CONCLUSIONS

The study on the perceptions of adolescents regarding the influence of television advertisements on the selected aspects of their lives has ended on the conclusion that television is a nucleus force in the young people's lives. The findings of the study revealed that adolescents were watching television on an average 17-21 hours per week. The study further showed that overall there was high influence of television advertisements on adolescent' lives. It was also found that influence was high on the educational aspect of adolescents' lives whereas, it was moderate on their social, cultural and emotional aspects of their lives.

Television has acquired a significant place in homes and is looked as an accepted phenomenon all over the world. India is also gaining supremacy in informational technology frenzied by Internet, Internet-phoning, satellite channels, computers, telecommunication system etc. Advertisers have captured advanced communication systems and are rushing to get an access to consumers by approaching to every possible communication means available in the modern society. Television has preeminence over other media due to its multi-sensorial appeal and its ubiquitous nature. It has put captivating hold on people across the world - especially pre-teen children, and adolescents due to their susceptible stage. Television and advertising collectively make a dangerous amalgamation. Television is now days being considered as a combat zone for the

advertisers to win battle with their rival to place their products in the viewers' brains.

Young people are increasingly the target of advertising and marketing. This child-targeted marketing not only concentrate on sweets and toys, but it now includes clothes, shoes, and a range of fast foods, sports equipment, computer products and toiletries as well as adult products such as cars, household products, loans/finance and even credit cards. The impact of television advertisements is greater on youths than we think be it daily, weekly or monthly. They are constantly exposed to the advertising of products, which are presented to them in the most enticing fashion possible in order to elicit a response to, and purchase of the product being offered.

Television advertising has clearly begun to root out the cultural and social differences within individual nations, producing standard accents and attitudes, giving a sense of mutual involvement. Television advertising has therefore become a system designed to persuade and to dictate people's mind and is being considered as a changing device now a day.

The study showed that the impact of television advertisements on the lifestyles, habits, behavior, emotions and thinking pattern of the adolescents was enormous. Furthermore, it was spotted in the present study that television advertisements planted high impact on the educational aspect of adolescent' lives and even some of the hardest critics of television advertising

would concede that at least few commercials including advertisements for social cause are informative, resourceful and absorbing and that they should be endorsed by keeping society's and adolescents' best interests foremost in mind.

The point to make here is not just that children and adolescents are such easy prey of television advertisements. It is not just that the rushing river of television advertisements determines the sorts of shoes they desire, the sorts of clothes and toys and games and breakfast cereal and other foodstuffs that they must have. It is not just the discontent and frustration that in many cases leads to aggressive violence of the worst kinds and bad habits like shop-lifting in order to obtain that their parents will not or cannot give them. All of this is of great concern, but the point to focus on here has to do with the question that are we vigilant enough to protect the world of our children and adolescents from the strategies of advertisers.

The advertisers of course are not some terrible people with malevolence aim. They are just trying to sell their products. Nevertheless, their primary concern is not unequivocally the well-being of our youths. Why should it be? Their purpose is to create advertisements that are booming for their business, and this means to get the television viewer interested in their products. But this is not a desirable situation.

Consumerism has become the widespread world trend and unwittingly we are becoming habituate to it. We are handing our youths over to the consumer culture by pushing them towards web spread by the most refined preachers i.e. Advertisers. But we are ourselves so blinded by the all-embracing propaganda we do not consider to confront the advertisements. Contrary, we pay our hard earned money and let involve our children as well in the deal.

In fact, we should raise our voice against the exaggeration of advertisements and for the advertisements, which bring in young people dissatisfaction, frustration, aggression, vulgarity and limitless craving for things. The parents and teachers should demand that youths' best interests should be kept foremost in mind by the government regulators /media planners while giving approval to any such type of the television advertisements.

The parents themselves should take initiative in shaping their children's attitudes towards television and its content including advertisements. In the developed countries various researches have shown that in families where parents watch television with their children and explain the contents on the screen and help them to critically view television, children learn more positive information from television than those children who are left alone to appraise television and its messages.

