

The effectiveness of instructional media for teaching of consumer education

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ABSTRACT

From the investigation carried out it was observed that majority of the rural and urban respondents had acquired better mean scores regarding general consumer awareness in pre-test. Scores acquired regarding redressal mechanism, advertising gimmicks were poor. Regarding problems faced by consumers in market place, rural respondents had awareness up to certain extent. After the intervention programme, majority of the respondents from urban and rural area's scored the highest in general consumer awareness, the second highest score was in enhancement regarding buying behavior. Regardless of the locale, majority of the respondents showed major change in awareness regarding advertisement misguiding consumers and problem of product and services; whereas problems of weights and measures, cheating by shopkeeper showed fewer enhancements in awareness in spite of intervention. Regarding media effectiveness Participatory Media was the highest (1.0087_{LSD}) amongst the rest of the educational media; whereas Semi-Participatory Media scored (0.6616_{LSD}), coming on the second position, Non Participatory Media scored the least (0.4321_{LSD}) and stood on the third position. Majority (66 per cent) of the urban respondents acquired good awareness regarding consumerism after imparting intervention program as compared to (46 per cent) rural respondents.

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The world of advertising seems too good to be true to many. It has glamour, it offers the best things in life and has quick-fix solutions to almost all problems that young consumers may face. Advertising has become such an inextricable part of our lives. Thanks to television - that we can't really imagine life without it. Is there a way to determine how much advertising affects our lives and influences our purchase decisions and goes even further to change our attitudes? Besides, who monitors the subliminal and surrogate advertising that we hardly ever notice and yet, which leaves an indelible mark on our minds.

Teenagers are psychologically and indirectly forced to go for conspicuous purchase. Therefore, the consumers must be wise buyer and directly in contact with the utilities. Currents trends indicate that teens have a large amount of disposable income but are not knowledgeable about consumerism. Since children are becoming young consumers at an early age, children must learn to obtain information about goods and services, understand the psychology of selling and advertising, learn to shop wisely and distinguish between wants and needs. It, then, becomes very important for children to be taught to purchase wisely and a few simple precautions will ensure that they choose the right product at the right price.

Since consumer education is a tedious and procedural subject, its teaching becomes challenge for the teacher in the class room. If proper implementation of educational technology is given cumulative acquisition

of attitudes and skill in knowledge will occur by building upon what one has previously understood.

Teaching technology involves the mechanism of instructional process in the classroom situation. It has three components (1) Method, (2) Material, (3) Media.

In the traditional approach to school teaching, most class time was spent with the teachers lecturing and the students watching and listening. The students work individually on assignments and cooperation is discouraged. Such teacher-centred instructional methods have repeatedly been found inferior compared to instruction that involves active learning, in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm during class that is cooperative learning, in which students work in teams on problems and projects under conditions that assure both positive interdependence and individual accountability. This applies understanding of content, acquisition of critical thinking or creative problem-solving skills, formation of positive attitudes toward the subject being taught, or level of confidence in knowledge or skills.

Today it is the believed that education must be based on the principle that humans are social animals who learn best in real-life activities with other people. Given this view of human nature, the most progressive teacher desires to provide not just reading and drill, but also real-world experiences and activities that centre on the real life of the students. A typical progressive slogan is "Learn by doing!" What I hear I forget, what I see I remember,

what I experience, I know. To make hearing permanent and effective, plain talking and lecturing is not enough, it has to be accompanied by practical experience and exposure. The educator must provide opportunity. Actual involvement by learner so that they can see, practice, gain confidence, ask question and apply to real life situation.

Keeping this philosophy in mind, the researcher in present study has developed three educational media in order to test the efficiency of educational media for imparting consumer education and to equip the children with critical awareness regarding consumerism and in a participatory process attempt to discover ways of strengthening their response towards the media. The entire event invited full or partial participation of the students and stimulated their thinking.

METHODOLOGY

The current study is designed to limit its focus to gather and analyze data on existing level of awareness regarding consumerism among teenagers and to test the effectiveness of developed educational participatory, semi participatory and non-participatory media on its enhancement. A diagram presented below shows the perceived link between the components of consumerism.

