DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

A PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE OF FOOD ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION AIMED AT CHILDREN: A CASE OF THE ETHEKWINI REGION

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DECLARATION

I, Vusi Innocent Mpungane, hereby declare that all efforts put into this dissertation are of my own knowledge and decree, except where otherwise specified, and that acknowledging other authors is done to the best of my knowledge and is perfectly presented.

I also confirm that the dissertation has not been submitted in whole or in part to any other institution of higher learning, either internationally or locally.

---------- 13 April 2023

Vusi Innocent Mpungane Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate my work to everyone who has helped and motivated me to finish this dissertation, especially:

Sara Mitha, Postgraduate Librarian

Nathan Chirwa, my best friend

This research is also dedicated to my beloved mother, Evelyn Siziwe Mpungane, who was always so proud of me but was unable to witness my success. Thank you for always believing in me, Mum.

Everyone who has never doubted my ability to finish this mission, even when it seemed impossible.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline" *(Proverbs, 1: 7).*

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ABSTRACT

Food and beverage advertisements on television (TV) influence food preferences, particularly among children and adolescents. The primary objective of this study was to establish parental perspectives regarding the promotion of food aimed at children on television in the eThekwini region. There were four sub-objectives in this goal. Sub-objective 1 was to determine parents' opinions of food promotion on television directed towards children. Sub-objective 2 was to examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on television influences their children's eating habits and food preferences. Sub-objective 3 was to establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food to children. Sub-objective 4 was to establish whether opinions might differ according to respondents' demographic make-up.

This was a quantitative cross-sectional study conducted on a subset of the greater eThekwini population. It should be noted, however, that this study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, making it difficult to handpick candidates because many were unwilling to participate for obvious reasons. This became a limitation that will be taken into account in the interpretation of results.

A questionnaire was designed using previously validated questions from past studies. Despite differences in demographic makeup and other factors, the results obtained in the eThekwini region mirrored those obtained from previous studies conducted elsewhere in the world. Food advertising directed towards children has received regular attention for many decades, but it remains a contentious issue, with little favourable press coverage. Nevertheless, marketers continue to use TV as one of the most common promotional tools to advertise products aimed at children. It therefore follows that many children are subjected to TV commercials on a daily basis. Findings could thus be useful not only to marketers, but also to food manufacturers, parents, the government, and academics.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Advertising can be defined in a variety of ways, however in the case of this study, advertising is defined as a paid communication attempt, where the financial supporter is identifiable, and the message that is sent is impersonal (Wheeler 2019: 122; Stanton 2014; Gomez *et al.* 2017: 2627). According to Kunkel, Castonguay and Filer (2014: 182), advertising/promotion is viewed as an element in an organisation's marketing mix that serves to inform, persuade, and remind the market of the organisation or its products. The primary benefit of advertising is that it increases customer traffic and sales for a better value proposition (Tarabashkina *et al.* 2016: 146; Kunkel *et al*. 2014: 181; Frechette 2015). Food advertising can be defined as the action of communicating the features and benefits of a food product in order to persuade customers to purchase the product (Elías *et al*. 2021: 3588; Wiegand and Reinarts 2019: 25).

It has become apparent that the marketing of food affects individuals with respect to their information on nutrition, the choices they make with respect to food, and how they carry out both purchasing and consumption of food (Driessen *et al.* 2022: 3). One of the main groups that are recipients of this information is children (Dikmen *et al.* 2022: 1). Previous research has clearly shown that problems associated with this are still an issue in the public domain (Backholer *et al.* 2021: 131; Brinson and Holiday 2021: 219; Mchiza, Steyn and Hill 2015: 8243).

In light of this, it has become evident that South Africa should pay close attention to food advertising directed towards children. Consumer research can assist businesses to select the best strategies to close the gap between current food advertising and parental perceptions of food advertising directed towards children. This country is viewed as a developing economy, with distinct ethnic groups and population density structures among its customers that cannot be directly compared to more developed countries.

This chapter will begin with a number of definitions of common terminology used in the study. It will then provide an outline of parental perspectives on television (TV) food advertising aimed at children. This section will also discuss the research problem, the aims and objectives of the study, the research method used for the study, the rationale of the study and the limitations of the study.

