

Child Psychology at Advertisements and Theory of Visual Constructivism

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ABSTRACT

Children's psychology is complex and quick learning especially at visual and vocal contents and adopts the learning and building knowledge about the advertisements in the process of visual constructivism. This study is about the child psychology in the approach of constructivism towards advertisements in animation channels and study includes kids who are in less than 7 years age group and tweens who are between 8-12 years age group with an objective to test the relevance of constructivist psychological theory related visual contents in the form of advertisements on cartoon channels. The total sample size is 275 including 140 kids and 135 tweens and the respondents are asked to give their preference of choice by ticking the right option, which are converted into contingency table and applied phi – correlation test with the help of chi-square test and as well cell chi-square test.

Keyword: Constructivism, Children, Advertisements and Cartoon Channels

INTRODUCTION

Albert Einstein (Kendra Cherry, 2013) proclaimed that even though children are transformed into adults, children actually think differently than adults. Children are unique minded and complex thinkers and the same thinking takes different nurtured developments along with their growing age. But actual child development is carried away by environmental living comforts like luxurious environments with advanced facilities like digital and electronic items. Other than the social, cultural and socio economic context, children are highly carving themselves in digital technology and entertainment context.

Theory of Constructivism (Fosnot, 1996) portrays the process of learning. The process of constructing knowledge and awareness commence with cognitive, physical, and visual constructions. Children are mentally manipulated and achieve visual excitement while they are in the process of constructivism. Semiotic constructivism where children understand and learn things from signs and symbols with contextual meaning is well interpreted to describe the relationship between components and children psychology.

Visual constructivism (Theodore, 2006) is upright medicine for constructing children's imagination and visual thinking. Children's spatial intelligence (Liben, 1981) is developed by visual semantics in the form of colour, graphics, sound, and visual dramatic story. Television has been a learning tool for the children especially through moral stories oriented cartoon channels in India. These channels are developing inhabitation in the minds of the children and fixing in the brain of the children the constructive learning from the programmes on the cartoon channels. Cartoon channels became one of the important media vehicles to carry the advertisers' message and reach the child market with their respective products. Aiming to draw the attention of the children, the advertisements are flooding through the cartoon channels.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Children are regenerated in thinking due to advanced technological entertainment channels like TV. As per ASSOCHAM survey blogged in Indian Current Affairs, "Children watch TV more than 35 hours a week" (The Hindu, Online Edition, 23 Nov 2010). As per Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, "Children consist

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of 40% of total population in India (Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, 2013)". The theory of constructivism says children are actively engaged at something new and innovative thing they find and learn firmly out of it. Children not only acquire knowledge from TV programmes but also their learning is affirmed when they practice it whatever they have learned as per constructivist theory.

Constructivists (Benaim et al., 1995) believe that the cognitive information is mentally constructed by integrating the information and the experience in present world". The children's psychological observation differs based on the child development over the age (Satterly, D., 1987). Children memory works effectively in memorizing the advertisements they watch and these advertisements are recalled often by the children (P. Ziegler et al., 1978). There is an impact of age differences in children to get affected by the advertisements (Roedder, D.L., 1981). The children are affected by the cartoon tales in animated channels and their age plays vital role in developing their psychology towards those cartoon channels (Alia Bibi, 2012). The advertisements have great impact on children and their behaviour (Friedman, 2011).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to examine the impact of advertisements in animated channels, to test the relevance of constructivist psychological theory related visual contents in the form of advertisements in cartoon channels, and to test the age based influence on memorizing psychology of the children.

LIMITATION/SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is extended to the impact of advertisements on T.V, cartoon channels on children including both kids and tweens. The study area has been limited to only in the state of Andhra Pradesh and taken 5 major cities namely Hyderabad, Vizag, Tirupathi, Vijayawada, and Karim Nagar as sample. Research has been done in very short time with financial limitations and unavailability of sufficient literature research for this study.

RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENTS

1. Children including kids and tweens will psychologically be influenced by animated channels.

2. Children like advertisements on cartoon channels according to their age and age based psychological differences.
3. Poor advertisements fail to catch the attention of the children.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data have been collected from the children through a structured questionnaire with the sample size of 275 that includes 140 kids (less than 7 years) and 135 tweens (8-12 Years). The randomized sampling method is used for the collection of the data. Questionnaire has been carried by an enumerator to help children to fill the form. The respondents were asked to mark their favourite factor.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis has been done by using numerical count of responses by a children to their favourite choice of category, with the help of organised tabulation in the form of cross representing matrixes in which categories are taken on rows and gender of the respondents are taken on columns. Their responses are converted into contingency tables and applied Phi – Correlation test with the help of Chi-Square test. Phi – Correlation is used even though it is more than 2 by 2 table by using the smallest of (rows – 1) or (column – 1). In this case, phi – value is 1 (column -1 = 2-1 = 1). More than 0.5 of phi -value is considered as high association while less than 0.5 of phi – value is considered as low association, in other sense, differences in the gender preferences. The respondent values are not shown in the analysis to reduce the paper space and tables contained only calculation parts of chi-values. Expected valued, chi-values and Phi- values are calculated with the formulas of $EV = \text{total of rows} * \text{total of columns} / \text{grand total}$, $\text{Chi Square} = \text{Power} ((AV-EV), 2)/EV$, and $\text{Phi - Value} = \sqrt{\text{chi-square/sample size}}$ respectively.

Animated channels proved to be realistic programme oriented entertainment channels for kids and it has proved the symptom of constructivism in its findings. Constructivism develops child knowledge and strengthen psychological base by cognitive processes of their children experiences where these channels developed interesting telecast programme sequences to take a child into cognitive process. It is proved in Table 1 that majority

Table 1: Favorite Cartoon Channels of Children: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Channels	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
Cartoon Network	3.73	3.27	0.14	0.16	0.31
Pogo	6.40	5.60	2.03	2.31	4.34
Nick	1.60	1.40	0.10	0.11	0.21
Hungama	20.80	18.20	2.22	2.54	4.76
Disney	6.40	5.60	2.03	2.31	4.34
Animax	1.07	0.93	0.00	0.00	0.01
Total	40.00	35.00	6.52	7.45	13.97
Phi - Value					0.43

of kids and tweens watch Hungama channel daily where programmes like Doraemon has attracted their cognitive senses to stick to their favourite channels. Even channels like Pogo and Disney Channels are psychological attracters to kids while tweens are bonded to Cartoon Network channel.

Table 2: Favourite Cartoon TV Programmes of Children: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Programmes	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
Ninza Hattori	1.60	1.44	0.10	0.13	0.23
Shinchaan	8.00	7.20	1.13	1.42	2.55
Tom and Jerry	2.13	1.92	0.01	0.00	0.01
Ben 10	4.27	3.84	1.20	1.22	2.42
Chota Bheem	8.53	7.68	0.03	0.01	0.05
Doraemon	16.00	14.40	0.06	0.03	0.09
Total	40.53	36.48	2.53	2.81	5.35
Phi - Value					0.27

Contextualized constructivism plays a greater role in children to choose their favourite programmes due to authentic and real life related stories which they see on animationchannels. Children tend to go under psychological authentic real life application of the programmes that they watch. This has shown greater impact on psychological development on children that cements the strength of child memory towards advertisements. It is revealed in Table 2 that kids and tweens are clearly stuck to the programme of Doraemon which is centered around the story of gadget

based experimentations by little kid called Doraemon and exploitation of that gadget by the other kid called Nobita. These characters have shown many real life thinking of the children which has impacted children psychology to vote for Doraemon. ($\phi = 0.25$ where $\phi < \text{smallest of } r-1 \text{ or } c-1$). Even though majority of children watch Doraemon programme on Hungama Channel, the secondary choice for both the ages has clearly shown the difference since kids watch Shinchaan and Chota Bheem.