The research design used for present study has two pronged approach. A descriptive survey with pre-tested, validated interview schedule was used to acquire the information needed for knowing the awareness among the students regarding the consumerism. After the survey, an intervention programme (need based) was designed

to enhance the level of awareness among the selected respondents, thus, the most suitable design for the present study was a combination of descriptive cum experimental method sandwiched with again the descriptive survey method for post test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Majority of the rural and urban respondents had acquired better mean scores regarding general consumer awareness in pre-test. Scores acquired regarding redressal mechanism, advertising gimmicks were poor. Regarding problems faced by consumers in market place rural respondents had awareness up to certain extent. After the intervention program, majority of the respondents from urban and rural area scored the highest in general consumer awareness, the second highest score was in enhancement regarding buying behavior. Regardless of the locale, majority of the respondents showed major change in awareness regarding advertisement misleading consumers and problem of product and services; whereas problems of weights and measures, cheating by shopkeeper showed less enhancements in awareness in spite of intervention.

To test the difference in the effectiveness of the participatory, semi-participatory and non-participatory media on the enhancement level of awareness regarding consumerism among the selected respondents, one way ANOVA was carried out.

Table 1 show that the F_{cal} (41.287) was greater than F_{tab} (2.99) at alpha 0.05. This implies that there was a significant difference amongst the three mean net

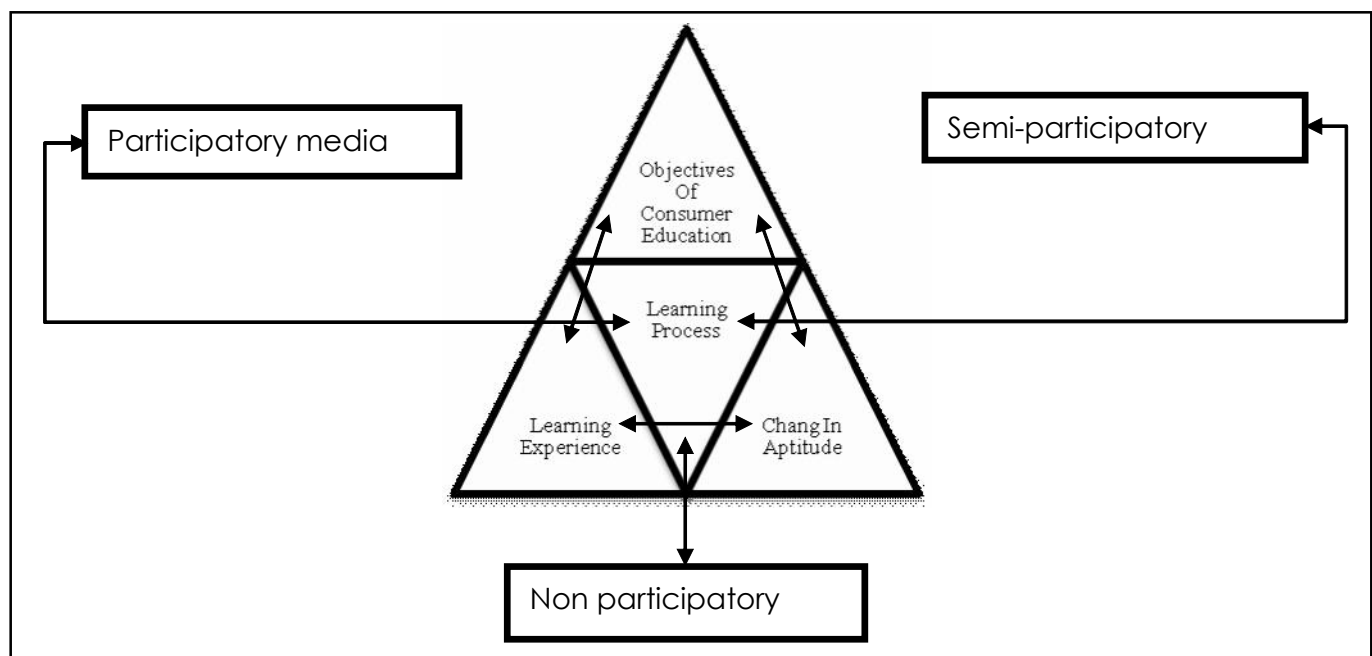


Table 1 : Effectiveness of the participatory, semi- participatory and non-participatory media on the enhancement level of awareness regarding consumerism

Source of variance	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F _c value	F _t value (2,189)	Level of significance
Between groups	10.786	2	5.393	41.287	2.99	P-value <0.05(NS)
Within groups	24.688	189	.131			
Total	35.474	191				

gain scores of the respondents exposed to different educational media. Thus, it could be said that the type of media and involvement of the respondents had significant effect on the enhancement level of awareness regarding consumerism.