1.1 DEFINITIONS OF TERMINOLOGY AND MAIN STUDY CONCEPTS

In order to have a broad understanding of the subject and the issues that have evolved on the subject, it is necessary to define the terminology and main concepts used in this study.

Advertising can be defined in a variety of ways, but in this case, advertising is defined as a paid communication attempt, where its financial supporter is identifiable, and the message sent is impersonal (Stanton 2014). Wheeler (2019: 122) adds that "advertising is any form of paid non-personal presentation of ideas, goods, or services for the purpose of promoting a product or service."

Childhood obesity is defined as a child with a body mass index (BMI) for age percentile greater than 95 percent. A child is considered overweight if their BMI for age percentile is greater than 85% but less than 95% (Lanigan, Tee and Brandreth 2019: 192). Childhood obesity has become a global crisis, putting children at risk of developing serious health problems later in life, such as Type 2 diabetes, sleeping disorders, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and cancer (World Health Organization [WHO] 2017: 5; Mbalati 2019).

Parents' perceptions. According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2017), marketers recognise that consumer perception plays a more important role in customer decision making than any form of “objective reality”. Perception drives their attitudes and resulting actions and are based on their needs, wants, values and personal experiences. Parents play an important role in raising children (Avery *et al*. 2022: 865). Furthermore, children's purchasing knowledge and skills are acquired through parent-child interaction, as well as training and modelling. According to Loosea *et al. (*2022: 2), parents are concerned about advertising to young children, believing that it

creates a culture where consumption is understood to be the norm, which is a materialistic attitude.

Demographic make-up can be defined as the basic details that include segmentation such as a person's gender, personal income, age, and, in this case, the presence of children.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The role of promotion in children's food preferences, choices, and consumption has sparked debate in many countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and elsewhere (Vedevijvere *et al.* 2017; Dikmen *et al.* 2022: 1). Previous research confirms that there has been a deluge of food advertising aimed at children in both developing and developed countries, especially on TV (Olafsdottir and Berg 2017: 2921). Researchers from various countries have found that children exhibit product recall and can talk about what they have seen on TV advertising (Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8; Soni and Vohra 2016; 142; Wang and Lobstein 2018). However, parental responsibility alone cannot be expected to overcome exposure to food advertising on TV directed at children without the assistance of the government and relevant stakeholders (Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22; Vohra and Soni 2016: 34; Nesraddine *et al.* 2019).

The issue of food promotion to children has been studied in many countries, but it remains a contentious topic in the public sphere (Brinson and Holiday 2021: 220; Prowse 2017: 274). Previous research conducted in South Africa in 2010 revealed that adolescents have emerged as critical target consumers for advertising agencies, with children's purchasing power expanding dramatically (Cassim 2010: 181; Moschis 2017: 1384). Children are becoming more involved in their own purchasing decisions, not only for themselves but also for the household (Brinson and Holiday 2021: 219; Soni and Vohra 2016: 35).

Promotional firms target children because they want to foster and develop brand loyalty among children in order to keep children motivated to consume their brands (Khan 2022: 372; Yarimoglu *et al.* 2018: 35), resulting in an increase in the promotion

of food aimed at children (Prowse *et al.* 2018). Therefore, children are growing up in an environment where they are bombarded with food advertising, branding, and other forms of promotion (Harris and Kalnova 2017: 50). Advertising firms are also becoming more sophisticated in their design and development of advertising strategies and techniques capable of influencing young people (von Nordheim *et al.* 2022: 169; Baird *et al.* 2017: 2-12).

Businesses are becoming more aware of the need to be more relevant and responsive to the children's market, resulting in the need to base their advertising techniques on a thorough understanding of young people and their interests, as well as their values and beliefs (De Jans *et al.* 2019: 174; Kunkel, Castonguay and Filer 2014: 182). The evidence of childhood developmental psychology and how children respond to advertising helps advertisers to develop effective and age-appropriate techniques (Boyland and Golden 2017: 331). Parents play an important role in their children's upbringing, with children's purchasing knowledge and skills being largely acquired through parent-child interaction, as well as training and modelling. However, parents are still concerned about food advertising to children (Soni and Vohra 2014: 143). Some parents, teachers, and other relevant groups believe that advertising takes advantage of children's lack of advertising knowledge and experience (Bogart, Castro and Cohen 2019: 807). There is also a perception that advertising creates demands in children, which leads to family tensions and conflict at home (Becker, Wiegand and Reinartz 2019: 25).