Table 3: Number of Hours Children Watch TV: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Hours	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
1-2 hrs	18.13	15.87	1.45	1.66	3.11
3-4 hrs	19.20	16.80	0.75	0.86	1.61
5-6 hrs	1.07	0.93	0.00	0.00	0.01
7-8 hrs	0.53	0.47	0.41	0.47	0.88
9-10 hrs	0.53	0.47	0.41	0.47	0.88
full day	0.53	0.47	0.41	0.47	0.88
Total	40.00	35.00	3.43	3.93	7.36
Phi - Value					0.31

It is true as per constructivist theory that no knowledge is absolute rather it is constructed. It is based on the information processing repeatedly. Another fact of constructivist theory is that the knowledge only develops within their context. As per Table 3, the knowledge about the advertisements in the memory of the children is constructed due to repetitively watching the same ads again and again and it is clear that kids and tweens are heavily gone under repetitive watching of advertisements since they watch animated channels for longer period. ($\phi = 0.31$ where $\phi < \text{smallest of } r-1 \text{ or } c-1$). It has helped both kids and tweens to develop their advertisement knowledge due to excessive watching on TV since both the categories of children watched TV 3-4 hours a day and followed by 1-2 hours a day. This excessive engagement with television developed a positive psychological memory on the children to remember their advertisements.

The combination of social components like interest, influence, personal choice, and psychological preferences have led children to choose their advertisements choices related to different products to define under this constructive approach. This constructivist approach mentions about influences of multiple and complex elements to go for a specific choice. This is due to

Table 4: Product Advertisements and Children Recalls: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Products	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
Chocolates	18.13	15.87	0.19	0.22	0.41
Junk Food Items	3.73	3.27	0.80	0.92	1.72
Clothings	1.60	1.40	0.10	0.11	0.21
Candies	5.33	4.67	0.02	0.02	0.04
Toys and Games	9.60	8.40	0.04	0.04	0.08
Stationery	1.60	1.40	0.10	0.11	0.21
Total	40.00	35.00	1.26	1.43	2.69
Phi - Value					0.19

understanding of the cognitive product choice that is influenced by either food habits in life course or playing interests by the kids. It is proved in Table 4 that children, both at ages of kids and tweens, preferred their choice to chocolates which is normally enjoyed by the kids in taste as well as psychological softness and smoothly cream in the chocolate flavour. ($\phi = 0.19$ where $\phi <$ smallest of $r-1$ or $c-1$). Both kids and tweens memorized advertisements of chocolates as their favourite product advertisements on the cartoon channels followed by toys and games.

Table 5: Children Reaction during Commercial Breaks: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Action	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
Watch it	7.47	6.53	0.81	0.93	1.75
Change channel	26.67	23.33	0.20	0.23	0.44
Leave TV	1.60	1.40	0.10	0.11	0.21
Put in Mute	2.13	1.87	0.01	0.01	0.02
Ignore	1.07	0.93	0.00	0.00	0.01
Switch off	1.07	0.93	0.00	0.00	0.01
Total	40.00	35.00	1.14	1.30	2.43
Phi - Value					0.18

One of the constructivism theorists (Gregory, 1974) pointed out that when perception (their interested programme lines) changes, here in this context interrupts, though there is no change in sensory input (their interest for the present viewing programme), a child looks for

nearest perceptual interest (hypothesis) which is nearer (other channels). This is proved in this research as children look for nearest same contented stories on other channels if their present programme is interrupted by commercials (advertisements). In Table 5, Children, both kids and tweens, look for changing the channels to look out for their other interests instead of watching advertisements. ($\phi = 0.18$ where $\phi <$ smallest of $r-1$ or $c-1$). Both kids and tweens change the channel, if advertisements interrupt during the cartoon programmes and very few people watch.

