

## **Television Advertisements, Parental Mediation and Snack Choices among Pupils of Selected Primary Schools in Surulere Local Government Area, Lagos State**

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### **Abstract**

The exposure of children between ages 4-11, to snack television advertisements has been a recurring issue in developed and developing countries. The number of snack television advertisements targeted at children, especially during their television program viewing, is mostly for sugar-sweetened, fatty, and salty snacks. These kinds of snacks can hinder a child's development and lead to diseases such as diabetes and obesity.

The study adopted a survey research design using a quantitative method. The study area used was Surulere Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria, with a population of 2347 (Surulere Local Government Education Authority, 2021). Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in this study. A sample size of 332 was determined using a formula developed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) while the respondents were selected based on a signed consent form by parents. The questionnaire research instrument was validated with the use of face and construct validity, reliability of the instrument was also determined with a pilot study of 10 per cent of the sample size. The Cronbach's alpha test results which were greater than 0.7 (0.748, 0.764, and 0.820) showed that the instrument was reliable. There were 266 response rates, while some of the remaining 66 copies were not returned, some unanswered and some rejected due to inconsistent information. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 22) while adopting descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings of the study revealed a positive influence of snack television advertisements on pupils' snack choices. It also revealed that active, restrictive and co-viewing parental mediation has a positive significant influence on children's snack choices but parental mediation cannot significantly moderate the relationship between snack television advertisements and pupils' snack choices for Gala, Pure Bliss and Minimie. The study showed that children between ages 7-11 are exposed to the negative effects of increased consumption of unhealthy snacks, obesity and poor nutrition due to snack television advertisements and base their choices for snacks on what they observe from such advertisements.

The study recommended the need for parents to adopt the combination of active, restrictive and co-viewing parental mediation for effective results in altering the influence of snack television advertisements on their children's snack choices.

**Keywords: Exposure, Influence, Parental Mediation, Snacks, Snack Television Advertisement**

### **Introduction**

In the realm of advertising, both advertisers and advertising agencies target children for certain products, using aggressive marketing to appeal to their desires for products like Pure Bliss Biscuits, Minimie chin-chin, and Gala Sausage Roll. These products often contain sugary, salty, or fatty contents that children of primary school age are exposed to. Parental mediation is crucial to protect children from exposure to unhealthy snack television advertisements and to control their snack choices. Television advertising targets children, who are vulnerable to these adverts due to their low cognitive skills. Despite this vulnerability, advertisers frequently include children as a target audience in certain product categories. They use music, popular figures, and attractive offers to influence children's perceptions. Research indicates that children struggle to recognize and comprehend the

features of advertised snack products. More than 80 percent of advertisements directed at children feature toys, cereals, snacks, candy, flavored food drinks, or fast-food restaurants, often emphasizing the positive aspects while neglecting the negative effects of such products. To effectively recognize and understand televised advertisements, children need to distinguish between commercials and programs, and recognize the persuasive intent of advertisements. Additionally, parental mediation plays a crucial role in protecting children from unhealthy exposure and managing their buying behavior, across various media platforms such as internet use, video games, mobile phones, smart phones, television viewing, and buying advertised products. Primary school children in Lagos State often buy snacks, drinks, and fast food items during school hours because some parents are unable to prepare breakfast and lunch for their children due to busy schedules. This habit of snacking during school hours may lead to overeating or consuming unhealthy foods, resulting in various food-related health conditions in children. Children's snack choices are influenced by both televised product advertisements and parental influence. The production of sugar-sweetened, fatty, and salty snacks is of great concern, as these products can cause non-communicable diseases such as malnourishment, diabetes, and obesity. Children under the age of eleven are particularly susceptible to contracting diseases due to unregulated consumption of snacks and fast foods advertised on television. Children often display strong desires for advertised snacks like Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin, and Gala Sausage Roll, and they may try to persuade their parents to buy these products. If their efforts fail, many children buy these snacks on their own. It is important for parents to mediate between their children and television advertisements to help them understand marketing strategies employed by advertisers. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the extent to which parental mediation mitigates the influence of television advertisements on their children's snack choices. This study examines the influence of television advertisements and parental mediation on the snack choices of pupils in selected primary schools in Surulere Local Government Area of Lagos State.

The study's objectives was to investigate the extent to which pupils of selected primary schools of Lagos State are exposed to Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin and Gala Sausage Roll television advertisements;

1. To assess the level of active parental mediation in Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin and Gala Sausage Roll snack television advertisements
2. To find out the level of restrictive parental mediation in Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin and Gala Sausage Roll snack television advertisements
3. To ascertain the level of co-viewing parental mediation in Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin and Gala Sausage Roll snack television advertisements
4. To assess the influence of Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin and Gala Sausage Roll snack television advertisements on pupil's snack choices
5. To ascertain the influence of parental mediation on the relationship between (Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin chin and Gala Sausage Roll) snack television advertisements and pupil's snack choices.

