

# TV watching habits and influence of television commercials on buying products among male and female children in rural area

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## ABSTRACT

Television (TV) is one of the major visual media watched by children and hence marketers try to influence children through TV commercials for selling their products. Children in rural areas spend lot of time in watching TV as it is the visual media which is easily accessible to them. The present paper is an attempt to have a comparative assessment of The TV watching habits and the influence of TV commercials in purchase of products among male and female children .The study reveals that no difference could be noticed in the TV watching habits and influence on purchase of products based on TV commercials among male and female children of age group between 5 and 15 living in rural area.

**KEY WORDS:** TV watching Habits, TV commercials, Buying of Products, Product preference, Influence of commercial.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advertisement through media is the practice of marketers to build up and promote the brand image and to attract customers to their product. Advertising has also grown to a highly specialized industry carving a niche in industry and business sector. Children have become an important target market for the marketers. The products specifically targeted for the children find a prominent space in the media advertisement. Even though the purchase decision is taken by the elderly people, most of the purchases of such products are made due to the influence of children as they get exposed to the advertisement through the media. Such products are seen to be advertised through the visual media, particularly Television and internet due to the fact that children spent more time in watching Television and internet compared to other media options like print, radio and others. Nowadays children have become an active participant in deciding on the purchase of such as confectionary products, and other food products, dress materials toys.

The penetration of Information & Communication Technology has led to increased focus on marketing efforts directed towards rural areas which constitutes a large chunk of market in India. The ultimate aim of a marketer is to enhance their market share through attracting more and more customers, thereby increasing the volume of sales. The advertisement is designed to reach a large mass, focusing on the target audience. As regard to products to be consumed by children, the advertisement is addressed to them since the success of their advertisement depends on the interest aroused in the products by the children watching the commercial. This will lead to purchase of the products by the parents in the interest of their children. But even though regulations are there in every country, there are both positive and negative aspects relating to the advertisements. The marketer's only interest is to expand the business. As children spend more time in watching Television and internet, they become the beneficiaries of the good and evil effects of the same. Hence there is a felt need to have an assessment of the influence of TV Commercials on children towards purchase of products.

**Statement of the problem:** The marketers are spending crores of rupees towards advertisement and the market size for advertising is reported to be Rs 13200 crores. Advertisement directed to children mostly prefers visual media. Hence the issue to be addressed by marketers is in the area of development of an appropriate strategy for advertisement through TV, as it is the mostly watched visual media preferred by children of age group between five and fifteen years .The study commenced with an assessment of the TV watching habit of male and female children of the same age group, living in a rural village in Tamil Nadu, The study was an attempt to make a comparative assessment about the influence of visual media, TV commercial in particular, on purchase of products and the type of products, among male and female children. The study also attempted to understand the type of products normally purchased based on the influence of male and female children.

**Scope of the study:** The study focuses on the male and female children between the age group of five to fifteen living in a rural area as they form the group who persuades their parents in purchase of products based on the interest generated by the TV commercials. The study is confined to a rural village in Tamil Nadu namely Puthenthurai.

### Objectives:

- To understand the habits of male and female children in watching TV commercials.
- To identify the TV programs mostly watched by male and female children.
- To understand the TV commercials of products those arouse interest in children of different sex while watching TV.
- To make an assessment of the products mostly purchased based on the influence of children as an outcome of watching TV commercials.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Type of Research:** This research is descriptive in nature.

**Data Collection:** Both primary and secondary data were collected for the purpose of the study. Primary data was collected from children between five to fifteen years using a structured interview schedule and secondary data source includes books and published journal articles.

**Sampling Design:** Puthenthurai village consists of 691 households. A preliminary investigation revealed that the total number of children between the age group five and fifteen years in Puthenthurai village was 112. A sample size of 90 was assumed at 95% confidence level and confidence interval five. The sample selection is based on simple random sampling.

**Methods of Analysis of Data:** The data is tabulated and analyzed using statistical tools by application of SPSS. The tools used include percentage analysis, Cross Tabulation and Chi Square.

**Limitations:** The study is limited to a small village, namely Puthenthurai in Kanyakumari District, in Tamil Nadu due to the time constraints

## 3. DATA ANALYSIS

**Distribution of Male and Female Children in the Study Area:** The distribution of male and female children in the sample population drawn from Puthenthurai village is shown in Table 1 below

**Table.1.Sex-wise Distribution of Children**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Male</b>	46	51.1	51.1	51.1
<b>Female</b>	44	48.9	48.9	100.0
<b>Total</b>	90	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of male and female children is found almost equal as can be seen in the Table 1.

**Time Spend in Watching TV:** The time spent by male and female children in watching TV was assessed. Cross tabulation in this respect is shown in Table 2.

**Table.2.Time Spent by Male and Female Children in Watching TV**

		Time Spent in Watching TV					Total
		Less than 1 hour	1-2 hours	2-3 hours	3-4 hours	Greater than 4 hours	
Sex	Male	9	10	12	9	6	46
	Female	9	9	12	9	5	44
Total		18	19	24	18	11	90

In order to have a comparison of time spent by male and female children in watching TV daily the following hypothesis was formulated.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference in TV watching time among male and female children.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is difference in TV watching time among male and female children.

In order to test the above hypothesis, a Chi Square test was conducted and details are as shown in Table3.

