

# **Role of Advertisement in Remolding The Materialistic Opulent Society With Special Reference to Contemporary Punjab - India**

**Dr. Rajesh Kumar Mahajan**

DAV College Abohar, Punjab (India) Email:dr\_rk\_mahajan@yahoo.co.in

**Abstract:**

*In this globally connected world, media attracts the public by imparting knowledge and awareness of products and the companies rely on media to market their products and increase their sales, through advertisement. The present paper probes into the prospects launched by advertisement in an opulent society. There is no denying the fact that this contemporary era has driven us towards materialistic sumptuousness. Media plays a profusely relative role in catering to it, by way of advertisement. Not only urban, but rural areas have also been reached out for outsourcing. This paper seeks to study the psychological consequences of advertisement on materially steered society and to analyze how well influential impact has been produced by juxtaposing it in an adoptable background. The world of advertising, without a doubt arrests the consumer attention in a very calculative manner, especially the younger section of the society. In fact the most affected strata happen to be the youth of the country. Advertisement increases the brand value and by face endorsing it, adds to the value of the product. But the viability of advertisement as status symbol is still to be deciphered. The role played by media is scrutinized deeply in this paper in order to study its impact on consumers. And last, a questionnaire is being proposed that provides a clear picture of the world diving in materialism.*

**Keywords:** Opulent Society, Materialistic, Contemporary, Psychological, Deciphered.

**Introduction:** For all the consumer products and various other household goods, children are considered as influential purchasers and influencers and have become a big market segment now. To lure the children, their potential consumers, markets are targeting this base through advertisement, since it is likely to attack children easily, especially in areas like Punjab, India. Such advertisements glorify the level of materialism amongst children as they still are incapable of understanding the real worth of products targeted at them. This current investigation is a result of one such rising consumer. A number of studies have been taking place only to identify the level of materialism that is rising among children. In a survey that was conducted in UK, it was

found that children have become more materialistic than their previous generations. (GfK, Social Research, 2007).

Materialism is a western phenomenon which is fast making hold in Indian society and has become an instinctive trait among young children. The rich, affluent American society associates materialism with a meaningful life. The uplifted living standard and daily urban life styles act as indicators of growing interest in materialism in the states. The rapid globalization and spread of markets across continents find the materialistic upsurge in developing countries. In a fast growing economy like India, the craze

for high life style is rampant among children which allow most of the marketers to thrive. They devise new strategies to lure the young minds into purchase of lavish and luxurious items. For targeting this younger generation, preferably kids, they spend billion dollars on adverts, to draw their attraction towards the commodities, indicative of materialistic fervor. The paper seeks to explore the impact of materialism on children with a deep insight into the role of media in particular in enhancing this effect. Media, these days performs a socialising role. From baby-sitters and matrons, TV is shaping their consciousness, value structure and the ideology that makes them view objects in a particular style. The modern consumer is socialized by media and not by parents because of increasing complexities in life, urban social structure, work culture of both the parents, their busy job schedules and above all, disintegration of joint family structure. With reduced focus on emotional tuning of children, with scarcity of time in case of dual income holder parents and with easy availability of media and that for longer duration, children are becoming susceptible to changes in external environment. The visual lure of TV screens draws them closer to obtaining unrealistic possessions which they correlate with the new chic lifestyle and obviously materialism is inculcated indirectly. The attractive commodities are treasured as worldly possessions. TV doyens excel in the art of creating want where want doesn't exist. These false needs are generated to make children antagonistic

to parental values and selfish for their material holdings. The materialistic attitude also impairs their holistic development making them utterly dissatisfied and diffident beings.

#### **Objectives:**

- To study the stimulating psychological repercussions of advertisement on materialism.
- To study the juxtaposition of advertisement in opulent society and its viability as materialistic status symbols.
- To decipher the impact of social media on materialism and analyzing its hold on children and adults.
- To study the economic upheaval caused by advertisement.

