

## Chapter Three

# METHODOLOGY

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The purpose of this study is to examine the cognitive skills of children regarding television advertisements according to their age, parental education, and economic backgrounds as well their place of residence. The study will also focus on the buying behaviour of children. It will also examine the gratification children achieve after watching advertisements; it will also explore the food habits of children, parent-child relationship, as well as the effects of social service advertisements on them.

This chapter on methodology of the study focuses and explains-

- (i) Research methodology adopted for the study
- (ii) Explains the sampling technique
- (iii) Procedure of data collection
- (iv) Evaluation of data

### 3.1 Title of the Study

Impact of Television Advertisements on Children: A Comparative Analysis of Urban and Rural Silchar, Assam.

### 3.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the cognitive skills of children regarding television advertisements according to their age, parental education, economic backgrounds as well as place of residence. It will also examine the gratification children achieve after watching advertisements, their buying behaviour, food habits of children, parent-child relationship, as well as the effects of social service advertisements on them.

### 3.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- Objective 1 : To find out the understanding ability of children regarding advertisements as well as their buying behaviour and food habit.
- Objective 2 : To find out what kind of gratification children achieve when they see an advertisement as well as when they buy the product.
- Objective 3 : To find out how advertisements affect parent child-relationship.
- Objective 4 : To find out whether social service ads can generate a sense of social awareness and responsibility in children.
- Objective 5 : To assess whether parental education and their income can influence the child's buying decision and increase the understanding ability of advertisements in children.

### 3.4 Rationale of the Study

In the previous chapter, studies related to impact of advertisement on children are reviewed extensively which claims that advertisements bear the potential to influence young minds. Studies suggest that advertising has great impact on child health and psyche which depends on various factors as age of the child and his development of the cognitive skills, consumer behaviour, income of the family, level of exposure to advertisements and multiple other influential factors. Most of the studies advocated that commercials have negative impact on young children. The studies typically focused on urban children who are exposed to television culture. It is significant to mention that the Indian scenario has changed in the post 1990s when people were able to see the Gulf War sitting in their couch. Satellite channels penetrated in the rural

landscape which probably has ushered a nascent era of consumerism even in the rural counterpart of the society. The rural children are also exposed to commercial channels and view advertisements. The present study tries to draw a comparison between the urban and rural setting of Silchar regarding the impact of advertisements on them. Moreover the study tries to explore the impact of commercials based on various variables as age group, parental income, parental education and place of residence of the respondents which plays a crucial role in the child's understanding of the function of advertisements as well as on their buying behaviour and food habit. A child grows up gradually and develops cognitive skills according to their age. The study tries to explore the cognitive skills of the children according to their age. It is said that knowledge is light, it enlightens an individual as well the society. Therefore it becomes vital to study parental education as an influential factor.

We live in a social environment where every individual has a role to play. There are innumerable advertisements that sell ideas and try to implement social messages for a better society and healthy environment. Despite the plethora of research on impact of advertising on children in general, research on parental education and its impact on both commercials and social service advertisements are limited. Pondering on these issues, the study tries to explore effects of social service advertisements on children of both urban and rural areas.

### 3.5 Research Questions:

In order to understand the impact of advertisements on children, research questions based on age group, parental income, parental education and residential background are formulated.

- RQ1 : What are the cognitive levels of children of various age groups regarding television ads and how is it influenced by their place of residence?
- RQ2 : What is the degree of competitive possessiveness found among children of various age groups and how is it influenced by their place of residence?
- RQ3 : What is the degree of involvement of parent with their children in helping them to understand the functions of advertisement and how is that involvement influenced by their educational level?
- RQ4 : What are the cognitive levels of children in respect to social service advertisements and how does that level vary across different age groups of children and parental income level?

