

PESTER POWER: A STUDY OF RIBENA AND CAPRI-SUN'S ADVERTISEMENTS AMONG PUPILS OF AJAYI CROWTHER UNIVERSITY STAFF SCHOOL, OYO, SOUTHWEST NIGERIA.

OJO, Cornelius Segun and SHITTU, Ganiyat Adeoti

Abstract: *This study was carried out to investigate the influence of television advertisements on children pester power, using Ribena and Capri-sun beverages as case studies; with a view to answering the research questions: Do children recollect the television advertisements that they are exposed to and whether they nag or pester their parents for the advertised products? The study was based on two theories: the Social Learning Theory and Elaborate Likelihood Model/Theory. Focus Group Discussion was adopted as the method of the study. Using purposive sampling technique, pupils of Ajayi Crowther University Staff School, Oyo, southwest Nigeria, were the population of study. 10 participants each were selected for the three discussion groups, making a total of 30 sample size. Findings revealed that children pester their parents to purchase products whose advertisements they have been exposed to on television, subsequent on which they consume the products and form their opinion about the products. Majority of the subjects were aware of the products and have been exposed to their commercials, although their recallability of the products' commercials was poor owing to varied reasons. Also, findings affirmed that there is a link between the exposure of the children to the commercials of Ribena and Capri-sun; and their demand and pestering for the products. To this end, the study concludes that television advertisements are great tools for influencing children's demand for products as evident in the result obtained. The study therefore, recommends that advertisers should be consistent with the production of television advertisements to aid children recollection of their brands and; to design advertisements that appeal to their choice since they exert great influence on the family's purchase decisions.*

Key Words: Advertisement, Beverage, Children Influence, Pester Power, Television

Introduction and Statement of Problem

In the contemporary world, advertising has become part of our everyday life. It is all around us; and we can neither escape looking, watching nor listening to it, even if unconsciously. Advertising messages reach and influence us, in ways we cannot explain. They are often recorded somewhere at the back of our minds and are recalled when we are buying something or looking for a particular service. Children are no exception of the influence; in fact, they are more easily influenced by advertisements making them a good target for advertisers wishing to sell, especially children's products. Advertising has changed the way children learn, react and behave to a large extent. Children today mean business. They have a firmer grip over the society than what their parents ever had. Not only are they consumers in their own right, they also have a major influence over the family's purchasing power (Anadi and kavya, 2019).

Kadambini (2007) posits that children are vulnerable to persuasive messages; advertisers therefore, leverage on the vulnerability of the inexperienced class of consumers who easily fall prey of persuasive messages to sell their products. They do this by spending enormous amount of money to produce advertisements that compel children to demand for the advertised product. Elucidating further, Lapierre, Milici, Rozendaal, McIister & Castonguay (2017), also argue that children are valuable audience because they spend billions on their own purchases, influence family decisions about what to buy, and promise a potential lifetime of brand loyalty. Children do this through a tactic referred to as pester power or nag factor (*BBC News*, 2012 www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17871107).

Bamfo, Kraa, Asabere and Atara (2019), state that children's attitude towards television advertisements depends on the extent to which a child likes television advertising and views it favourably or unfavourably. Also, it has been noted that children have a liking towards television advertisements due to the animated characters which engage children's attention (Gulla & Purohit, 2013). Some researchers have found that children's liking for television advertisements have resulted into strong recall and high levels of recognition for adult targeted advertisements. Children's liking or dislike also depends upon the nature of the product being advertised. Children have been found to like advertisements for Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) products and toys because not only are these advertisements interesting but also the products (Chan, 2003).

Bamfo et al (2019) further states that advertisements on television have significant impact upon the attitude of teenagers towards TV commercials. It is therefore, important to note that whilst children may not have the money to make purchase decisions; they however, exert enormous influence on their parents to buy products for them. This research therefore, investigated how television advertisements influence children's pestering for Ribena and Caprisun.

