

# *The Influence of TV Commercials on the Lifestyle of Youngsters*

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**Abstract:** Media is considered as an emergent pillar of society. Several studies affirm the impact of media on society regarding social learning as well as construction of reality. Recurrence of TV commercials on various TV channels may contribute as a determinant factor about the lifestyle choices of youngsters. The present study was conducted about the Influence of TV commercials on the lifestyle of youngsters. The core objectives of the study were, first to explore the influence of TV commercials on the lifestyle choices of youngsters. Second objective was, to explore the role of TV commercials in promoting materialistic values among youngsters. The AIDA model was applied to assess the impact of TV commercials on youngsters. The population of the current study was students of University of the Punjab Lahore. By applying Multistage sampling a sample of five hundred students were randomly selected. Data was analyzed by using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The results of the present study show that TV commercials have impact on the lifestyle of youngsters and there is relationship between TV commercials and lifestyle choices of youngsters. Results also highlight the role of TV commercials in promoting materialistic values among youngsters

**Keywords: Commercials, Life style, Youngsters, Materialism, TV**

## **Introduction**

The mass media are expanded media technologies that are planned to reach a large audience by mass communication. The technology through which this communication takes place varies. Broadcast media such as radio, recorded music, film and television transmit their information electronically. Society is comprised of institutions, which have different functions for the progress and stability of the society and its members. There are basically five social institutions but now mass media

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is also considered as a social institution, because in the present epoch, media is influencing all the other social institutions.

Electronic media as a whole but specifically television dramas and cooking shows, fashion channels and the self-motivated styles of advertisements which have impacted on the life styles of different sections of society. The desirability that television advertisements produce in some ways is also contributed by the youth.

The development of advertisement is as age old as human history. Advertisement is a strategy for creating awareness among people about different products. Different societies used different symbols and tactics to attract the attention of people for the consumption of their products. These activities were performed on a limited area due to limited resources. But with the passage of time advertisement has become a powerful tool and plays the role of bridge between consumer and buyer. Advertising is the active source to influence the mind of viewers and gives viewers contact towards a particular product or service (Katke, 2007). Without proper investment, no business can become a market front-runner (Hussainy et al., 2008)

Television is the most dominant and persuasive medium of communication around the globe. Due to its powerful effect, most advertisers have faith on television for advertisement of their products to appeal to the youngsters as they are their target audience in most of the cases. This is due to the fact that people are easy to convince to buy any particular product which is being advertised on television.

In the same manner, overall television viewing influences the life style of different sections of society in different manners. Youth belonging to various income classes are now gradually motivated to follow ongoing fashion trends and more enthusiastic to spend on fashion products according to their own incomes. Though their financial plan and taste in fashion may vary, the rich and middle classes alike are part of the fashion race. Firms are spending a massive amount of their budget for advertising their products and facilities. They are investing to influence the buying behavior of customers and shaping the factors that have direct or indirect effects on buying behavior like purchasing power (Ayanwale et al., 2005). This focus on advertising is because it is considered an effective tool to stimulate customers and influence their buying behavior (Niazi et al., 2012). The present study is significant in a number of ways and will help in understanding the different dimensions between TV commercials and youth. Through this research, I will be able to justify the role of TV commercials on the youngsters and their choices. The findings of this study will help in gauging the impact of TV commercials in creating materialistic values among youngsters.

The study will help uncover some critical areas that many researchers were not able to explore. The research will provide insights regarding the issues and perceptions that are leading the youth to different trends, styles and materialism.

## Literature Review

Advertising is a core idea that is used by diverse companies to get favor and maximum sale of their products. Ayanwala (2005: 200) defines advertising as, "a non-personal paid form where ideas, concepts, products or services, and information are promoted through media (visual, verbal, and text) by an identified sponsor to persuade or influence behavior". Advertising is the core idea that is obtainable in non-personal ways to create purchase objective. It is defined as distribution of information about products in a non-personal way typically paid by a sponsor through different media (Datta, 2008). Advertisers are trying to spread maximum information about products in target market. Therefore, reputation is the aim of advertising (Ramaswami & Namakumari, 2004).