### 3.6 Area of Study

Silchar has been selected as the area of present study. Silchar is located in Southern Assam of India. It is the headquarters of Cachar district in Barak Valley. The valley is the product of the partition and was a part of Surma valley before independence (Bhattacharjee, 2006). The district is bound by the North Cachar Hills and the state of Meghalaya in the north, on the East by Manipur, on the south by Mizoram and on the west it is bounded by Tripura and the 'Sylhet' district of Bangladesh. As per provisional reports of Census India, population of Silchar in 2011 is 1, 72,709; of which male and female are 86,812 and 85,897 respectively, so maintaining the sex ratio of Silchar town is 989 per 1000. Although Silchar town has population of 1, 72,709; its metropolitan population is 2, 28,985 of which 1, 15,443 are males and 13,542 are females (Provisional Census Report, 2011).

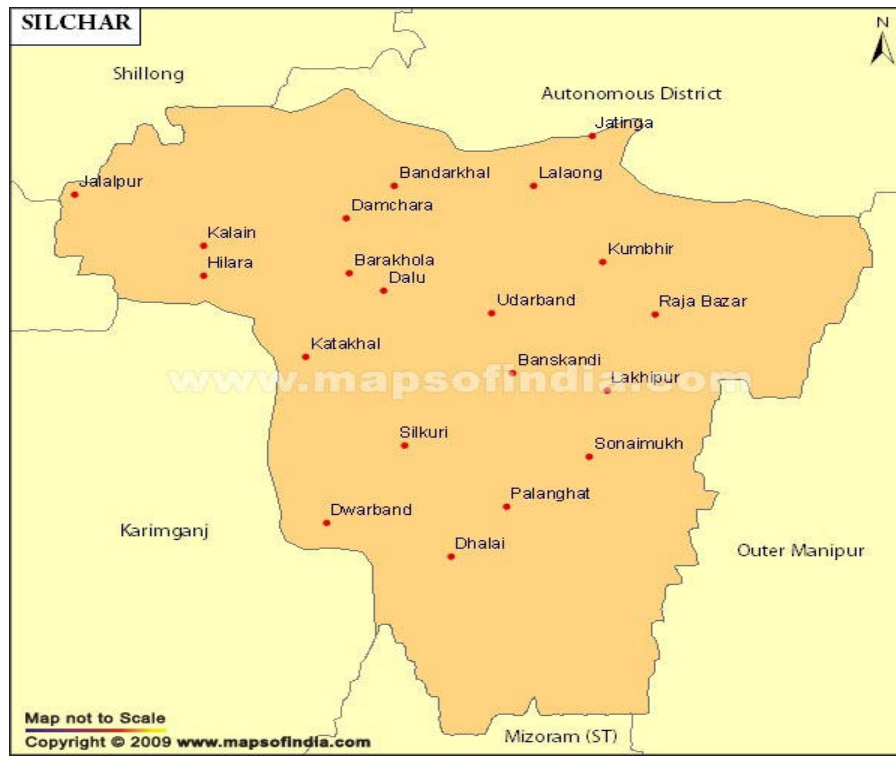


Figure 3a: Map of Silchar

### 3.7 Design of the Study

The design of the study is survey research based. A sample survey was conducted in the urban and rural areas of Silchar, in order to find out the overall impact of television advertisements on school-going children of Silchar. Survey research is an important and useful method of data collection. As Rubin, Rubin, and Piele (1990) say that survey research often employs a correlation design, not looking for cause-and-effect connections but seeking to describe opinions or attitudes of certain groups, or the relationships between two or more factors. A large number of data can be collected with relative ease from a variety of people. It allows the researcher to examine many variables (demographic and lifestyle information, attitude, motives, intentions and so on) for analyzing the data (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003).

### 3.8 Population and Sample

#### 3.8.1 Population

The school going children of 2-11 years from different socio- economic background is the population in the study.

#### 3.8.2 Sample

A sample is a subset of population – a group or class of subjects, variables, concepts, or phenomena (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003). From the population a sample size having 525 samples was selected from both urban and rural areas of Silchar.