Children demand and appeal to their parents to purchase their desired products and subscribe to services they fancy. They demand for products that pique their interest and often nag their way to getting such products which oftentimes results in declining parent's decision role and giving rise to pester power. Pestering revolves around kids, and they form an influential segment for growing the business across the globe (Vinnakota and Mohan (2020)

Several research studies have affirmed that pestering is an impractical tactic deployed by children to obtain what they want, a method that has proved to be quite productive overtime. To this end, the aim of this research was to fill the lacuna that exists between the direct linkage of pestering that emanate from exposure to television advertisement to product demand as well as its effectiveness.

Objective of the Study

1. To investigate if children recollect the television advertisements of Ribena and Caprisun
2. To ascertain if children nag/pester their parents for Ribena and Caprisun after exposures to their television advertisements

Research Questions

1. Do children recollect the television advertisements of Caprisun and Ribena
2. Do children nag/pester their parents for the advertised products: Ribena and Caprisun

Literature Review

Advertising has been defined according to the Nigeria code of advertising as a form of communication through the media about a product, service or idea paid for by an identifiable sponsor ([Bardi & Diakpomrere 2019](#)).

Contemporary children spend more time watching TV and thus, they are exposed to more commercials. They are attracted by the aesthetics, bright colours used in the design of the

advertisements, as well as the persuasive messages that affect their subliminal minds to think that TV commercials are a reality leading to pressures on their parents for the advertised products (Muhammed & Zein 2012).

Pester power is a way of marketing which targets children who are unable to purchase products for themselves; but relentlessly request their parents to buy the advertised product for them (Henry & Borzekowski, 2011). In the United States, 50 million kids age 11 and under wield \$1.2 trillion in annual purchasing directly and indirectly (Staff, 2018). To take advantage of this spending power of children, the marketing industry has developed a set of strategies for enhancing 'kidfluence', the nag factor or pester power (Aluvala & Varkula, 2020). Also, Vinnakota and Mohan (2020) describe pester power as the child's act of repetitive nagging and beleaguering of their parents to buy advertised products and items. Children demand and appeal to their parents to purchase their product and services.

According to Lodhi and Zafar (2018), children are immature and do not understand the marketing approach of companies for their products, so, they go for things that have been advertised and influenced by their peers. The children are the most vulnerable class of consumers because they are easily influenced by what they see on television and what their friends are doing. The urge to imitate and the desire for the product therefore propel them to nag their parents for the advertised products.

Elucidating further, Dan, Ghorai and Basu (2018), opine that there are negative and positive effects of advertising on children. On the positive note, advertising makes the kids aware of the new products available in the market. It increases their knowledge about the latest innovation in the field of technology. But on the negative side advertisements encourage children to pester their parents to buy the products they see in the commercials, regardless of whether they need them or not and whether they are useful or not. Many throw tantrums and use different tactics to force the adults to get them what they want. Children are likely to misinterpret the messages that are conveyed in commercials as studies have shown that they also tend to focus on the negatives rather than the positive sides of the messages.

Nevertheless, the effect of television advertising on pester power is complex, dealing with the interplay between the characteristics of the children, the attitudes of their parents, and environmental settings. Our empirical study attempts to isolate the effect television advertising on children pester power.

Theoretical framework

Elaborate likelihood model

The theory was developed by Richard E. Petty and John in 1980. The theory examines the ways in which people are persuaded. The model aims to explain different ways of processing stimuli, why they are used, and their outcomes on attitude change (Geddes 2016).

Elizabeth Hopper (2019) further postulates that the elaborate likelihood model/theory is a theory of persuasion that suggests that there are two different ways people can be persuaded of something, depending on how invested they are in a topic. When people are strongly motivated and have time

to think over a decision, persuasion occurs through the *central route*, in which they carefully weigh the pros and cons of a choice. However, when people are rushed or the decision is less important to them, they tend to be more easily persuaded by the *peripheral route*, that is, by features that are more tangential to the decision at hand (Miller, Freimund & Powell, 2018)

The relevance of the theory to the study is that it explains the ways in which children are being influenced by the exposure to Ribena and Caprisun based on their actions, consequent to the exposure. When children pester their parents for the product (s) (Ribena & Caprisun) after their exposure to the attractive television advert, their persuasion could have been said to take the peripheral route; however, the parents after being pestered by their wards to purchase the products, will analyse the contents and attributes of the product, the critical analysis of the parent describes the central route.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory was proposed by Albert Bandura in 1977/94. The theory emphasizes the importance of observing, modelling, and imitating the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Social learning theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behaviour (Nabavi, 2012). McLeod (2016) states that the social learning theory has four meditational processes that help determine whether a new behaviour is acquired: Attention, retention, reproduction and motivation.