### **Theoretical framework**

#### **Family Communication Patterns Theory (FCPT)**

The family communication pattern theory (FCPT) was developed in 1972 and 1973 by McLeod and Chaffee. It explains how parents influence their children's processing of media messages based on conversation and conformity orientations. The theory identifies four types of families: consensual (active mediation), pluralistic (co-viewing mediation), protective (restrictive mediation), and laissez-faire (uninvolved mediation). The FCPT sheds light on how parents can influence their children's snack choices and mitigate the impact of media, as well as its influence on communication behaviors within and outside the family. However, even in families with strong communication patterns, peer influence can still affect children's choices.

### **Media Dependency Theory**

In 1976, Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur proposed a theory that suggests the more a person relies on the media, the greater the media's influence on them. This is relevant to how children use media, like TV and smartphones, and may lead to unhealthy snack choices. Media dependency refers to relying heavily on a specific communication medium. Critics argue that the theory does not account for individual differences in media usage and fails to describe the role of media during social change or crisis.

### **Theory of Cognitive Development**

Cognitive development theory, proposed by Jean Piaget in 1936, explains how children comprehend their environment and the objects within it. According to the theory, children build their understanding of the world by encountering disparities between their existing knowledge and new discoveries in their environment, and then adjusting their ideas accordingly.

Piaget delineated four stages of cognitive development:

1. **Sensorimotor Stage:** This initial stage begins at birth and continues until the child acquires language.
2. **Preoperational Stage:** This stage spans from the child's acquisition of language at around age 2 to age 7, during which they do not yet grasp concrete logic and are unable to mentally process and manipulate information.
3. **Concrete Operational Stage:** Following the preoperational stage, this stage occurs between the ages of 7 and 11, during which children's thinking processes become more mature, enabling them to draw inferences from observations to make generalizations.
4. **Formal Operational Stage:** This final stage, encompassing ages 11 to 20 (adolescence/adulthood), sees children capable of hypothetical and deductive reasoning.

In the context of the study, it was revealed that children between the ages of 2 and 11, primarily primary school children, struggle to mentally process messages or understand the perspective presented in advertisements they encounter while watching television programs.

Critics of this theory have pointed out some shortcomings, including overestimating the abilities of adolescents and underestimating those of infants. Additionally, Piaget is criticized for neglecting the cultural and social interaction factors that contribute to children's cognitive development and thinking abilities.

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **Exposure of Television Food Advertisements toward Children**

In 2017, Signal, Stanley, Smith, Barr, Chambers, Zhou, Duane, Gurrin, Smeaton, McKerchar, Pearson, Hoek, Jenkin, and Mhurchu conducted a study using wearable cameras to analyze children's exposure to food marketing. They found that children were exposed to non-core food marketing 27.3 times per day, which was more than twice their exposure to core food marketing. The study recommended urgent action to reduce children's exposure to marketing of unhealthy foods.

In 2020, Lavrisa, Hristov, Kelly, and Pravst studied the impact of regulations on children's exposure to food advertising on television. They found that while regulations reduced the advertising of unhealthy foods during children's programs, children's overall exposure to unhealthy food advertising was unlikely to have been considerably reduced by the regulations.

In 2014, Oyero and Salawu's study on Children's Food Commercials on Nigerian Television Stations revealed that the commercials used various appeals to persuade the target audience and could alter children's experience

of food and their culture of food consumption.

In 2012, Ayantunji, Robert, Eddy, and Irene conducted a study on Children's attitudinal reactions to television advertisements in the African context. The findings showed the popularity of television advertising among children and suggested the use of experimental methods to test children's reactions to advert videos.

#### **Influence of Parental Mediation on Pupil's Snack Choices**

In a study by Lwin, Shin, Yee, and Wardoyo (2017), the researchers examined a parental health education model of children's food consumption and its influence on children's attitude, intention, and consumption of healthy and unhealthy foods. They used structural equation modeling based on a survey of 1119 children aged 9-12 and found that parental education strategies influence children's food consumption in a complex manner that is highly context-dependent. Parental guidance of food consumption enhanced children's healthy food attitude and intention to consume, while reducing the intention to consume unhealthy food.