**Materials and Methods:** The present paper focuses on the survey conducted in the three districts of Punjab, India. These districts are, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana. The questionnaire included 23 questions and was distributed among 100 samples with different age groups, marital status, education, and occupation and family incomes. The data was analyzed and evaluated with spss software.

#### **Result and Discussion:**

The sales media in our current lives cannot be ignored. It is making a huge impact on our everyday discourse, considering our likeliness about food, dress and even our religious beliefs. Media is a tool, agent and even a vehicle that is bringing the consumable products at home to the potential consumers through advertisement. Even the socialization thrives on it. Many modes of media include – news papers, magazines, television, radio and internet. Our beliefs and perceptions are getting tampered with the use of media. This is the reason, the term media carries different meanings. The present results indicate that

advertisements show association with the opinion of the consumers. In a sample of 20 consumers, some denied any effect of different advertisements; 35% said there is no difference in the quality of available material; 10 % said they are not careful and do not depend upon their past experience; 0 % said they gave no attention to the advertisement while purchasing products; 55% said they seek no opinion or references within group before any purchase. 80% consumers said yes to different options which were dependent upon advertisements; 38.8% are more careful and they depend upon their past experience. Question no. 1 and Question no. 9 showed chi square value  $p=.004$  which shows strong association with the effect of advertisement. 20% consumers showed denied effect of advertisements by different sources like cinema, exhibition, magazines and television while 80% consumers showed positive impact of advertisement by different sources. Most of consumers (51.3%) prefer television. While 13.8% prefer advertisement through magazines, 12.5% radio and cinema and 1.3% prefer word of mouth. So there is no effect of advertisement on these sources. Different consumers adopt different sources of advertisement. This value showed no association of advertisement with these sources. Advertisement played very important role in decision making, saved time, and played a creative role. [ $p=.037$  q1 and q15] indicate that 20 said advertisement do not influence the customers while 80 said Media and advertisement influence the customers ( $p=.012$ ). The customers buy the product by watching media advertisement. They collect information first before buying. Some ignore and buy product ( $p=.016$ ). Consumers prefer not only one selling point in advertisement but they give equal weight to presentation, prominent personality, social topic and music ( $p=.012$ ).

Advertisement conveyed through media showed no association with reliability ( $p=.061$ ).

Materialistic goods showed negative and positive impact of society ( $p=.041$ ). 20% consumers said that people criticize the product and their reliability whereas 80% said that they are aware about the products and their reliability ( $p=.006$ ). Media is a good tool for advertisement ( $p=.017$ ).

The average income of different customers leads to increased competition among them ( $p=.047$ ). The average expenditure on materialism varies from person to person. Advertisements promote sale and promotion of material showed association with average income and expenditure on materialism,  $p=.034$ .

Average expenditures on materialism per annum showed association with more attention to the advertisement message while making purchase of product, very careful observation and dependence upon past experience and preference for quality of materialism,  $P=.031$ .

Celebrities as role models presenting the product affect expenditure on materialism,  $p=.013$ . Advertisements act as driving forces, save good deal of time, add value to materialism through creativity and affect averages expenditure on materialism,  $p=.041$ .

Watching and listening to the advertisement affects expenditure on materialism. Both showed association with each other,  $p=.007$ . Expenditure on materialism showed association with information conveyed through media about materialistic goods.

### **Existing Body of Knowledge:-**

The main target of those working in market are children, the reason being

that in comparison to other source of media, television advertisements appeal more to the children They find it difficult to understand the textual context of other sources of media. Rossiter explains that how in the growing age, the advertisements put their impact. Effects like intellectual, affective and behavioral are created through the exposure to advertisements. These advertisements have direct impact on emotional state of mind of young age groups, which results in complete acceptance of the products that are advertised. Terms like Media and Advertisement have been variously interpreted in different dictionaries over the globe. According to Oxford Dictionary, it stands for, “The main means of mass Communication such as television, radio and newspaper and Business Dictionary Communication channels, through which news entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated.” As per Cambridge English dictionary “The internet, newspapers, magazines and television etc are Considered as a group”. Merriam- Webster’s learner’s Dictionary defines it as a Medium of cultivation, conveyance or expression. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English states that it includes “All the organizations, such as television, radio, and newspapers that provide news and information for the public, or the people who do this work”. Presently, media plays an indispensable role as a source of information for children. With the advancement of technology and busy schedule the parents can’t spare time to teach basic values to their children, due to which media has become the source of

their learning. So children feel more interested in facts put forward by media more than their parents. The more a child is exposed to media, the more he keeps himself segregated from society. Children are attracted by the marketers through different strategies, which tempts them to buy the products.