Table 6: Children and their Favorite Advertisement Element: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Elements	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
Background Music	8.00	7.00	1.13	1.29	2.41
Brand Ambassador	1.60	1.40	0.23	0.26	0.48
Story	19.20	16.80	0.17	0.19	0.36
Dialogues	4.80	4.20	0.01	0.01	0.02
Graphics	5.33	4.67	3.52	4.02	7.54
Captions	1.07	0.93	0.00	0.00	0.01
Total	40.00	35.00	5.05	5.77	10.83
Phi - Value					0.38

Vocal constructivism (Stefan Szczelkun, 2012) is another perceptual dose to get closure to the psychology of the children by making these little minds to hear the vocal choirs or solos repeatedly. The story and related lyrics with right message by advertisements as background music in touch with the story line and their uplifting validated messages in the form of jingles are heartthrob for children. It cements their constructive knowledge or memory to remember the advertisements they watch cartoon channels. In Table 6, it is observed that children, both kids and tweens, flatly voted for story and vocal and non-vocal background music ($\phi = 0.38$ where $\phi <$ smallest of $r-1$ or $c-1$).

Interpersonal constructivism (Cragan, 1998) is to deal with final outcomes by complex in their perceptions and sophisticated communication that develop within the children. As per this after searching and gaining the knowledge about the advertisements on the cartoon channels, the children go through interpersonal search to vomit the results of external knowledge gained. The

Table 7: Children and their Post Advertisement Behaviour: A Phi-Correlation Analysis with the Help of Chi-Square

Outcome	Expected Values		Chi Values		
	Kids	Tweens	Kids	Tweens	Total
Ask but don't force	19.20	16.80	1.20	1.37	2.57
Force till they buy	10.67	9.33	1.04	1.19	2.23
Save money and buy	3.20	2.80	1.51	1.73	3.24
Just tell friends	6.93	6.07	5.08	5.80	10.88
Total	40.00	35.00	8.83	10.09	18.93
Phi - Value					0.50

ultimate results turn positive unless the constructivism doesn't validate in their search and learning process. In Table 7, it is observed that children, both kids and tweens, are positive in their final outcome in relation with their advertisement behaviour ($\phi = 0.50$ where $\phi < \text{smallest of } r-1 \text{ or } c-1$). Both kids and tweens don't force parents to buy but they ask to do so. But kids force their parents till they buy the product that they have seen in the advertisement while tweens just discuss with their friends about the same advertisement. Children try to influence the parents after watching advertisements.

FINDINGS

1. Majority of kids and tweens watch Hungama Channel daily where programmes like Doraemon has attracted their cognitive senses to stick to their favourite channel.
2. Kids and tweens are clearly stuck to the programme of Doraemon which is centered on the story of gadget based experimentations and has impacted children psychology.
3. The knowledge about the advertisements in the memory of the children is constructed due to repetitively watching the same ads again and again since they watch animation channels for longer period.
4. The children, both kids and tweens, preferred their choice to chocolates due to psychological softness and smoothly cream in the chocolate flavour.
5. Children look for nearest similar contented stories on other channels if their present programme is interrupted by advertisements.

6. The story and related lyrics with right message by advertisements as background music in touch with the story line and their uplifting validated messages in the form of jingles are favourites for children.
7. Kids force their parents till they buy the product that they have seen in the advertisement but tweens just discuss with their friends about the same advertisement.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Advertisements should be telecasted only in child favourite channels.
2. Advertisements should be telecasted during the programmes which are interesting that make them sit before TV continuously for some time.
3. Advertisements should be well made to make children not to change the channels.
4. Use good background music to the ad making script.

CONCLUSION

Animation channels are successful entertainment channels for kids with good inbound constructivism in its programme contents and contextualized constructivism plays a greater role in children, for they tend to go under psychological authentic real life application of the programmes that they watch. Knowledge about advertisements on the cartoon channels is constructed through repeatedly and contextual advertisements since they watch TV continuously for hours. Due to understanding of the cognitive product choice that is influenced by either food habits in life course or playing interests by the kids, they preferred their choice to chocolates which is normally enjoyed by the kids in taste as well as psychological softness and smoothly cream in the chocolate flavour. Children look for nearest similar contented stories on other channels if their present programme is interrupted by commercials that drive them to change the channels during advertisements. The story and related lyrics with right message by advertisements as background music in touch with the story line and their uplifting validated messages in the form of jingles are heartthrob for children, and finally they turn positive towards buying products and force their parents or influence them to buy those products.