In a related study, Yee, Lwin, and Ho (2017) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis to evaluate the influence of parental practices on child promotive and preventive food consumption behavior. They found that the efficacy of some parenting practices might depend on the food consumption context and the age of the child. For healthy foods, active guidance/education might be more effective, while for unhealthy foods, restrictive guidance/rule-making might be more effective. The study also suggested that for children 7 and older, restrictive guidance/rule-making could be more effective in preventing unhealthy eating, while for children 6 and younger, rewarding with verbal praise can be more effective in promoting healthy eating and preventing unhealthy eating. Ahn (2019) examined parental media literacy and parental mediation strategies for advertainment content featuring popular media characters. This study focused on children's need for adult guidance to understand persuasion attempts from media contents. The findings showed that parents may be able to understand the selling intent of sponsored and general television advertisements. It was also found that parents are likely to combine active, restrictive, and co-viewing mediation. Additionally, there was no clear pattern on consistent relationships between parental mediation and media literacy. The findings suggest that media literacy and parental educational level have a significant effect on how parents mediate advertainment contents.

#### **Influence of Snack Television Advertisement on Pupil's Snack Choices and Snack Consumption**

The study "Children, Media and Food: A New Paradigm in Food Advertising, Social Marketing and Happiness Management" by Zambrano, Jimenez-Marin, Galiano-Coronil, and Ravina-Ripoll (2021) focused on the issue of obesity among children and its relationship with food advertising in Spain. The study found noncompliance with the advertising code for children and observed inadequate eating habits among children, with a high number of food and drink advertisements targeted at children under 12 years old.

Another study by Alphonsus, Eruke, and Eucharia (2013) examined the snack consumption patterns of adolescent Nigerian urban secondary school girls. The study found that a majority of the girls consumed energy-dense snacks and soft drinks, with low consumption of fruits. It concluded that there is a need for health education to promote healthier snacking behaviors among adolescent schoolgirls.

The study conducted by Iyiola and Dirisu (2014) revealed that children's advertisements have a significant impact on family purchasing behavior, as children are easily influenced by advertisements, which affect the family's purchasing decisions.

In their study on the impact of television advertising on children's food choices, Tousi and Altinkaya (2017) found that food, television, school, and musical advertisements all influence children's food consumption behavior.

Moreover, Gesualdo and Yanovitzky's (2019) study explored the influence of advertising susceptibility on adolescents' preference for and consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs). The researchers found that advertising susceptibility was a reliable predictor of SSB preference and consumption among adolescents.

Emond, Longacre, Drake, and their colleagues (2019) investigated the influence of child-directed television advertising on pre-schoolers' intake of advertised cereals. Their observational study showed that exposure to child-directed high-sugar breakfast cereal television advertisements was associated with brand-specific high sugar breakfast cereal intake by pre-schoolers.

Finally, Russell, Vincent, and Croker (2018) conducted a study on the effect of food advertising on children's dietary intake and its impact on child obesity. They found that television advertising has a significant impact on children's dietary intake.

### Methodology

For this study, a survey research design was used, and a questionnaire was used to collect data. The study's population comprised 2,347 pupils from six selected primary schools in Surulere Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria (Surulere Local Government Education Authority, 2021). The sample size was calculated using a formula developed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009). This formula was chosen because it provided clear scientific steps for determining the study's sample size rather than relying on the researcher's estimation or guesswork. The technique involved three stages before arriving at the final sample size. A confidence level of 95% was chosen, allowing for a 5% error margin. The formula was calculated as follows:

#### First Stage

$$n = p\% \times q\% \times [Z/e\%]^2$$

n is the minimum sample size required

p% is the proportion belonging to the specified category

q% is the proportion not belonging to the specified category

z is the level of confidence required which is 95 per cent

e% is the error margin allowed at 5 per cent

Therefore, it was assumed that the population has an equal chance of being exposed or not being exposed to the message; hence p% and q% are 50% each.

Therefore, statistically:

$$n = 50 \times 50 \times [1.96/5\%]^2$$

$$n = 371.55 \text{ which is approximated to } 371.$$

#### Second Stage

This second stage refined the sample size by computing the specific universe (population) of the study into a new equation. This was to ensure adequate representation of the population by the sample, which is the minimum requirement of the principles of sampling. For this stage, the formula is thus:

n

$$n = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

$$1 + (n/\text{population})$$

Then n which is 371 from the first stage is substituted for n in the formula in the second stage while 2,347 was substituted for population.