### 3.9 Sampling Procedure

The probability sampling is employed in order to select the appropriate sample. The universe of the study comprises of all the school going children of both urban and rural areas of Silchar. The study area is divided into 28 Wards that governs urban areas of Sihar and 11 '*Gaon panchayats*' governing the rural areas. Through stratified sampling the urban and rural areas are divided into several sub- population called 'strata'. From every strata one school is selected both from urban and rural areas. A total number of 28 schools from urban and 11 schools from the rural area were selected. Then through a systematic probability sampling where every  $n$ th subject or unit is selected from the population. The class registers bearing the roll number is used to select the samples at a sampling rate of  $1/5$  having a sampling interval of 5. Randomly a starting point is chosen, for example, the student bearing roll number 1 and the subjects numbered 6, 11, 16, 26, and 31 and so on. Accordingly

students from each school were selected. As probability sampling the representative group is easily obtained and the possibility of classification error is eliminated.

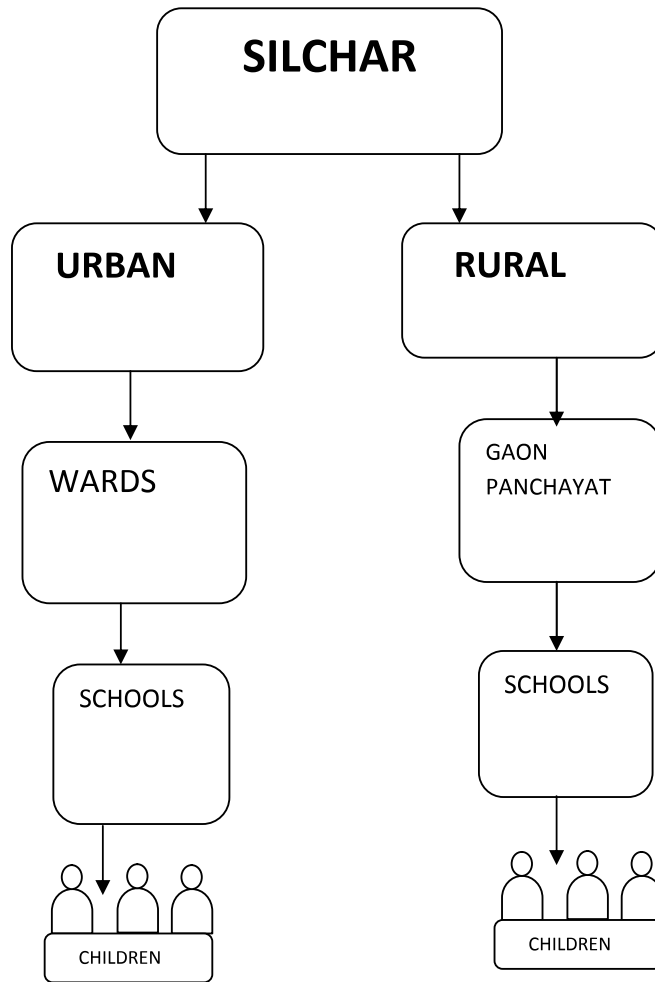


Figure 3c: Sampling Procedure

### 3.10 Variables

The variables undertaken in the study are age group, family income, parental education, media exposure, and residential background.

Sl. No.	Variables	Categories	Description
1	Age group	2- 11 years	2-4years
			5-7 years
			8-11years
2	Family income	Higher income group	AboveRs.25,000(per month)
		Middle income group	Rs. 10,001– 25,000
		Lower middle income group	Rs. 5,001 – 10,000
		Lower income group	Below Rs. 5,000
3	Parental education		Post Graduate
			Graduate
			Intermediary education
			Elementary education
4	Place of residence	Urban Rural	

Table 3a: Variables of the Study



### 3.10.1 Description of the Variables

There are many factors that persuade the extent of influence of TV advertisements on children. The understanding and influence of advertisements on children may vary according to their age, family income, parental education, and residential background.