As relates to the study, the children's attention must be arrested, the message of the advert should be retained by them and they should be able and willing to reproduce and be motivated to do so before the television advertisements can influence them.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was Focus Group Discussion (FGD). FGD is a method that is mostly adopted when one needs to understand an issue at a deeper level than one can access with survey. FGD method was adopted since it presents a valiant opportunity to obtain information needed from our class of respondents i.e. children. Question guide was used as the research instrument. This approach involves drawing specific questions that can proffer salient responses and answers to the aforementioned research questions of the study.

The population of the study comprised of pupils from Ajayi Crowther University staff school, Oyo southwest, Nigeria. The total population of the study obtained from the school head teacher was 276 pupils; from which 30 pupils were selected using non-probability purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is based on the intention or the purpose of the study. Purposive sampling is used when the researcher has a one or a more specific group of interest in mind. In other words, there are criteria for selection based on the task before the researcher. Since the focus of study was children aged between ages 6 and 13, hence, participants/respondents selected were children within that age range.

Presentation of Tables

Group 1

Table 1: Background Information of the Informants

S/N	Respondents	AGE	CLASS	GENDER
1	K1	10	Primary 5	Male
2	K2	9	Primary 3	Female
3	K3	6	Primary 3	Male
4	K4	9	Primary 4	Male
5	K5	10	Primary 4	Male
6	K6	9	Primary 3	Female
7	K7	7	Primary 3	Female
8	K8	9	Primary 3	Female
9	K9	10	Primary 5	Female
10	K10	9	Primary 3	Female

Group 2

Table 2: Background Information of Respondents

S/N	Respondents	Age	Gender	Class
1.	R1	9	Male	Primary 3
2.	R2	8	Female	Primary 3
3.	R3	8	Female	Primary 3
4.	R4	9	Female	Primary 4
5.	R5	9	Female	Primary 5
6.	R6	10	Female	Primary 5
7.	R7	9	Female	Primary 4
8.	R8	8	Female	Primary 3
9.	R9	9	Male	Primary 3

10.	R10	7	Male	Primary 3
-----	-----	---	------	-----------

Group 3**Table 3: Background Information of Respondents**

S/N	Respondents	Age	Gender	Class
1.	I1	9	Male	Primary 4
2.	I2	9	Male	Primary 4
3.	I3	9	Male	Primary 4
4.	I4	10	Female	Primary 5
5.	I5	7	Female	Primary 3
6.	I6	8	Female	Primary 3
7.	I7	10	Male	Primary 5
8.	I8	10	Male	Primary 5
9.	I9	10	Male	Primary 5
10.	I10	13	Male	Primary 5

Tables 1-3: Higher population of the focus group respondents were female (53.3%). This shows that more female informants were readily available for the discussion compared to the male (46.7%). It was also observed that fourteen (14) of the informants were in primary three (3) while those in primary four (4) and five (5) were seven (7) and nine (9) respectively. One of the informants was aged six years; three (3) of them were seven years old, while four (4) of them were eight years old. Thirteen of the respondents were aged nine (9) years which is the most populated age range of the discussion. Subsequently eight of them were aged Ten (10) years and one of them is thirteen (13) years. While thirteen and six years were the least populated age in the study, ages 9 and 10 were very populated.