Advertising is done to create likeness, attraction and influence buying behavior in positive way. Attitude-towards-the ads is an exciting theory of advertising often used to understand the buying behavior. Effective advertisement powers the attitude towards brand and finally leads to purchase intention (Goldsmith & Lafferty, 2002). Ideally, consumer's buying behavior is the product purchase decision (Adelaar et al., 2003). Advertisers are using different techniques to effectively convey commercial messages to create purchase decision. Hierarchy of effects model often used to assess the effectiveness of advertisement and is a series of steps such as, attention, interest, desire and purchase decision (Cavill & Bauman, 2004; Grover & Vriens, 2006). The steps of hierarchy of effects model are as follows:

**Awareness:** It is the first step of the hierarchy of effects model, where people get awareness about products. At this stage, advertisers introduce their products, services and information about the usage of products. Initially, advertisers create awareness about products in their target market and its benefits to use (Baca et al., 2005). According to Ashcroft and Hoey (2001) awareness is the cognitive stage to attract customers and is the first step of communication process.

**Interest:** Advertisement of a product or service is run with the aim to create interest among target viewers because creating interest is the priority of advertisers (Rowley, 1998; Broeckelmann, 2010). Continuous buying of a particular product shows consumers' interest (Ghirvu, 2013). Pharmaceutical companies, for example, often invest to create products interest in target market with aggressive sales force which attempts to motivate customers for further query (Baca et al., 2005).

**Desire:** It is the third step of hierarchy of effects model that deals with the aspiration of target customers to buy a product or service. From advertising view point, desire is said to be the intense level of wanting a product. Creating desire is the priority of advertisers, where they explain the features and benefits of their products, that how much value you have here (Richardson, 2013). At this level, advertisers try to give greater exposure of a product to the customers (Rowley, 1998).

**Action:** At the fourth level of hierarchy of effects model action is taken by a customer i.e. actually purchasing a product or service. At this stage, customers are ready to pay for the products to fulfill

their intense desire for a particular product or services. A number of incentives offered may persuade a customer to take action (purchase). For example discounted prices often entice customers to take action i.e. buy something (Rawal, 2013). As mentioned by Ashcroft and Hoey (2001) action is the behavior stage involving actual purchasing. According to Hoyer and Macinnis (2009) effective advertising creates positive feelings that lead to actual purchase of advertised products. Therefore, on the basis of above arguments we can hypothesize.

Lifestyle is the pattern of one's life that a person chooses to perform certain activities. According to the definition of Kotler et al., (2008), "Lifestyle is a person's pattern of living as expressed in his or her activities, interests and opinions". Likewise, Moore (1963) presented his opinion that "lifestyle is a patterned way of life into which people fit various products, events or resources. Moreover, consumer purchasing is an interrelated, patterned phenomenon and products are purchased as part of a lifestyle". The life pattern and products usage of rural area is different than urban areas. For example, some villagers may not keep mobile or have no understanding of mobile usage. Therefore, the study is interested to determine the effects of lifestyle on consumer buying behavior in rural areas.

Life style is a concept defined as the means by which people live and spend time and money, mirroring a person's activities, interest and opinions, as well as demographic variables (Blackwell *et al*, 2001). From head to toe advertisers are creating a need for all types of branded products. They are creating a need for greater consumption, materialism, brand consciousness, flamboyance and prestige. Advertisements today are changing the entire lifestyle and attitude of youth. According to Kotwal (2008) advertisement played a significant role in introducing a new product in the family list and making better choice during shopping. According to him girls spend most of the money which they receive from home monthly. The adolescent girls are influenced by TV advertisement when they purchase clothing; they were guided by fashion, friends and boutiques.

Researches frequently show that women commonly compare themselves to others they see around them. Therefore, when female adolescents look at thin models, they feel less confident in themselves. Additionally, for example, young males are increasingly receiving pressure from advertisements to become more muscular. This has also caused young males to become increasingly doubtful about their physical appearance. By viewing beautiful models in advertising campaigns, women reported lower body pleasure, a temporary rise in comparison standards toward physical attractiveness and an improved belief regarding the importance of attraction (Eisend *et al.*, 2007).

Television advertisements have significant impact on youth including product choices and overall perceptions of gender roles. The tendency for pre-adolescent and adolescent females to compare their bodies to women represented in the media increases with age. Increased exposure to television, magazines and movies put youth at a higher risk of adopting unhealthy lifestyle habits (Aruna *et al*, 2008).

Youngsters are greatly influenced by TV commercials and practically buy those products that are frequently advertised in TV commercials. In a study conducted by Richins (1995) it was pointed out that on exposure to advertisement comparison with advertising images takes place which improves the materialistic desires of the viewers.