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Food advertising directed towards children has received regular attention for many decades, but it remains a contentious issue, with little favourable press coverage (Velasquez *et al.* 2021: 706; Soni and Vohra 2016: 451; Velazquez *et al*. 2018: 2). Nevertheless, marketers continue to use TV as one of the most common promotional tools to advertise products aimed at children. It therefore follows that many children are subjected to TV commercials on a daily basis. Many children do not consume the daily recommended minimum amounts of vegetables, fruit, and whole-grain products, but they do consume more sugar, salt, and fat than they should (Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22; Choi *et al.* 2022: 10).

According to Prowse (2017: 274), one of the most important vehicles used to transfer images of food to adolescents is that of TV. Children spend a large portion of their free time in front of the TV, resulting in a much greater reach to this target group (Cairns 2019: 209; Chang *et al.* 2018: 2-15). Current research states that South African children are no different to children elsewhere in the world, spending a large portion of their free time watching TV (Mbalati 2019; Mchiza *et al*. 2015: 2-11).

South African public health institutions are dealing with issues such as under and over nutrition, which is affecting the lives and health of young children (Mills 2016: 16; Shisana, Labadarios and Rehle 2014). It has been proposed that childhood obesity is exacerbated by exposure to TV. This has sparked a debate about TV food advertising aimed at children, owing to the abundance of advertisements for unhealthy drinks and food, particularly those with high caffeine, sugar, and salt content (Owen 2018: 1; Lynn and Zolkepli 2019: 110).

There is a general perception that young children lack protection from the onslaught of TV advertisements, including those promoting unhealthy foods aimed directly at them. This is mainly due to their lack of understanding of the nuances of advertising messages in the same way that an adult audience would (Backholer *et al*. 2021: 13144; Pitts *et al.* 2015: 21). However, child protection cannot be solely the responsibility of parents; the state must also play a significant role. Accordingly, some regulations have been put into place to try to change this scenario (Avery *et al*. 2022: 864; Mills 2016: 16).

Connected with this discussion, the following research questions arise:

> What are parents' opinions towards the advertising of food products on TV during programmes that are directed towards children?
>
> Do parents perceive that the advertising of food products on TV aimed at children affects their eating habits and food preferences?
>
> What are parent's opinions towards regulations with regards to the advertising of food products on TV aimed at children?
>
> Would any of the above vary when the demographic makeup of respondents differs?

In order to answer the above questions, a number of research objectives were put forward.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were as follows.

1.4.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of this study was to establish parental perspectives towards the promotion of food aimed at children on TV in the eThekwini region.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

The following sub- objectives were drawn from the primary objective of the study:

- To determine parents' opinions of food promotion on television directed towards children;
- To examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on television influences children's eating habits and food preferences;
- To establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children; and
- To establish whether opinions differ according to respondents' demographic make-up.

1.4.3 Hypotheses

After reviewing the literature, the following hypotheses were established to correlate with the secondary objectives:

H1 Parents have a positive opinion towards food promotion on television directed towards children

H2 Parents perceive that food promotion on television has a positive relationship with children's eating habits and food preferences

H3 Parents have a positive opinion towards regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children

H4 There is a relationship between demographic characteristics and perceptions towards the advertising of food on television directed towards children

1.5 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This research should help to increase the advertising of healthy food products to children in the eThekwini region by taking into account the needs and desires of parents, children, and society as a whole. The study could also contribute towards the improvement of current regulations of TV food advertising directed at children in South Africa.

TV food advertising directed at children, in particular, appears to have been reported as problematic in South Africa for the past decade, but the problem persists, and thus information gathered on this topic could be very useful, and may even encourage further research. Parents in the eThekwini region must pay close attention to children's food advertising on TV.

South Africa, as a developing economy with diverse cultural and demographic structures among its consumers, cannot be directly compared to developed countries. As a result, data gathered on this topic could be extremely useful, even inspiring further research. A study like the one described here is actually needed to fill the knowledge gap about TV food advertising, particularly among children in the eThekwini area.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This investigation employed a quantitative approach. To speed up data collection, convenience sampling methods were used. Data was collected through the use of a questionnaire and mall intercepts. Convenience sampling was used because it is less expensive, takes less time than other sampling strategies, and is simpler. Convenience sampling is beneficial when used to generate a potential hypothesis or study objective. Despite its limitations, there are steps that can be taken to improve the credibility of this popular and simple method.