Findings and Analysis

1a.) To investigate whether children recollect television advertisements of Ribena

Groups	Number of pupils who remember Ribena and its advertisements		Percentage	
	Product	Advertisement	Product	Advert
Group 1	10	5	100%	50%
Group 2	8	8	80%	80%
Group 3	10	10	100%	100%

From the table above, findings illustrate that all the respondents in group one (100%) were able to recollect the product alone while 50% of them remembered the television advertisement of Ribena. Hitherto, in group two, 80% of them recall the product (Ribena) as well as its advertisement. Meanwhile, all the respondents in group 3, were able to recall the product as well as its advertisements

1b.) To investigate whether children recollect television advertisements of Capri-sun

Group	Number of pupils who remember Caprisun and its advertisements		Percentage	
	Product	Advertisement	Product	Advert
Group 1	10	10	100%	100%
Group 2	8	7	80%	70%
Group 3	10	9	100%	90%

The table above indicate that all the respondents in group one (100%) were able to recall the product as well as the television advertisement of Capri-sun (100%). In group two however, 80% of them recall the product (Capri-sun) while 70% remembered the advertisement. In group 3, all the respondents (100%) recall the product while 90% of them recollected its advertisements.

2a) To investigate whether children pester their parents for the advertised product

Groups	Number of pupils that pester their parents for Ribena drink	
	Respondents	Percentage
Group 1	0	0%
Group 2	6	60%

Group 3	8	80%
---------	---	-----

From the table above, in Group 1, all the respondents (100%) did not indicate any form of pestering for their parents to buy the drink for them, a result which could emanate from their low level of exposure to the product as they were not able to recall the product without the aid of a sample. However, 60% and 80% of the respondents in groups 2 and 3 pestered their parents for the product respectively.

2b) To investigate whether children pester their parents for the advertised product: Caprisun

Groups	Number of people that pester their parents for Capri-sun drink	
	Respondents	Percentage
Group 1	10	100%
Group 2	6	60%
Group 3	9	80%

The respondents in group one displayed pester power the most, as all of them (100) pestered their parents for Capri-sun drink. 60% demanded for it in group two and 80% in group 3.

Discussion of Findings

The study explored the influence of television advertisements on children pester power, using Ribena and Capri-sun among pupils of Ajayi Crowther University Staff School. This was in line with the general objective of the study, which was to examine children's recollection of television commercials and their pester power. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. To investigate if children recollect the television advertisement of Ribena and Capri-sun
2. To ascertain if children nag/pester their parents for Ribena and Capri-sun after exposure to their television advertisements

The discussion of findings follows the order of the research objectives with a progression on how the elements or sub-themes emerging from each theme provide answers.

Children's recollection of Television Commercials

The research objective one was geared towards investigating children recollection of television commercials of Ribena and Capri-sun. The search threw up two major themes - recall for advert prowess and descriptive prowess of the various advertisements that they were exposed to. This discussion elaborates the findings with regards to the role of each of these sub-themes.

From the analysis, the informants could recall the various advertisements of Ribena and Capri-sun that they had been exposed to. However, the recallability of the respondents for Capri-sun was stronger than that of Ribena (*see tables 1 and 2*). This finding affirms Dadras, Shahi & Zedah's (2017) study, that the child's mind is quite receptive, the details of a product they like live rent free in their head and they have vivid pictures of it making them able to nag for such products from their parents till the product is purchased for them.

Children Demonstration of Pester Power

The second objective was to test whether children nag/pester their parents for Ribena and/or Capri-sun. Findings prove that children pester their parents to purchase both Ribena and Capri-sun for them. Although the respondents in group one claimed they did not pester their parents for Ribena, but that their parents purchase it for them out of their own freewill. Another factor that could also be responsible for this, is their poor recollection of the brand as they needed sample of the product to remind them of the drink; having not seen the television advertisements of Ribena in a long while. However, pester power was established in the three groups for Capri-sun drink because they were more conversant with the television advertisements of Capri-sun (*see tables 3 and 4*).

This finding is in tandem with Reijmersdal, Rozendaal, Sminck, Noort & Buijzen's (2017) projection that children insight about the brands, purchase intention and request to their parents for purchases are significantly influenced by attractive advertisement messages. The children pester their parents for the product whose advertisements they have been exposed to once they like the advertisement.

Conclusion

Consequent upon the findings and analysis, it is established that children are indeed heavy viewers of television advertisements and that they enthusiastically remember the various television advertising messages of a brand or product they like.