### **Different Persuasive Tactics of Media :**

Creativity like the use of lively colours, wit, humour, jubilancy are some of the methods to attract customers. The advertisements are shown repeatedly on different kinds of media; customers are attracted by the use of music jingles, devices like anthropomorphism i.e. the attribution of human characteristics and behavior to which is not human, using celebrities to advertise the products, children as models so that familiarity is created and prime offers which include freebies and limited period offers so that people get attracted. Media uses different methods to attract the customers. Various strategies have been adopted by the media over time to attract the buyers. Use of vibrant colours, humour and joyfulness, media jingles and music etc arrest the attention of the buyers easily. The use of anthropomorphism which is attributing the human or living characteristics to non-human or non-living things has also been used to attract people. Celebrities endorsing any market products, add to the viability of the particular brand. Even child faces are used to make the viewers more familiar and relatable to the endorsed products. When children see their age mates on screen using and enjoying particular products, they also demand the same.

**Materialism** : The Term materialism has expanded its scope to cover various different fields of sociology and economics. When we talk about economic field, materialism is referred to as the value to attain self happiness. However when we discuss its social implications we define it as an obsession about worldly pleasures and how these pleasures are attained in this competing world. Nowadays, these worldly pleasures have occupied very significant position for people who consider them as everything. There are two groups in which materialism can be classified “terminal materialism” and instrumental materialism”. When a product is consumed and considered as a necessity, it is termed as Terminal materialism whereas instrument materialism is when people are satisfied by doing facilitated activities of their belongings. This attitude towards materialism is so deeply rooted in thinking of people that now it has become mandatory to analyse some factors related with it. Family communication pattern, income of parents, age and gender of child, influence of the peers, culture of the country, exposure to television advertisement and retail stores in the wake of materialism have cast their impact on the children. But the fact is that more than any other thing, television advertisement is the major factor responsible to instill materialism in children. Along with this age, as well as gender can also be considered. Studies on materialism prove the fact that as the age passes, the charm for material possession loses its intensity. Another feature i.e. gender also plays its role to determine

the level of materialism in children. It has been noticed that boys are usually more materialistic in comparison to girls as boys have more vulnerability to external environment like media and press. Then, culture also plays its part. In comparison to countries having collective culture, countries having individualistic culture are more prone to materialism. This is the reason behind India being less materialistic as in India collective culture prevails. Due to easy access of selling products, there has been boost in materialism. Shifts in materialistic values have taken place due to scarcity and socialization. A theory proposed by Inglehart says that the less supplied things are more valued. Those who are economically not stable, the need for status invigorates up materialism in them. People often struggle for those requirements which gives them acknowledgement in their society. Another study says that in comparison to concept oriented approach, parents having socially oriented communication influence and promotes materialism in their children. Another factor i.e. family income also gives rise to materialism as those with lower income are more materialistic than with higher incomes.

### **Media and Materialism**

Two points of view have been put forward by the researchers on materialism affecting children: - Socialization point of view and psychological point of view. When family, peers and media are responsible for infusing materialistic values, it is

termed as socialization viewpoint. Whereas when child's state of mind like stress or self esteem are responsible for evolution of materialism, it is termed as psychological viewpoint. Media is held responsible for creating strong desire among children to possess those materialistic things. "A sense of self" is created by the media between "what we have and what we do" with the assistance of advertisements.

### **Role of Media in Boosting the level of Materialism among children**

The difference between external environment and family is made clear to children through media. However the value system of children is impeded by extreme exposure to external environment because it makes them susceptible towards worldly possessions.