For that reason,

$$n = \frac{371}{1 + (371/2,347)}$$

$$n = 369.49.$$

Approximately, this is 369

Therefore, for this second stage,

$$n \text{ (sample size)} = 369$$

**Third Stage**

At this stage, the researcher projected the response rate as 80 per cent which is based on the respondents' traits. Furthermore, 369 was substituted for the n in the formula as 90 is substituted for re%.

$$na = n \times \frac{100}{re\%}$$

Where:

na = actual sample size

n = minimum sample size

re% = response rate expressed in percentage

$$na = \frac{369 \times 100}{90}$$

$$na = \frac{36900}{90}$$

$$na = 332.10 \text{ approximately } 332$$

Therefore, the derived sample size that is representative of 2,347 based on the above formula is 332. This number was then distributed proportionately among selected primary schools in order to ensure that each school is allocated the number of instruments proportionate to its population. To achieve this, Uzuagulu's (1998) statistical formula is used to derive a proportionate sample size for each primary school. The formula is as follows:

$$X = \frac{n}{N} \times \frac{p}{1}$$

Where:

X = the proportionate number to be derived from the sample

n = total sample size for each school

N = total number of population to sample = 2,347

P = total number of population to be sampled in each school

I = constant

The proportionate distribution of sample figures according to the selected primary schools as derived from the

above formula is shown in Table 1

**Table 1: Proportionate distribution of sample size**

S/N	Name of School	Population	Sample Size	Percentage	
1.	<b>Adeniran/ Ogunsanya Ward</b>	The Fountain Nursery and Primary School (Private)	311 pupils	42	13%
2		Lagos Progressive Primary School (Public)	328 pupils	47	14%
3	<b>Ijeshatedo Ward</b>	Covenant Child Academy (Private)	254 pupils	37	11%
4		Ijeshatedo Primary School (Public)	778 pupils	110	33%
5	<b>Shitta/Ogunlana Drive Ward</b>	Kingdom Kids Minders Int'l School (Private)	361 pupils	51	15%
6		Shitta Primary School (Public)	315 pupils	45	14%
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,347</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Researcher's calculated results

In this study, we used a sampling technique to select participants from Surulere Local Government Area. The area was divided into wards in alphabetical order, and then the wards were grouped into sets of 3, with 4 wards in each group. We used systematic sampling to select the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd wards from each group (Adeniran/Ogunsanya, Ijeshatedo, and Shitta/Ogunlana Drive). We also used simple random sampling to select 1 private and 1 government primary school from each ward.

The participants were chosen based on the condition that they had a signed consent from their parents to take part in the survey. We also selected specific snack television advertisements (pure bliss biscuits, minimie chin chin, and gala sausage roll) based on their airing during children's or family viewing times.

For data collection, we used a questionnaire, and for analysis, we used Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) software version 22. The results were presented using descriptive statistics in the form of simple percentages, frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation.

**Data Presentation/Analysis**

**Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Response Rate**

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)		
<b>Age</b>	6-8	94	35.3	
	8-10	101	38.0	
	Above 10	71	26.7	
	Total	266	100.0	
<b>Class Rank</b>	Primary 4	93	35.0	
	Primary 5	82	30.8	
	Primary 6	91	34.2	
<b>School Sampled</b>	Sample Size	Total Response	Response Rate (%)	
	<b>The Fountain Nursery and Primary School</b>	42	33	78
	<b>Lagos Progressive Primary School</b>	47	43	91

<b>Covenant Child Academy</b>	37	37	100
<b>Ijeshatedo Primary School</b>	110	85	77
<b>Kingdom Kids Minders Int'l School</b>	51	40	78
<b>Shitta Primary School</b>	45	28	62
<b>Total</b>	332	266	80

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 1 shows that respondents were children, many of them were between the ages of 8 to 10 (38%), while 35.3 percent were between the ages of 6 to 8 and 26.7 percent were above age 10. Many of them were in primary 4 (35%), followed by those in primary 6 (34.2%); while those in primary 5 were the least represented (34.2%).

It further shows the response rate of each school sampled, where The Fountain Nursery and Primary School had a response rate of 78 percent, Lagos Progressive Primary School had a response rate of 91 percent, Covenant Child Academy had a 100 percent response rate, Ijeshatedo Primary School had a response rate of 77 percent, while Kingdom Kids Minders International School had a response rate of 78 percent and Shitta Primary School had 62% response rate.

Overall, the study had a response rate of 266, with 66 questionnaires returned, unanswered, or rejected due to inconsistent information.