Results generated also indicate that children minds are receptive and that they recollect the various television advertisements of the brand they like as long as the brand is consistent with the production of attractive and compelling advertisements that help them stay in the mind of their consumers.

Further, it was also established that children pester their parents to purchase their desired products for them and that it is an effective medium as proven by the result generated from the respondents. The relevance of children's choice should therefore be considered by advertisers wishing to sell children products as they exert great influence on what is being purchased for them.

Recommendations.

This study recommends among others, that: advertisers should produce more advertisements targeted at children as it is an effective way to boost sales. Also, parents should monitor the television contents that their wards are exposed, in order to reduce the extent to which their demands influence family purchase decisions. Furthermore, advertising agencies and policy formulators and implementers should make firm policies and laws that safeguard children from exposure to unhealthy television advertisements, particularly those of junk foods and drinks.

Reference

Advertising Strategy: <https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Advertising-Strategy-PKBHWJUAJPRAX>

Anadi T and kavya, S. (2019) The Growing 'Kidfluence' on Parents' Buying Behaviour: The Era of Young Consumers, VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2, ISSN:2349-5138.

Aluvala, R & Varkula, M (2020) A study on impact of pester power on purchase behaviour select FMCG products in Hyderabad, International Journal of Management (IJM), ISSN Print: 0976-6502 and ISSN Online: 0976-6510

Bamfo, B.A. Kraa, V, Asabere P. and Atarah B.A. (2019). Effects of television adverts on children's purchase behaviour: evidence from Ghana, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2019.1614740>

[Bardi & Diakpomerere](#) (2019) Importance of Publicity and Marketing in Nigerian Universities Theatre Management

Chan, K. (2003). Parental concern about television viewing and children's advertising in China. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 15(2), 151–166. doi:10.1093/ijpor/15.2.151

Dadras, A. Shahi, Z. & Zedah, S. N, (2017), The Impact of Advertising on Children: How Does Advertising Influence Children? *International Journal of Management Sciences and Business Research*: 6 pp. 103-111 (6).

Gulla, A. & Purohit, H. (2013). Children's attitude towards television advertisements and influence on the buying behaviour of parents. *International Journal of Marketing, Financial Services*, 2(6), 103–117

Henry, H. K. M., & Borzekowski, D. L. G. (2011). The Nag Factor: How Do Very Young Children Get Their Parents to Buy Foods and Beverages of Low Nutritional Value? John Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Kadambini Katke (2007) The Impact of Television Advertising on Children Health And Family Spending – A Case Study, Conference: International Marketing Conference

Kelly, Jon. (2012). Is Mr. Potato Head to blame for 'Pester Power' ads? www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17871107

Matthew, A. Lapierre, Francis, F. Milici, Esther Rozendaal, Anna R. McIister & Jessica Castonguay (2017) The Effect of Advertising on Children and Adolescents. *Paediatrics* Vol 140, No S2, E20161758

Staff, V. (2018). Kidfluence: How Kids Influence Buy Behaviour. <https://www.paramount.com/news/audience-insights/kidfluence-kids-influence-buying-behaviour>. Retrieved April 14, 2023.

Reijmersdal V., Rozendaal E.A, Smink E, Van Noort N, & Buijzen G, (2017), Processes and effects of targeted online advertising among children. *International journal of advertising*, 36(3), 396-414

Mohammed & Zein (2012) effects of television advertising on children in the middle east, vol 5, DOI:[10.1108/17537981211284443](https://doi.org/10.1108/17537981211284443)

J. Geddes (2016). Elaboration Likelihood Model Theory – Using ELM to Get inside the User’s Mind, <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/elaboration-likelihood-model-theory-using-elm-to-get-inside-the-user-s-mind>

Miller,Z, Freimund, W & Powell, R (2018)Measuring elaboration and evaluating its influence on behavioural intentions, DOI:[10.1177/109258721802300103](https://doi.org/10.1177/109258721802300103)

Nabavi (2012), Bandura's Social Learning Theory & Social Cognitive Learning Theory, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267750204_Bandura's_Social_Learning_Theory_Social_Cognitive_Learning_Theory

McLeod, M. (2016), Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html>