Due to television, there is difference between parents and children's method of perceiving things which arises conflicts in family. When the request for Wanted product is rejected by parents, children feel dissatisfied.

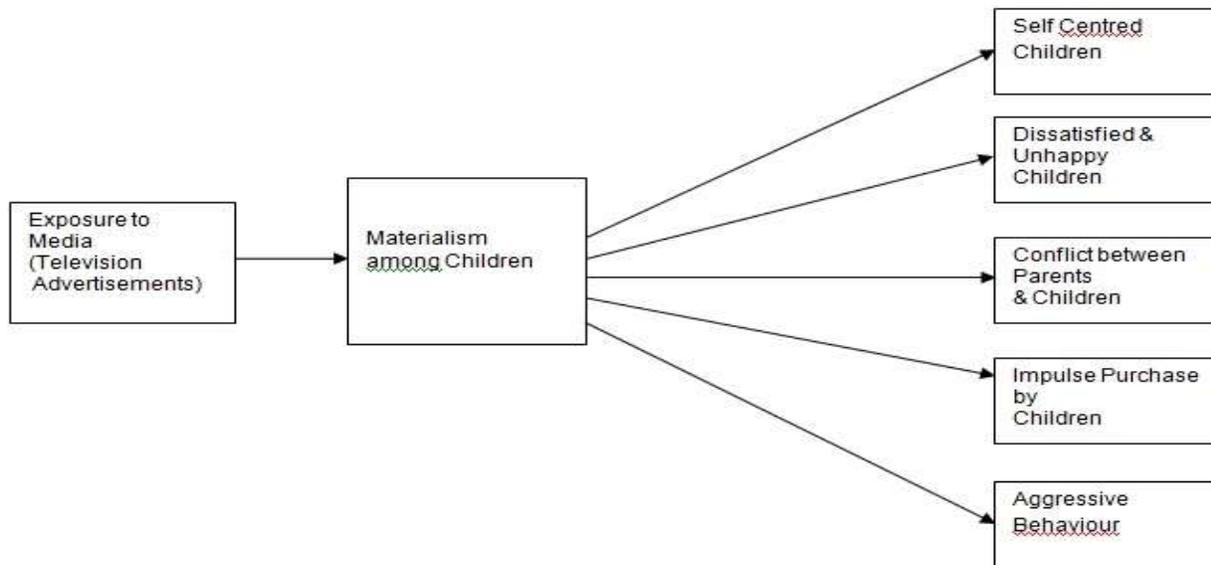
Children are convinced by employing a variety of methods through the source of television advertisements to buy the products that are being advertised. But the issue that arises here is that, when children are exposed so much to television, it lessens their sociability and they give upper hand to information rather than the reality. The social theory named "cultural hypothesis gives detail

about the effects that advertisements have on children. Cultivation theory suggests that the "more time people spend living in the television world, the more likely they are to believe social reality portrayed on television". As the age passes, the effect that media creates also lessens, but the materialistic impact that media endorses stays throughout the lives of children. One of the major reasons includes the behavior that they generate in themselves during early years. When a child is in ripening years, the way a mother approaches media plays very significant role in establishing materialism in children. The Phase of early or middle childhood is the time when children are mostly affected by materialism produced by media. China has given confirmation to this fact through a study which proves that young children are found to be more materialistic and they have made it as a ground for attaining happiness and friendship. Another study was made by Mistry where children were asked to make sketches in order to define the position of poor and rich. Children made materialistic possessions like computers, toys, stationary items as the criteria for assessing the amount of happiness and sadness of poor and rich people. Hence it is evident that children considered materialistic things, the reason for happiness or richness. Materialism can also be seen in children's attitude while trying to express their views. The children feel more materialistic and self

centered if they feel insecure and try to look for their happiness. An observation was made that those possessing this kind of worldly attitude don't find it necessary to save and hence they spend as much money as they can. Those who are unsatisfied or unhappy are more likely to possess this worldly attitude. Children feel that their success depends on the attainment of material items and feel glad when their requirements are satisfied. Therefore it can be said that materialism has proven to be a major factor which determines the happiness and needs of children. The way according to which children perceive these worldly possessions incites them

to convince their parents for purchasing these items. 80 said that the customers are influenced by the media and advertisement. Media advertisements incites customers to buy the products being advertised. Before they purchase the product, information regarding that product is collected. Some people turn a blind eye and purchase the item. Preference is not only given to the sale of items but equal weightage is given to the demonstration, eminent personalities are chosen for advertisements, music social topic etc However Reliability shows no concern with the media advertisements.