In this connection it is prudent to suggest parents, media planners and government regulators various guidelines based on the findings of the present study. Suggestions on the Basis of Results of the Present Research:

Suggestions for Parents:

Talking and discussing about media messages can best teach media literacy skills to youths at home. The main practice of imparting media literacy lies in the power of discussion. A freeflow exchange of thoughts while watching television or after gives youngsters important skills to judge media content. Regular media literacy discussion sessions can have a substantial effect on perceptive of children and adolescents of screen content and its impact. Through these family interactions they will gain specific knowledge and skills, which will help them to think, evaluate, and question media messages.

Various researches have pointed out that when children grow up in homes where discussion of television content is a regular activity they are less likely to be negatively influenced by television violence, advertising maneuvers, and portrayal of gender stereotypes or dissolute depictions of women in media.

Media literacy skills help to immunize children against the potential impairment by media messages. It gives them strength and resistance skills to be exposed to multi- media environment without becoming polluted by it. The parents can teach media literacy and can help in balancing the lives of adolescents in the multimedia environment in the following manner:

There should be variety of activities and experiences for youths to enjoy besides television. There should be activities, which require focused concentration and critical thinking such as reading, creative work such as art and craft, working with puzzles, word games which require mental exercise etc. Television should not be kept on while taking meals to enjoy family mealtime, conversing with each other without television.

Parents should carefully decide where the television is placed. It will be helpful in reducing viewing time of young peoples by keeping the television set where it can be easily checked what youngsters are watching. Separate television in a bedroom of youngsters might make controlling television too difficult for parents and the television viewing too easy for them.

Parents ought to deal directly with television violence. Youths need protection from glamorized portrayals of televised violence as much as possible. Discussion is essential for protecting adolescents from violence on television. While coviewing together parents and children can count the number of violent acts in advertisements, cartoons, action-adventure movies and programs and discuss how the program or movie or advertisement could be improved with less violence. Parents should try to extend the learning experiences of young people by encouraging them to read literature, learn music, sport, and any art like painting, toy making, flower decoration etc.

Parents must set a good example. Parents are the most important role models for children. Limiting their own TV viewing and choosing programs carefully will encourage children to emulate their parents.

Parents should explain to adolescents that all television programs have an underlying economic purpose. The television industry, like all industries, is in business to make money. It is desirable to teach youngsters that commercial television is not a free entertainment and it is a commercial operation.

Parents should explain to youths about gender stereotypes in television, portrayal of women as sexy but dump head; men as superhero and tough but not sensitive; housewife as self-denying / sacrificing person; or older people as feeble or helpless to correct their perceptions regarding gender portrayal in television programs and commercials.

Parents should help children and adolescents to resist advertisements by explaining the purpose of commercials to them that they are intended to make people want things they may not need. Limit the number of television advertisements by skipping them.

Adolescents should be made known that the purpose of television advertising is to get people interested in buying products, not to entertain viewers only. Parents should talk about the ways in which the product is made attractive on the television screen. They should assist young people in identifying the claims made in the advertisements.

Parents should encourage children and adolescents to seek more information regarding product before buying than simply trusting the advertisement's claims. The youths should be encouraged to analyze the product and its need before purchasing like does it work well? Does it is really needed? What other comparable products are available in the market and at what cost?

Adolescents should be helped to understand that advertisements give them some, but not all of the information required for right choices for purchase of the products. Help should be given to young people to understand that product information does not come from advertising entirely and that an advertisement is only a prologue, not the total account of the product.

Youths and children should be involved in the decisions about family purchases, from clothing to home appliances. Children should watch how the relative qualities of particular brands of the product could be weighed. This will help them while making similar decisions when it comes to personal purchases.

Adolescents and children should be taught about budgeting, saving, and waiting before making a purchase.

Parents aid counter consumerism and competition by examining and checking own behaviors like impulse buying, overextend credit, shop for recreation, or always pursue the latest models in the market. Parents must be willing to say "no" to children's unreasonable requests for the products.