This study sample was drawn from four major shopping malls in the greater eThekwini region. A self-administered questionnaire was completed by 400 respondents in four major shopping malls in the greater eThekwini region (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Four shopping centres were used in data collection

Name of Mall	Location
Bridge City Shopping Centre	Station Road Kwa Mashu
City View Shopping Centre	10 Mathews Meyiwa Road Stanford Hill Road , Durban
KwaMnyandu Shopping Centre	341 Griffiths Mxenge Highway, Umlazi
The Workshop Centre	99 Samora Machel (Aliwal) Street, Durban

The selection of these four shopping centres was made to ensure that a diverse cross-section of the population was served. The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques that were appropriate for the situation. SPSS Statistical Package version 27 was used, as well as the necessary statistical tests.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS

The following delimitations apply to the study.

- The study was restricted to the eThekwini region.
- The study was limited to selected shopping malls in the eThekwini region.

The above two constraints were imposed as a result of financial and time constraints. Due to the delimitations, generalisation of the findings to the general population is not suitable. The selection measures were put in place for respondents who entered or left the shopping centre according to a sequence that was chosen at random between the numbers 1 and 10. Additional controls were implemented to help guide final selection.

1.8 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The study is divided into six chapters that are organised chronologically.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The study's introduction is presented. This includes the study's goals and objectives, the framework, approach to the issue, rationale for the study, and limitations and delimitations.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This is the review of literature. Previous research on food advertising aimed at children has been examined and conducted. Finally, any studies conducted in South Africa that are relevant to this investigation were reviewed.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter explains the research methodology used in the study. It describes the research design, research questions, and methods used, and includes a discussion of the population and samples used in the study, as well as the methods used for data collection and analysis. Validity and reliability testing are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Presentation and data analysis of results

This section contains a discussion of the study's findings. This chapter presents the data, analyses the results, and interprets them so that they are meaningful to the researcher. The results are presented in a descriptive and interpretive manner, with the analysis revealing parents' perceptions and attitudes towards TV food promotion to children.

Chapter 5: Discussion of results

This section contains a summary of the study's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Arising from this, summary conclusions and recommendations for future research on the topic are outlined.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter contains a summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The chapter provided historical context for parental perspectives on TV food advertising aimed at children: A case study of the eThekwini region. It also discussed the study's aims and objectives, the framework, approach to the issue, rationale for the study, limitations and delimitation, and the overall background of the investigation.

The following chapter will critique previous studies' research while also covering the study's main concepts as thoroughly as possible.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Food is promoted to children using a variety of marketing techniques, including personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotion, billboard advertising, and TV advertising, all of which aim to increase customer purchases at the point of sale and TV remains the primary advertising medium for reaching children (Cairns *et al.* 2013: 213; Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8). Although food advertising directed towards children on TV has been a source of contention for decades, it continues to generate less public attention than anticipated (Prowse 2017; Velazquez, Daepp and Black 2018: 2; Brinson and Holiday 2021: 220). According to the 2017 Rudd Centre report, parents generally underestimate the amount of unhealthy food advertised to children and do not necessarily participate in educating their children about eating healthy food (Fleming-Milici and Harris 2016: 103; Choi *et al*. 2022: 10).

According to various studies, the majority of food advertising aimed at children on TV is identified as promoting one of the 'big four', referring to sugar sweetened morning cereals, savoury snacks, soft drinks and confectionary (Velazquez *et al.* 2018: 3; Prowse 2017: 274; Cairns *et al*. 2013: 214, Avery *et al*. 2022: 865; Boyland *et al.* 2021: 20).

On a global scale, the prevalence of childhood obesity among children has raised concerns about food advertising on TV (Kim *et al.* 2017: 68; Avery *et al*. 2022: 865). As a result, the general public, politicians, and academics have begun to pay more attention towards this topic (Prowse *et al.* 2018: 39; von Nordheim *et al.* 2022: 169). Although other factors, such as changes in leisure activities, have also been identified as possible causes, food marketing on TV has been identified as having a significant influence on childhood obesity (Haugtvedt, Herr and Kardes 2018). In particular, junk food advertising on TV continues to dominate this debate (Dalton, Collins and Marshall 2015: 2 Driessen *et al.* 2022: 3).