Moschis and Mitchell (1986) conducted a study designed to test the effects of television advertising and interpersonal communications on the teenager's consumer behavior. According to them, the effects of such communication processes on teens are evaluated in the context of household decision making. Thus, the influence of these images may be of enormous significance in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of young people.

The study evidences that majority of adolescent respondents are influenced by the TV advertisements and usually like to buy cold-drinks, some children like to buy chips and similar products as well. These products increase fat on the body especially in children of age 12-20 years. Television also has negative impacts, it creates eye problems. It stops the children from going out and playing with friends. Advertising makes them buy things even if they do not need. It can make them tired and unable to focus on their lessons (Mahmood, 2009).

According to Chan *et al.* (2007) social relations, both personal and celebrity-mediated, play an important role in the establishment of consumption values. Peer communication and peer influence were positively related to social comparison. Motivation for viewing advertisements was positively related to imitation of celebrity models. Both are positive predictors of materialism. TV commercials have significant impact on the taste, behavior habits and life style of youth. It also impacts in any way (Daud, 2011).

Adolescent eating behavior is a function of individual and environmental influences. Individual influences are psychological as well as biological, whereas, environmental influences include direct social environments such as family, friend, and peer networks and other factors such as school meals and fast food channels.

Soft drink companies focus their attention and advertising budget on youth between 10-20 years. Aerated soft drinks, apart from sponsoring wrong images, have long been assumed of lowering calcium levels and phosphate levels in the blood. The relationship between soft drink consumption and body weight is so resilient that for each additional soda consumed, the risk of obesity rises 1.6 times (Das, 2007).

The term materialism has been explained differently while showing the same effect i.e. giving value to material things. Another general source of materialistic models is advertising messages. Advertisements encourage consumption by using images of gorgeous and famous product users, demonstrating social reward through using products and associating products with wealthy lifestyles (Kasser *et al.*, 1993).

Peer communication influences social comparison while advertising communication influences imitation of celebrity models. And both social comparison and imitation of celebrity models, in turn, influence materialistic values. This is consistent with argument that individuals learn to adopt materialistic values through social learning from family members, peers and the materialistic messages that are frequently found in television programs and their commercial messages (Kasser *et al.*, 1993).

Materialism has been identified as tendency of an individual to think of the material possessions as a necessity for their living. As a result of which, people consider worldly things as everything for them. The materialism can be understood as, "terminal materialism" and "instrumental materialism" (Csikszentmihalyi *et al.*, 1981). Terminal materialism occurs when consuming a possession is considered as the only necessary thing, whereas instrumental materialism takes place when people consider that satisfaction in life can be obtained just by doing some activity facilitated through belongings (Belk *et al.*, 1983).

Materialists place possessions and their acquisition at the center of their lives. Daun (1983) describes materialism as a life-style in which a high level of material consumption functions as a goal and serves as a set of plans. Materialism thus lends meaning to life and provides an aim for daily endeavors.

Materialists tend to judge their own and others' success by the number and quality of possessions accumulated. Rassuli *et al.* (1986: 5) describe members of a consumer society as evaluating others and themselves in terms of their consuming life-styles, and in Heilbroner's (1956: 23) analysis, acquisitive, materialistic people value possessions "for the money they cost rather than by the satisfactions they yield." Du Bois (1955) and others have noted that materialists consider material well-being as proof of success and evidence of right-mindedness.

One of the motives that possessions and their attainment are so crucial to materialists is that they view these as essential to their satisfaction and well-being in life. Belk (1983: 291) notes that "at the highest levels of materialism possessions assume a central place in a person's life and are believed to provide the greatest sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction." In a like manner, Ward *et al.* (1971: 426) describe materialism as "an orientation emphasizing possessions and money for personal happiness and social progress". The perspective that pleasure or self-satisfaction is the goal of high consumption levels is frequently presented in the works (e.g.; Heilbroner, 1956; Wachtel 1983; Campbell, 1987). While most individuals are probably involved to some extent in the pursuit of happiness, it is the pursuit of happiness through acquisition rather than through other means (such as personal relationships, experiences, or achievements) that separates materialism.

From the above discussion it can be summarized that TV commercials have impact on the life style of youngsters in many ways. It also highlights the involvement of youth in different product selection pattern and materialistic approaches.

**Objectives of the Study**

- 1- To explore the influence of TV commercials on the life style choices of youngsters.
- 2- To investigate the role of TV commercials in promoting materialistic values among youngsters.