Parents should share in their children's television viewing and encourage them to discuss and think critically about what they are watching. When viewing advertisements, talk with them about the various elements of advertisement i.e. jingles, slogans, music, dress of model, story line, characterization of model, animation etc. Youths should be encouraged to break down the advertisements into parts. Ask them to decide which elements of the advertisement provide information about the product and which parts are not relevant

in advertisement. This process can develop responsible decision-making behavior in adolescents.

Youths should be helped to judge the reality behind the adventure in advertising by encouraging them to draw upon their personal experiences. For example, an advertisement showing a model performing stunts on a particular brand of a product then parents should raise a number of questions like, if you bought that product do you think you would be able to do the tricks the model in the advertisement is doing; how long do you think he had to practice before he could do them; what do you think would happen if you tried to do those stunts without practicing first? Adolescents should be guided that only the professionals who are selected by the advertisers for their product promotion can perform the adventurous activities and nonprofessionals should not try to imitate them.

3 The importance and social need of cause advertisements on television like tree-plantation; anti- drug; anti- smoking; safe sex; women's issues, national integration etc can be explained to youths by highlighting beneficial tips in the social cause advertisements. Television is an educational tool and advertisements on television can be used to develop social awareness among youths and as a result, social responsibility could be developed in youths and many social problems in society could be eradicated.

These above mentioned schedules would help adolescents and children to scrutinize television content sophistically and critically particularly advertising claims of the products on their own. More generally, this process also should help to build their self-confidence and sense of competence when it comes to making independent decisions regarding product's purchase and moreover help them to become rational and clever consumer.

Suggestions for Media Planners/ Advertisers.

Advertisers should always take into account the level of knowledge, sophistication and maturity of the viewers before advertising any product. Advertisers, therefore, must have a special responsibility to protect adolescents and children from overt advertising appeal.

Products that are inappropriate for use by children and adolescents should not be advertised or promoted directly to them.

Advertisers should recognize that advertising should communicate information in a truthful and accurate manner.

Advertisers should capitalize on the potential of advertising to influence behavior by developing advertising that addresses positive and beneficial social behavior, such as friendship, kindness, honesty, justice, generosity, respect which develop social responsibility, social tolerance and unity. Advertisers should contribute to the parent-child relationship in a constructive manner.

The advertising presentation should not be misleading children about benefits from use of the product.

Products should be shown used in safe ways, in safe environments and in safe situations.

Food products should be represented with a view toward healthy development of the children and for the development of good nutritional practices. Advertisements should clearly and adequately describe the role of the product within the plan of a balanced diet. Snack foods, health drinks, confectionary items etc should be clearly illustrated as such, and should not be advertised as substitutes for meals.

Presentations of violence that could frighten or provoke anxiety, fear or apprehension in children or which, motivate youth for repeating violence in real life should be avoided in advertisements.

Advertisements should not guide adolescents and children to ask parents to buy products. Advertisements should not suggest that parents who purchase a product or service for their wards are superior, more intelligent or more generous and loving, open-minded than parents who do not. Advertisers should not create a sense of urgency in advertising of products for use of children and teenagers for example, by using words like 'now', 'hurry', 'rush up' and 'fast'.

Advertisement should not build the impression to children that possession of product will result in more acceptances by their friends. Nevertheless, it should not be implied that lack of a product would cause children and adolescents to be less accepted or rejected by their peers.

It should not be suggested through advertisements particularly in advertisements of children and adolescents' products that, purchase and use of a product would enhance their prestige, skills or other special qualities.

Advertisements, which use celebrities as product endorsers, presenters then care, should be taken that all personal endorsements should reflect the actual experiences and beliefs of them. Extra care should be taken to avoid creating any false impression that the use of the product would enhance the status of the consumers and make them a star.