**Table.3.Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	df Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	0.099 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.999
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	0.099	4	0.999
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	0.012	1	0.914
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	90		

Since the p-value, at 4 degrees of freedom, 0.999 is greater than 0.05, the difference is considered insignificant and the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence there is no association between sex and TV watching time among children.

**TV Programs Mostly Watched by Children:** The Table 4 gives the programmes watched by the children of different sex. The children mostly watch reality shows and music followed by cartoons and music. The other programs specified by children include sports, serials etc.

**Table.4.TV Programmes Mostly Watched by Male and Female Children**

		TV Programme Mostly Watched by Children					Total
		Cartoon	Music	Reality Shows	Movies	Others	
Sex	Male	9	9	10	6	12	46
	Female	7	10	11	8	8	44
Total		16	19	21	14	20	90

The following hypothesis was formulated to find out the association between sex and the TV programmes watched

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between sex and TV programmes watched by children.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no association between sex and TV programmes watched by children.

Chi square test was conducted to test the hypothesis. The output of the test is given in Table 5.

**Table.5.Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	df Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	1.392 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.846
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	1.399	4	0.844
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	90		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.84.

Since the p-value, at 4 degrees of freedom, 0.846 is greater than 0.05, the difference is considered insignificant and the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence there is no association between sex and TV programmes mostly watched by children.

**TV Commercials of Products Liked by Male and Female Children:** The TV commercials of products liked by children are given in Table 6.

**Table.6.TV Commercials of Products Liked by Male and Female Children**

		Commercials of Products Interested					Total
		Confectionery Products	Food Products	Toys	Clothing	Others	
Sex	Male	13	10	5	8	10	46
	Female	9	9	8	9	9	44
Total		22	19	13	17	19	90

The association between sex and the TV commercials of products were tested formulating the following hypothesis.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between sex and TV commercials of products liked by children.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is association between sex and TV commercials of products liked by children

Chi square test was employed to test the above hypothesis.

**Table.7.Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	df Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.540 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.820
Likelihood Ratio	1.550	4	0.818
N of Valid Cases	90		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.36.

Since the p-value, at 4 degrees of freedom, 0.820 is greater than 0.05, the difference is considered insignificant and the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence there is no association between sex and interested Commercials.

**Products bought Due to Influence of TV Commercials by Children:** Table 8 shows a type of products brought by children of different sex due to the influence of TV commercials. The output of the cross Tabulation is given in table 8. From the Table it could be seen that a good number of children preferred confectionary items compared to other products, as their first preference while making purchase .Other products such as Toys, clothes and food products were also of interest to children in the particular age groups studied.

**Table.8.Products Bought Due to the Influence of TV Commercials by Male and Female Children**

		Products bought based on TV Commercials					Total
		Toys	Clothes	Food products	Confectionary Items	Others	
Sex	Male	8	9	10	10	9	46
	Female	8	8	8	12	8	44
Total		16	17	18	22	17	90

In order to see whether there is any difference in the products purchased by male and female children, the following hypothesis was formulated and tested using Chi Square test.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between sex and products purchased due to influence of TV commercials.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is association between sex and products purchased due to influence of TV commercials. The output of Chi Square test is given in Table 9.

Table.9.Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	df Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	0.477 <sup>a</sup>	4	.976
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	0.478	4	.976
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	0.008	1	.930
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	90		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.82.

Since the p-value, at 4 degrees of freedom, 0.976 is greater than 0.05, the difference is considered insignificant and the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence there is no association between sex and products bought based on influence of TV commercials.

**Confectionery Items Purchased by Children:** The type of confectionery item mostly liked by children was also assessed. It was seen that ice cream as the item mostly preferred by children in the age group studied. Details are incross tabulation given in Table 10.

Table.10.Confectionery Items Purchased by Male and Female Children

		Confectionery Item Purchased					Total
		Biscuits	Chocolates	Wafers	Ice cream	Health Drinks	
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Male</b>	9	12	8	11	6	46
	<b>Female</b>	10	7	7	13	7	44
<b>Total</b>		19	19	15	24	13	90

The following hypothesis was formulated to test the significance of the association between sex and purchase of confectionary products.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between sex and the confectionary products purchased.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is association between sex and the confectionary products purchased.

A chi square test was conducted to test the above hypothesis. The output of the chi square test is shown in table 11.

Table.11.Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	df Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	1.635 <sup>a</sup>	4	.802
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	1.650	4	.800
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	.272	1	.602
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	90		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.36.

Since the p-value, at 4 degrees of freedom, 0.802 is greater than 0.05, the difference is considered insignificant and the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence there is no association between sex and interested Confectionary products purchased.

**Findings:** The study revealed that most of the children under the age group 5 to 11 years spent up to four hours daily in watching TV irrespective of the sex. They watch mostly the same programmes as any difference could not be found in the preferred programmes. Cartoons, reality shows and music are the programmes that attracted children of that particular age group. This shows that the TV commercials targeting the children should be shown during those programmes that attracted children. The products that aroused interest in children were belonging to the category of Toys, Food Products, Confectionary items and clothing. But no significant difference could be noticed in the choice of products among male and female children. Irrespective of sex confectionary items were the products mostly purchased. Among confectionary products ice cream is the one which came to the top priority in the purchase list of children of the studied age group.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there is no significant difference in the time spent in watching TV, Programmes watched, interested commercials, products purchased, and the most preferred confectionary products among male and female children of age group 5 to 11 years in rural area.

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