**Table 3: Exposure to Snack Television Advertisements**

<i>Items</i>	<b>VH Freq. (%)</b>	<b>H Freq. (%)</b>	<b>L Freq. (%)</b>	<b>VL Freq. (%)</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Mean (<math>\bar{x}</math>)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (SD)</b>
I watch advertisements on television	175 (65.8)	70 (26.3)	14 (5.3)	3 (1.1)	4 (1.5)	4.54	0.78
I watch a lot of snack advertisements on television while watching my favourite television channels	130 (48.9)	100 (37.6)	22 (8.3)	13 (4.9)	1 (0.4)	4.30	0.85
I watch snack advertisements only when they interrupt the cartoon or programme I watch on television	109 (41)	108 (40.6)	35 (13.2)	14 (5.3)	-	4.17	0.85
I make decisions on the snacks to buy based on snack advertisements I watch on television	111 (41.7)	62 (23.3)	66 (24.8)	23 (8.6)	4 (1.5)	3.95	1.07
I eat only snacks I have seen and watched on television	57 (21.4)	66 (24.8)	81 (30.5)	54 (20.3)	8 (3.0)	3.41	1.12
<b>Average Overall Mean</b>						<b>4.07</b>	<b>0.93</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022;

Note: Freq. = Frequency



**KEY: VH=Very High, H= High, L=Low, VL=Very Low, NA= Not at all\*\*\*Decision Rule if mean is 1 to 1.79=Not at all; 1.80 to 2.59 = Very Low; 2.60 to 3.39 =Low; 3.40 to 4.19= High; 4.20 to 5 = Very High**

Table 2 indicates that pupils of selected primary schools in Surulere LGA were highly exposed to snack television advertisements, with an average score of 4.07. Particularly, they were very highly exposed to television advertisements ( $\bar{x}$ =4.54) and a large number of snack advertisements on television while watching their favourite channels ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.30). Additionally, the pupils were also exposed to snack advertisements to a high extent only when they interrupted the cartoons or programs they were watching on television ( $\bar{x}$ =4.17). They tended to make snack-purchasing decisions based on the advertisements they saw on television and predominantly consumed snacks they had seen advertised on television.

This suggests that pupils of selected primary schools in Surulere LGA were generally exposed to snack television advertisements to a high extent. In particular, they were very highly exposed to television advertisements and the high frequency of snack advertisements on their favorite channels. Moreover, the pupils were also exposed to snack advertisements to a high extent only when they interrupted the cartoons or programs they watched on television, influencing their snack-purchasing decisions and consumption patterns.

**Table 4: Level of Active Parental Mediation in Snack Television Advertisement**

Items	VH Freq. (%)	H Freq. (%)	L Freq. (%)	VL Freq. (%)	NA Freq. (%)	Mea n ( $\bar{x}$ )	Standard deviation (SD)
<b>ACTIVE</b>							
I would like to buy snacks I see on television but my parents always tell me to eat more fruits and fewer snacks especially the ones I see on television	87 (32.7)	64 (24.1)	74 (27.8)	40 (15)	1 (0.4)	3.74	1.08
My parents choose the kind of snacks that are healthy for me compared to the ones shown in the television adverts.	75 (28.2)	70 (26.3)	79 (29.7)	38 (14.3)	4 (1.5)	3.65	1.08
My parents regularly monitor my television viewing of snack adverts	60 (22.6)	73 (27.4)	84 (31.6)	40 (15)	9 (3.4)	3.51	1.10
My parents explain television programmes and advertisement contents of snack adverts	62 (23.3)	56 (21.1)	107 (40.2)	32 (12)	9 (3.4)	3.49	1.08

Source: Field Survey 2022

**KEY: VH=Very High, H= High, L=Low, VL=Very Low, NA= Not at all\*\*\*Decision Rule if mean is 1 to 1.79=Not at all; 1.80 to 2.59 = Very Low; 2.60 to 3.39 =Low; 3.40 to 4.19= High; 4.20 to 5 = Very High**

In Table 3, it is indicated that the level of active parental mediation in pupils' snack television advertisements was high, with a mean of 3.60. This suggests that active parental mediation was high in pupils' snack television advertisements. Specifically, parents were actively involved in choosing healthy snacks for their children compared to those shown in the television adverts ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.65), monitoring their children's television viewing of snack adverts ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.51), and explaining the contents of snack adverts on television programmes ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.49).

**Table 5: Level of Restrictive Parental Mediation in Snack Television Advertisement**

Items	VH Freq. (%)	H Freq. (%)	L Freq. (%)	VL Freq. (%)	NA Freq. (%)	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Standard Deviation (SD)
<b>RESTRICTIVE</b>							
I would like to buy snacks I watch on television but my parents would not allow me to watch snack adverts,	67 (25.2)	59 (22.2)	87 (32.7)	45 (16.9)	8 (3.0)	3.50	1.13
My parents prevent me from watching snack adverts on television	66 (24.8)	59 (22.2)	93 (35)	28 (10.5)	20 (7.5)	3.46	1.19
My parents prevent me from buying snacks shown on television snack advertisements	67 (25.2)	53 (19.9)	82 (30.8)	54 (30.8)	10 (3.8)	3.42	1.18
My parents regulate how I watch snack adverts.	49 (18.4)	76 (28.6)	75 (28.2)	48 (18)	18 (6.8)	3.34	1.17
<b>Average Overall Mean</b>						3.43	1.17