The use of premiums, promotions and sweepstakes in advertising has the potential to enhance the appeal of a product to young audience. Therefore, media planners and regulators should give special attention to the advertising of these marketing gimmicks to guard against exploiting young viewer's immaturity. Advertisers should take care to the safety of young viewers. Imitation, exploration and experimentation are important activities to children and adolescents. They are attracted to advertisements' action and adventure in general and may imitate product demonstrations and other actions without considering risk. Therefore, in advertisements high- risk action and adventure should not be shown while promoting product. Products inappropriate for use by young audience should not be advertised directly to them. Medications, drugs, contraceptive pills, condoms and supplemental vitamins should not be advertised directly to children. Such products should not be promoted directly to children by premiums or other means.

Advertisements should show children and teenagers doing age related appropriate work. For instance, young children and teenagers should not be shown driving vehicles like cars, jeeps etc.

Advertisers should not promote westernized culture in advertisement and western values of eat, merry and drink or nudity, individuality etc should not be glorified in advertisements. On the other hand Indian values should be promoted while advertising products.

Advertisers should recognize their social responsibility and promote and sustain social cause advertisements.

<u>Suggestion for Government Regulators</u>

Government regulators should check a very high number of advertisements between programs so that one may not think that he is watching program of advertisements.

Special attention should be given to the indecent and inappropriate portrayal of women in television advertisements.Women should not be depicted in secondary, passive, subordinate or in decorative and sexually suggestive roles.

Advertisements of unhealthy products like alcohol, cigarettes; pan masala should not be permitted on any channel.

Government can be suggested to appoint committee to periodically check and review the code of conduct of advertising.

Advertisements of products and services used by adults like contraceptives pills, condoms, alcohol, cigarettes, and advertisements of services for adults like phone friends, adult web-sites, should not be allowed to telecast in the prime time when children generally watch television. The timings of those advertisements should be rescheduled to avoid exposure of youngsters to such advertisements.

Government regulators should check that characteristics of gender, any class, creed, and religion should not be ridiculed while promoting products through advertising.

The government regulators should verify that the products especially by the use of children and teens proposed for advertisements have required certificates from government accepted standardization groups like ISI, Agmark, FPO, and Drug Control Boards etc.

Care should be taken that extreme quantity of aggression and violence like assault by mob, hunt, personal aggravation, rebel and revolt that require an emotional outburst should not be hyped in television advertisements.

Government regulators should check that extreme amount of adventurous and hazardous activities should not be shown in television advertisements, which motivate adolescents and children to replicate them.

Government should promote and encourage advertisements for social causes on every channel and the number of such advertisements should be sufficiently increased to bring awareness of social issues among young generation.

Recommendations for further studies: -

The same study can be conducted in relation to some other variables than taken in the present such as ordinal position of adolescents, family size, intelligence level, personality of parents or adolescents, television-viewing behavior etc.

A comparative study of rural and urban adolescents can be carried out to study the differences in their perceptions regarding the influence of television advertisements on rural and urban youths.

A longitudinal study can be conducted to find out the varying effects of television advertisements on children and adolescents during their different periods of life span.

The micro-level studies can be conducted to judge the influence of certain types of television advertisements on children and adolescents e.g. influence of food advertising, cigarettes / alcohol advertising, social advertising, cosmetics/ clothing/personal accessories advertising on adolescents' lifestyles, behavior patterns, attitudes and habits etc.

An experimental research can be conducted to study the effectiveness of advertising messages in terms of recall, recognition, attentiveness, and adoptability of advertising messages.

The influence of advertising through other media like print, radio, Internet, billboards, personal advertising etc can be taken up.

A content- analysis can be done of advertisements on television in terms of elements of advertising like language used, costumes, characterization of models, story line, jingles, music, violent/adventurous activities performed by models, gender portrayal in advertisements etc.

A comparative study can be conducted to judge the influence of advertising on sample of children and adolescents from developing and developed countries.

A sample of children ranging from pre-school children to college goers can be included in sample to judge the influence of television advertisements.

A study can be undertaken taking a sample of adults to know the perceptions of adults regarding the influence of television advertising on their wards which may be quite useful for the media planners and regulators to regulate and alter the terms of advertising as per the requirements of parents.