhood*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 239-58.
- Kotwal Nidhi, Gupta Neelima and Devi Arjee (2008) "Impact of T.V Advertisements on Buying Pattern of Adolescent Girls", *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 51-55.
- Lobstein T & Baur LA (2005) Policies to prevent childhood obesity in the European Union. *Eur J Public Health* 15,576-579
- Lobstein T & Dibb S (2005) Evidence of a possible link between obesogenic food advertising and child overweight. *Obes Rev* 6, 203-208
- Maher, J.K., Ilu, M.Y. and Kolbe, R.H. (2006), "Children's recall of television ad elements". *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 35 No. 1, pp. 23-33.
- Ramaswami, V.S. and Namakumari, S. (2004), *Marketing Management*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, MACMILLAN, India.
- Sargent JD, Dalton MA, Beach M, Bernhardt A, Pullin D, Stevens M (1997), Cigarette promotional items in public schools. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* 151:1189-1196.
- Scott D (1995), The effect of video games on feelings of aggression. *J Psychol* 129:121-132
- Singer MI, Anglin TM, Song L, Lunghofer L (1995), Adolescents' exposure to violence and associated symptoms of psychological trauma. *JAMA* 273:277-482.
- Took KJ, Weiss DS (1994), The relationship between heavy metal and rap music and adolescent turmoil: real or artifact? *Adolescence* 29:613-621.