

Impact of media on buying behaviour of adolescent girls

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present study was conducted in Kanpur city of Uttar Pradesh. The aim of research study was to find out the impact of media portrayal on buying behaviour of adolescent girls. Purposively, from the schools 120 adolescents (60 early adolescent girls and 60 late adolescent girls) were randomly selected from different schools of Kanpur city. A self-constructed questionnaire was used to find the impact of media portrayal on buying behaviour of adolescent girls, with respect to, willingness to use cosmetics to enhance physical appearance, willingness to buy trendy/modern cloths to enhance physical appearance and willingness to buy accessories to enhance physical appearance. Data were analyzed in terms of percentage, frequency and Chi square (χ^2). Findings revealed that all girls (100%) willing to buy cosmetics and trendy/modern clothes enhanced their physical appearance according to the current trends they observed through the media. Majority of girls (87.50 %) were willing to buy trendy/modern accessories (e.g.-goggles, earring, belts etc.) to enhance their physical appearance according to the current trends they observed through the media.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Impact of media, Buying behaviour, Adolescent girls

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Media especially, television, cinema and more recently the Internet, that provide information along with audio-visual experiences exert a powerful influence on the users since they affect the eyes, ears and the mind simultaneously. Child psychologist, Hurlock (2003) explained that mass media provides models of socially personality traits, which, children can use as models for their own personality development. For example, in matters of appearance, the children learn concepts of culturally approved stereotypes of the “right body build”. Further, according to her, children create aspirations of what they would like to look like, or concept media. Berk (1990) explained that children acquire knowledge of sex-appropriate behaviour, appearance, occupations and achievements by observing others around them. For instance, the term “fairer sex” alluded to women, has been persistently projected as a stereotype of women by the media. The results of a market survey reported in newspaper article, pointed out that the user profile of fairness creams had got younger (age 12-15 years), which was much less than a few years ago (The Times of India, Kanpur, April 8, 2009). The cause for

consumption of fairness creams by teenagers for enhancing their physical appearance, was attributed to the high exposure they have of various media that propagate standards of beauty and emphasis on “fairness” or fair complexion is one such standard of physical appearance that has particularly influenced young adolescents girls and even boys.

According to Kotwal *et al.* (2008) buying is a complex process involving a number of decisions to be made as to what to buy, where to buy, when and how much to buy. This process is divisible into stages such as awareness, information, application, trial and adoption. The buyers are aware of the product through one source, yet other sources might provide more information at the information stage. It might still be a different source influencing at the application stage when the purchase is made. The results of the study revealed that the girls viewed T.V., magazines, newspapers and Internet advertisements with interest and found them entertaining and informative to enhance their physical appearance. The non-informative factors like celebrities, catchy slogans, visual effects funny advertisements, easily affect the adolescents to