**KEY: VH=Very High, H= High, L=Low, VL=Very Low, NA= Not at all\*\*\*Decision Rule if mean is 1 to 1.79=Not at all; 1.80 to 2.59 = Very Low; 2.60 to 3.39 =Low; 3.40 to 4.19= High; 4.20 to 5 = Very High**

In Table 4, it is shown that the level of restrictive parental mediation in pupils' snack television advertisements was high ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ). This means that parents were actively involved in limiting their children's exposure to snack advertisements on television. This involved preventing them from watching snack adverts on television ( $\bar{x}=3.46$ ), preventing them from buying snacks shown on television snack advertisements ( $\bar{x}=3.42$ ), regulating their children's television viewing ( $\bar{x} = 3.34$ ), and also preventing their children from watching snack advertisements ( $\bar{x} = 3.50$ ).

**Table 6: Level of Co-viewing Parental Mediation in Snack Television Advertisement**

Items	VH Freq. (%)	H Freq. (%)	L Freq. (%)	VL Freq. (%)	NA Freq. (%)	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Standard Deviation (SD)
<b>CO-VIEWING</b>							
My parents allow me to buy snacks I like from snack advertisements on television	108 (40.6)	73 (27.4)	64 (24.1)	14 (5.3)	7 (2.6)	3.98	1.05
I am allowed to buy snacks I like from television advertisements especially when I pester my parents.	91 (34.2)	102 (38.2)	50 (18.8)	18 (6.8)	5 (1.9)	3.96	0.99
My parents always watch television programs and snack advertisements with me	79 (29.7)	75 (28.2)	83 (31.2)	27 (10.2)	2 (0.8)	3.76	1.01
My parents discuss the content of television snack advertisements with me as we view them together	58 (21.8)	82 (30.8)	92 (34.6)	31 (11.7)	3 (1.1)	3.61	0.99
<b>Average Overall Mean</b>						<b>3.83</b>	<b>1.01</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022 Note: Freq. = Frequency

**KEY: VH=Very High, H= High, L=Low, VL=Very Low, NA= Not at all\*\*\*Decision Rule if mean is 1 to 1.79=Not at all; 1.80 to 2.59 = Very Low; 2.60 to 3.39 =Low; 3.40 to 4.19= High; 4.20 to 5 = Very High**

In Table 5, it is shown that parents are highly involved in monitoring their children's exposure to snack television advertisements ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.83). This is evidenced by parents allowing their children to buy snacks they saw in the advert ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.83), allowing them to buy snacks when they pestered their parents ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.96), regularly watching TELEVISION programs and snack advertisements with them ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.76), and discussing the content of the snack advertisements with them as they watch together ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.61).

**Table 7: Influence of Pure Bliss, Minimie Chin Chin and Gala Sausage Roll Snack Television Advertisement on Pupils' Snack Choices**

Items	VH Freq. (%)	H Freq. (%)	L Freq. (%)	VL Freq. (%)	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Standard Deviation (SD)
<b>Pure Bliss (Mean = 3.44, SD = 0.88)</b>						
I have seen pure bliss biscuits and wafers on television while watching my favourite cartoon or show	192 (72.2)	59 (22.2)	10 (3.8)	5 (1.9)	3.65	0.65
I always want my parents to buy pure bliss biscuits and wafers for me	171 (64.3)	64 (24.1)	26 (9.8)	5 (1.9)	3.51	0.75
I like pure bliss biscuits and wafers because they look attractive and delicious on television	177 (66.5)	49 (18.4)	34 (12.8)	6 (2.3)	3.49	0.80
I like Pure Bliss biscuits and wafers because of their advertisement on television	167 (62.8)	65 (24.4)	26 (9.8)	8 (3.0)	3.47	0.79
Pure bliss biscuits and wafers look nutritious and good to me when I see them on television	167 (62.8)	65 (24.4)	26 (9.8)	8 (3.0)	3.44	0.80
I buy pure bliss biscuits and wafers with the pocket money my parents give me	149 (56)	55 (20.7)	50 (18.8)	12 (4.5)	3.28	0.92
My parents always buy pure bliss biscuits and wafers whenever I pester them	138 (51.9)	64 (24.1)	57 (21.4)	7 (2.6)	3.25	0.88
<b>Minimie Chin chin (Mean = 3.40, SD = 0.78)</b>						
I have seen Minimie Chin chin chin-chin on television while watching my favourite cartoon or show	193 (72.6)	62 (23.3)	7 (2.6)	4 (1.5)	3.67	0.61
I like Minimie Chin Chin Chin-chin because of its advertisement on television	174 (65.4)	64 (24.1)	21 (7.9)	7 (2.6)	3.52	0.75
I always want my parents to buy Minimie Chin chin chin-chin for me	161 (60.5)	73 (27.4)	24 (9)	8 (3)	3.45	0.78
I like Minimie Chin chin chin-chin because it looks attractive and delicious on television	153 (57.5)	74 (27.8)	32 (12)	7 (2.6)	3.40	0.80
Minimie Chin chin chin-chin looks nutritious and good for me when I see it on television	144 (54.1)	84 (31.6)	31 (11.7)	7 (2.6)	3.37	0.79
My parents always buy Minimie Chin chin chin-chin whenever I pester them	142 (53.4)	75 (28.2)	39 (14.7)	10 (3.8)	3.31	0.86
I buy Minimie Chin chin chin-chin with the pocket money my parents give me	132 (49.6)	77 (28.9)	50 (18.8)	7 (2.6)	3.26	0.85