Table 2 shows the performance of the respondents in each treatment group had exposure to selected educational media. The net gain scores, which is difference between the pre-test mean scores and post-test mean scores was computed for the three treatment group, which showed that Participatory media was the highest (1.0087) amongst the rest educational media; whereas Semi-Participatory Media scored 0.6616, coming on the second position. Non-Participatory Media scored the least (0.4321), stood on the third position.

Table 3 shows the least significant difference between the three treatment mean scores. Least significant difference test is a statistical procedure that determines if the difference found between two treatments is due to the treatment or if the difference is simply due to random chance. Table 1 depicts that semi-participatory and participatory media (0.3471_{LSD}) performed significantly better than non-participatory media (0.2295_{LSD}). The participatory and non-participatory media (0.5766_{LSD}) performed better than that of participatory and semi- participatory media (0.3471_{LSD}).

However, all the three means were greater than LSD calculated (0.1254), indicated that the results were significantly different due to the treatment and not due to random chance.

Thus the results of the study justify the statement that "What I hear I forget, what I see I remember, what I do I know". To make hearing permanent and effective, simple talking and lecturing is not enough, it has to be accompanied by practical experience and exposure. The educator must provide opportunity of actual involvement to learners so that they can see, practice, gain confidence ask question and apply to real life situation. The inadequacy with the lecture method particularly for school children has been brought to the fore by Orukotan and Oladipo (1994) and Oke and Oshodi (2000) and even present study confirms the same. It is expedient for the school teachers to make use of participatory media in passing on the information to the students. The story of consumption and consumerism will continue effectively for the trained teenagers.

Student's motivation and engagement are ongoing challenges for classroom tutors especially when dealing with monotonous and procedural subject like consumerism. To adequately teach students about consumerism, activities must be relevant to them and the items they consume. It should be intrinsic and motivational. It should

Table 2: The net gain scores between the pre-test mean scores and post-test mean

Educational media	Pre-test scores mean	Post test scores mean	Net gain scores	Ranking
Participatory media	1.7261	2.7348	1.0087	1 st
Semi-participatory media	1.7335	2.3951	0.6616	2 nd
Non participatory	1.8249	2.2571	0.4321	3 rd

Table 3 : Establishing significance with LSD at 5% (0.1254)

Treatment with	Mean net gain	LSD at 5%
Participatory Media (P)	1.0087	
Semi Participatory Media (S)	0.6616	0.1254
Non Participatory Media (N)	0.4321	

P-N	1.0087-0.4321	0.5766	≥	reject $H_0: \mu_P = \mu_N$
P-S	1.0087-0.6616	0.3471	≥	reject $H_0: \mu_P = \mu_S$
S-N	0.6616-0.4321	0.2295	≥	reject $H_0: \mu_S = \mu_N$

be enjoyable, promote participation, help students set personal goals related to consumerism, and provide positive feedback to the students. With careful, creative planning, consumerism in the classroom can be a rewarding experience for the students, both today and in the future.

Promoting intrinsic motivation to become wise consumers, it requires following three strategies. First, the tutor must eliminate threats and stress in the classroom.

Learning activities that are fun and encourage participation can help the students learn and retain an increased potential for continued behavioral change. Second, helping the students set meaningful goals (both long- and short-term) will assist them in transferring classroom learning into practical application. Finally, feedback is a great source of intrinsic motivation. It is essential that activities promote success and acknowledge student achievement. It is also helpful to create activities that provide automatic feedback so that students are encouraged to strive towards success.

It can be concluded from the major findings of the present study that using interactive activities and games in teaching encourage active learning as well as collaboration. The most important point of participation in an activity requires the use of content by the learner; thus ensuring students are working with the ideas that are being taught, and applying them. In lecture situations students are assumed to be doing this on their own (Reuben, 1999).

In addition to memory and performance benefits, games and interactive learning method have important social benefits for students. Students need to have learned the content and to be supported in the social norms of applying it, therefore for students to transfer what they have learnt, they also need to practice the skill of abstracting what they know and applying it. Students often have particular difficulty in far, transfer tasks, where they

have to use information in context very different from the learning environment. Interactive activities and games promote transfer because they require student's participation and active involvement with the core content. Creating opportunities for students to practice applying the content, such as games or stimulation, can bridge the distance between learning concepts presented in classroom and using that information to solve a problem met in their real situation.

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