**Research Methodology**

Research is a systematic and unbiased analysis and recording of precise observations that may lead to the development of simplifications, principles, theories and concepts, resulting in prediction for seeing and possibly vital control of events. In this study, Survey method was used and data was collected by using self-administered questionnaire. The population of the current study was students of university of the Punjab Lahore. By using multi stage sampling, a sample of 500 students was selected. After the collection of data, data was analyzed by using SPSS IBM 21 version.

**Research Objective 1: To explore the influence of TV commercials on the life style choices of youngsters.**

This section will directly answer the research objective number one and will also meet the research objective one by applying linear regression test of association between pattern of watching TV ads and life style choices of youngsters.

**Null Hypothesis**

There is no relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and the life style choices of youngsters.

**Alternative Hypothesis**

There is relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and the life style choices of youngsters.

**Table 1: Relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and life style choices of youngsters. Regression results**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.495 <sup>a</sup>	.245	.243	8.074

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pattern\_TV watch

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.

		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	27.128	1.427		19.008	.000
	Pattern_TV watch	1.287	.101	.495	12.705	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Lifestyle\_

The above table (Table 1) shows that the p-value is .000, which is less than the level of significance that is 0.05, so the researchers reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis .The R Square is 0.24 which means that the24% change in dependent variable is occurring due to independent variable. The alternative hypothesis is “There is relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and life style choices of youngsters. So the results indicate that there is relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and life style choices of youngsters.

**Research Objective 2: To explore the role of TV commercials in promoting materialistic values among youngsters.**

This section will directly answer the research objective two and will also meet the research object two by applying linear regression test of association.

**Null Hypothesis**

There is no relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and materialistic values among youngsters.

**Alternative Hypothesis**

There is relationship between pattern of watching TV commercials and materialistic values among youngsters.

**Table 2: The role of TV commercials in promoting materialistic values among youngsters  
Regression results**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.348 <sup>a</sup>	.121	.120	8.481

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pattern\_ TV watch

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		



1	(Constant)	33.311	1.499		22.219	.000
	Pattern_TVwatch	.882	.106	.348	8.292	.000

a. Dependent Variable: materialism\_

The above Table 2 shows that the p-value is .000 which is less than the level of significance that is 0.05, so the researchers reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. The R square is 0.121 which indicates that 12% change occurring in dependent variable (Materialism) due to the independent variable pattern of watching TV commercials. The alternative hypothesis is that there is relationship between TV commercials and materialistic values among youngsters. So the findings of the study support the alternative hypothesis. It shows that TV commercials have impact on materialistic values.

### Discussion

The present research was an attempt to examine the influence of TV commercials on the life style of youngsters. The research was conducted having two major objectives. First one was to explore the influence of TV commercials on the life style choices of youngsters. Second objective was to explore the role of TV commercials in creating materialistic values among youngsters. A survey was conducted to accomplish the present research. The AIDA model was applied to assess the impact of TV ads on the life style of youngsters. The results of the study indicate that TV ads have impact on the youth choices and also in creating materialistic values, which shows that there is positive association between TV ads and materialism. It may be of interest to point out here that the findings of the current research are in tune with the findings of past studies. The conclusions of past research, advertisements promote materialism (Roy, 2006), coerce viewers to buy unwanted products (Richins, 1995) and mislead viewers (Drumwright *et al*, 2009) were found, and thus reinforced. However, while strengthening the findings of previous research, the current research further builds upon them and provides evidence on how TV ads influence, manipulate and modify the behavior and lifestyle choices of individuals.

### Limitations of the Study

A key objective of the research process is not only discovering new knowledge but to also confront assumptions and explore what we don't know. The present study is conducted at university of the Punjab Lahore. The study was conducted only on students at university level. The findings of this study is generalizable only for the university level students. There is need to conduct study at school and college levels too and there may be diversity in the findings.

### Conclusion

The major concern of the present study was to explore the influence of TV commercials on the life style of youngsters' a sample of five hundred students were selected by applying multistage sampling technique. A hypothesis was formulated by the researchers to see the relationship between life style and TV commercials. The research revealed that there is relationship between TV commercials and

life style choices of youngsters and there is also relationship between TV ads and materialism. Most of the TV commercials have adverse effect on the youth and their lifestyle choices and made them materialistic. Due to the TV commercials the definition of relationships has also been changed. Because the main focus of the advertisers is on the young and teen age section of society, they use different tactics and symbols to get attention. This creates dissatisfaction among the youth.

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