1. Age- the level of understanding is related to the age as children response differently in different stages. Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development is a comprehensive theory about the nature and development of human intelligence. Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development is a comprehensive theory about the nature and development of human intelligence. Piaget's theory is the best known of the stage theories (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969). According to this theory, cognitive development occurs in four main stages: the sensorimotor stage (0-2 years), the pre-operational stage (2-7 years), the concrete operational stage (7-11 years), and the formal operational stage (11 through 15 years). The pre- operational stage is further divided into two segments, the symbolic function sub-stage (2-4years) and the intuitive thought sub-stage (4-7 years). Studies related to the cognitive development of the child employs Piaget's theory of cognitive development. In the present study the age group is divided according to the Piaget's theory to determine the understanding capability and impact of television advertisements on them.
2. Family income – children belonging to different income groups may interpret the message in different manners. Their needs and demands vary and inclination towards the media usage may also vary. The present study has undertaken four income groups, the high income group (above Rs.25, 000 per month), middle income group (Rs.10, 001– Rs. 25,000 per month) and lower

middle income group (Rs.5,001-10,000 per month) and lower income group (below Rs. 5,000 per month). In the year 1993, Uma Joshi And Avani Manihar in their study *Influence of Television Viewing on Adolescents as Perceived by Their Mother In Relation to the Selected Variables* also divided the family into three segments, the high (Rs. 6 ,000 per month), middle (Rs. 3-5,000 per month) and low (below Rs. 3,000 per month). In 1998, *Uma Joshi and Suvarna Bhokare* in their study, *Perceptions of Housewives Regarding the Influence of Television on Selected Areas of their Lives*, have taken two income groups, high (11,000 per month) and lower (below Rs.11,000 thousand). In the year 1993 and 1999 the inflation in the Consumer price index in India was 6.31per cent and the rise of consumer price index in the year 2011 was 8.87 per cent (as shown in exhibit no 6) when the present study was conducted.

3. Parental education – The education of the parents play a pivotal role in the decision making process of the children. Parents may act as teachers and educated parents may allow more freedom of expression to the children and influence the child’s decision.
4. Place of residence – The sample includes children from both the urban areas and the rural areas of Silchar. The areas governed by the Municipal board are considered as urban areas and the area under the jurisdiction of *Panchayat* is considered as rural areas.

### 3.11 Tool of Data Collection

#### 3.11.1 Primary data

1. For collection the data, a schedule is framed for the children for collecting the required data. It was served to the age group 2-11years. A schedule bearing 28 questions based on the objectives is used to collect the data. A schedule is used to make a personal contact with the children as observation can also be used in interpersonal communication which was not possible if the data was collected through a questionnaire. The schedule is divided into two parts. The first part includes the demographic details as the age of the respondent, gender, family income, educational qualification of parents and residing area (urban/ rural). The second part is for answering the objectives.
2. Videos of social service advertisements are used as a tool for aided recall.

#### 3.11.2 Secondary data

Existing literature as books, journals, newspaper articles served the purpose. The research papers related to the topic were also used to gather the data. The internet search engines were used to collect data from the online journals, census reports, e-books and articles. For analyzing the content of the advertisements YouTube's collection of old and recent Indian advertisements served as a systematic archive that is used.

### 3.12 Pretesting of the Tool

The tool is pre-tested on 30 randomly selected students from all age groups from both urban and rural areas. The purpose for pre-testing the tool is to check the clarity of

language, ease in responding and average time taken to respond. The schedule was further modified in order to make it unproblematic for the children.

### 3.13 Period of Data Collection

After the schedule was pretested and modified, the researcher started to collect data. The data was collected between the periods of April, 2012 – February, 2013.

### 3.14 Analysis of Data

A total number of 525 respondents were selected from urban and rural areas. But due to incoherent feedback from the respondents, 500 schedules were selected for evaluation and analysis. The data is evaluated manually and simple percentage method is used to find out the results of research objectives and for answering the research questions.