<b>Gala (Mean = 3.33, SD = 0.88)</b>						
I have seen gala sausage roll advertisements on television while watching my favourite cartoon or show	190 (71.4)	56 (21.1)	12 (4.5)	8 (3.0)	3.61	0.72
I always want my parents to buy gala sausage roll for me	168 (63.2)	57 (21.4)	29 (10.9)	12 (4.5)	3.43	0.86
I like the gala sausage roll because of its advertisement on television	166 (62.4)	52 (19.5)	33 (12.4)	15 (5.6)	3.39	0.91
I like the gala sausage roll because it looks attractive and delicious on television	149 (56)	66 (24.8)	36 (13.5)	15 (5.6)	3.31	0.91
Gala sausage roll looks nutritious and good for me when I see it on television	145 (54.5)	69 (25.9)	40 (15)	12 (4.5)	3.30	0.89
My parents always buy gala sausage rolls whenever I pester them	139 (52.3)	59 (22.2)	54 (20.3)	14 (5.3)	3.21	0.95
I buy a gala sausage roll with the pocket money my parents give me	113 (42.5)	72 (27.1)	66 (24.8)	15 (5.6)	3.06	0.95
<b>Average Overall Mean</b>					<b>3.40</b>	<b>0.82</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022; Note: Freq. = Frequency

**KEY: VH=Very High, H=High, L=Low, VL=Very Low\*\*\*Decision Rule if mean is 1 to 1.74 = Very Low; 1.75 to 2.49 =Low; 2.50 to 3.24 =High; 3.25 to 4= Very High**

In Table 6, it is evident that there is a strong correlation between exposure to snack television advertisements and pupils' snack choices, with a mean of 3.40. Specifically, the correlation between exposure to snack television advertisements and the selection of Pure Bliss ( $\bar{x} = 3.44$ ), Minimie Chin chin ( $\bar{x} = 3.40$ ), and Gala ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$ ) was very high. For Pure Bliss, it was found that the connection between exposure to snack television advertisements and pupils' choice was very high, particularly in terms of liking Pure Bliss biscuits and wafers because they appeared attractive and delicious on television ( $\bar{x} = 3.49$ ), as well as being perceived as nutritious and good for them based on the television advertisements ( $\bar{x} = 3.44$ ). This suggests that the preference for Pure Bliss was influenced by the attractiveness and deliciousness depicted on television, as well as the perceived nutritional value portrayed in the advertisement.

For Minimie Chin Chin, the connection between exposure to snack television advertisements and pupils' choice was also very high, particularly in terms of liking it because of its television advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 3.52$ ) and finding it attractive and delicious on television ( $\bar{x} = 3.40$ ). This implies that the preference for Minimie Chin Chin was strongly influenced by the advertisement and the perceived attractiveness and deliciousness conveyed through television.

Similarly, for the Gala, the connection between exposure to snack television advertisements and pupils' choice was very high, with pupils expressing a liking for the Gala sausage roll because of its advertisement on television ( $\bar{x} = 3.39$ ), finding it attractive and delicious on television ( $\bar{x} = 3.31$ ), and perceiving it as nutritious and good for them based on the television advertisements ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ). This indicates that the preference for Gala was greatly influenced by the television advertisements, the visual appeal, and the perceived nutritional value conveyed through the media.

### Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the impact of television advertisements and parental guidance on the snack choices of students in selected primary schools in Lagos State. The research used a survey design and a self-structured

questionnaire. A total of 332 students from primary schools in Surulere LGA participated, with ages ranging from 6 to 10. The majority of participants were in Primary 4 (35%), followed by Primary 6 (34.2%), and the fewest were in Primary 5 (30.8%). The following section will discuss the research questions in order.