### Self - Centered Children



### Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to examine the role that media plays in society. The process of consumer

socialization is changed due to the work culture of dual income households. Children through the source of media

have become more alert about new innovation and products available in market. To be alert is not bad but the problem arises when children become materialistic and start attaching their happiness to worldly things. Due to the busy schedule of parents, children get swayed away by worldly possessions. Parents try to remunerate the loss by giving material goods to children. Therefore the marketers being very well aware of the fact, start promoting the products like chocolate, pizzas, motor bikes, cars, laptop, holiday tours as indispensable requirements to make celebrations during some achievements or festivals. Cartoon channels are also used for this purpose, in order to promote their products. Children are not able to understand the reality behind these advertisements so they start believing them blindly and hence they become materialistic. The ultimate result is that conflict between parent and child arises as these things directly affect interpersonal relations. Parents will have to take into consideration these things, so that they can divert their children's attention from materialistic things.

#### References:

- [1] Ahuvia, A., & Wong, N. (1995). Materialism: origin and implication for personal well-being. *European Advances in Consumer Research*, 2, 172-178.
- [2] Berger, J. (1972), *Ways of Seeing*, London: British Broadcasting

Corporation and Penguin Books Ltd, London.

- [3] Chan, K. (2006). Exploring children's perceptions of material possessions: a drawing study. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 9(4), 352-364.
- [4] Churchill, G.A., & Moschis, G.P. (1979). Television and interpersonal influences on adolescent consumer learning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 6(1), 23-35.
- [5] GfK Social Research. (2007) Reflections on childhood—lifestyle. (accessed 29.09.2011).
- [6] Goldberg, M.E., Gorn, G.J., Peracchio, L.A., & Bamossy, G. (2003). Understanding materialism among youth. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(3), 278-288. Gupta, N. (2011). Globalization does lead to change in consumer behavior: an empirical evidence of impact of globalization on changing materialistic values in Indian consumers and its aftereffects. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 23(3), 251-269.
- [7] John, D.R. (1999). Consumer socialization of children: A retrospective look at twenty-five years of research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 26(3), 183-213.
- [8] Kasser, T., & Ryan, R.M. (1993). A dark side of the American dream: correlates of financial success as a central life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65(2), 410-422.
- [9] Kasser, T., Ryan, R.M., Zax, M., & Sameroff, A. J. (1995). The relations of maternal and social environments to late adolescents' materialistic and prosocial



values. *Developmental Psychology*, 31(6), 907-914.

- [10] Moore, R.L., & Moschis, G.P. (1981). The role of family communication in consumer learning. *Journal of Communications* 31(4), 42-51.
- [11] Richins, M. L. (1987). Media, materialism, and human happiness. *Advances in consumer research*, 14(1), 352-356.
- [12] Richins, M.L., & Dawson, S. (1992). A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(3), 303-316.
- [13] Sharma, A. (2011). Role of family in consumer socialization of children. *International Refereed Research Journal*, 2(3), 161-167.
- [14] Sirgy, M.J., Lee, D.J., Kosenko, R., Meadow, H.L., Rahtz, D., Cicic, M., Jin, G.X., Yarsuvat, D., Blenkhorn, D.L. & Wright, N. (1998). Does television viewership play a role in the perception of quality of life?. *Journal of Advertising*, 27(1), 125-142.
- [15] Weaver, S.T., Moschis, G.P., & Davis, T. (2011). Antecedents of materialism and compulsive buying: a life course study in Australia. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 19(4), 247-256.