### **Exposure to Snack Television Advertisements**

This study discovered that children were heavily exposed to snack television advertisements, especially while watching their favourite television channels and during interruptions in the cartoons or programs they were watching. The children made snack-purchasing decisions based on these advertisements and only consumed snacks they had seen on television. This finding aligns with the media dependency theory, suggesting that children increasingly rely on media for snack-related decisions when exposed to television advertisements.

Supporting this study's findings, Signal et al. (2017) found that children were exposed to non-core food marketing more frequently than core food marketing, occurring at home, in public spaces, and at school. Similarly, Ayantunji et al. (2012) discovered that children are interested in television advertising for its entertainment value, regardless of the intended audience. Additionally, Whalen et al. (2017) reported an increase in food and beverage advertisements during peak children's viewing times and cited static food advertising regulations.

Contradicting regulations minimizing unhealthy food advertisements during children's television programs, Larisa et al. (2020) pointed out that children's exposure to such advertisements increased outside of designated programming. Russell et al. (2018) linked television advertisements of unhealthy foods to increased dietary intake and BMI among overweight or obese children. Oyero and Salawu (2014) highlighted that advertisements targeting children make use of popular cartoon characters and music to attract attention and influence food choices and consumption habits.

### **Level of active, restrictive and co-viewing parental mediation in snack television advertisements**

The study found that parental mediation of television advertising significantly influences children's food consumption. The researchers reported that parents' strategies for educating their children about food had a notable impact on their food attitudes and intentions. Specifically, parental guidance on food consumption was found to enhance children's healthy food attitude and intention to consume while reducing the intention to consume unhealthy food. However, the study also revealed that parental mediation of television advertising had a stronger influence on unhealthy food attitudes compared to healthy food attitudes.

The study indicated that different types of parental mediation were prevalent in children's snack television advertisements. Co-viewing parental mediation was found to be the highest, followed by active parental mediation, while restrictive parental mediation was the least common. The findings suggested that parents who engaged in co-viewing mediation allowed their children to buy snacks they liked from the television advertisements and often watched programs and snack advertisements with their children, discussing the content together. On the other hand, parents practising active mediation chose healthy snacks for their children, monitored their television viewing of snack adverts, and explained television programs and advertisement contents to their children. Parents who practiced restrictive mediation prevented their children from watching snack adverts and from buying snacks shown in these advertisements.

Supporting these findings, another study reported that parents could employ a combination of different mediation strategies. Additionally, the effectiveness of specific parenting practices appears to be influenced by factors related to food consumption and the child's age. For healthy foods, active parenting practice might be more effective, while restrictive parenting practice might be more effective for unhealthy snacks. Furthermore, the text mentioned the family communication patterns theory, which established that the different types of parental mediation have distinct effects on children's consumption patterns. Contrary to the assumption

that co-viewing mediation indicates a lack of control over children's decisions, the study found that co-viewing had the highest positive impact on children's snack choices.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study found that children were frequently exposed to snack television advertisements and that parental mediation was common. Co-viewing mediation was the most common, followed by active mediation, while restrictive mediation was the least common. Snack Television advertisements had a positive influence on children's snack choices. Restrictive and co-viewing mediation also had a positive influence, while active mediation did not. The study emphasizes the need for a comprehensive strategy involving parents, regulators, and the food industry to encourage healthier snack choices among children. It also highlights the importance of empowering parents to mitigate the impact of snack television advertisements on their children.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the study, it is clear that children are significantly influenced by snack television advertisements, and parental mediation plays a crucial role in shaping their snack choices. Therefore, this study recommends the following based on these findings:

Parents should be educated about the impact of snack television advertisements on children and guided on effective strategies for mediating their children's exposure to these advertisements. Emphasizing the importance of healthy food choices and the potential negative effects of excessive consumption of unhealthy snacks can be beneficial.

Parents should adopt a combination of co-viewing, restrictive and active parental mediation in different contexts to get the desired result in pupils' snack choices. Also, since co-viewing parental mediation was found to have a significant impact on children's snack choices, promoting shared viewing experiences and discussions about snack advertisements between parents and children could be an effective strategy for shaping healthier snack choices

Children should actively watch television with the supervision of their parents to comprehend what they are being exposed to.

There should be efforts to promote healthy snack choices both in television advertising and at home. Encouraging the marketing of nutritious snacks and foods to children can help positively shape their preferences.

Regulators should consider stricter regulations on snack television advertisements targeted at children to minimize exposure to unhealthy food adverts.

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