This literature review sets out to establish a theoretical foundation by providing factual relationships as well as previous study findings that have aided in formulating the study's aims and objectives as well as the theoretical framework.

2.2 ADVERTISING

Advertising is a promotional technique that involves the payment for space in order to market products through TV and other media (Stanton 2014). According to Wheeler (2019), "advertising is any paid non-personal presentation of ideas, goods, or services with the intent of inducing people to buy".

It is critical for consumers to be aware of the availability of products and services in the marketplace (Lima, Ares and Deliza 2018: 112; Sonntag *et al*. 2015: 8566). Therefore, the function of advertising is to inform consumers about the existence of various goods and services, as well as their prices. It also assists customers to select from a variety of branded items to meet their specific needs (Vedevijvere *et al.* 2017: 1450).

According to Gomez *et al.* (2017: 2627), advertising consists of messages used to persuade customers to make a purchasing decision. The company pays for this and distributes the messages via a mass marketing medium (Lima *et al.* 2018: 112). According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), there are three general advertising objectives. These are to inform, persuade, and remind customers about the product or service being offered, as well as the advantages it has over competitors.

Gomez *et al.* (2017: 2629) highlighted the following characteristics of advertising:

- The primary goal of advertising is to inform through impersonal communication.
- Associated messages are transmitted through various forms of identifiable promotional mixes.
- Advertising can be persuasive at times. The ultimate goal of advertising is to persuade people to buy products, services, or ideas.
- Advertising is paid for by a distinct sponsor.

2.2.1 Different types of advertising

The type of advertising chosen is influenced by the business's objectives, as well as the consumers who they believe may be candidates for the products and/or services that they are attempting to sell (Sonntag *et al.* 2015: 8566; Stanton 2014; Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8). According to Zenith (2017), the advertising industry has undergone tremendous changes over the years, particularly the shift from more traditional formats to those driven by technology. Customers are bombarded with advertisements on a daily basis. Advertisements can be found in a variety of media, including newspapers, TV, the internet, and magazines. Advertisements can also be found in the form of displays, outdoor signs, direct mail, and other methods (Rossi 2017: 655). A discussion of various forms of advertising media follows.

2.2.1.1 Magazines

Magazines, as opposed to other media such as newspapers, are read when consumers have enough time (Barker *et al.* 2015: 25). Magazine advertising has the advantage of being available for a longer period of time (Johnson, Lewis and Nubbemeyer 2017: 10). Printing quality is higher, and being able to place colour advertisements are among the advantages of magazine advertising (Pitts, Burke and Adams 2015: 37). Several studies have revealed that magazine advertisements are a valuable source of information for the population, particularly children and adults (Hoban and Bucklin 2015: 4). Pitts *et al.* (2015: 37) agree, stating that print media such as newspapers and magazines are used by marketers to market and promote their brands to the public. There are two important reasons why magazines still remain relevant in these times, namely the fact that this media provides promoters with a highly targeted audience, and the highly focused and easily accessible content that is on offer enables advertisers to zero in on their target consumers, resulting in less wasted coverage (Hoban and Bucklin 2015: 4).

2.2.1.2 Radio commercials

Radio advertising is a type of mass advertising that can be used to quickly reach the target market. It is primarily used by local advertisers, who place approximately 70% of their advertisements on the radio (Blake, Nosko and Tadelis 2015: 1). South Africa

has a large number of radio listeners (Van Rensburg 2019) As can be seen in the following sample of various South African radio stations between October 2018 and March 2019:

- Ukhozi FM has 7.6 million weekly listeners.
- Umhlobo Wenene FM has 5.4 million weekly listeners.
- Metro FM has 4.3 million weekly listeners.
- SAFM has 7.6 million weekly listeners.
- East Coast Radio has 1.5 million weekly listeners.

This clearly demonstrates that a large number of people in South Africa listen to radio stations, providing advertisers with an excellent opportunity to promote their brands (Van Rensberg 2019).

2.2.1.3 Internet marketing

Younger, more targeted consumers are spending less time watching TV and more time on the internet (Blake, Nosko and Tadelis 2015: 2). As a result, internet advertising is becoming an increasingly important tool to attract specific target markets (Abhishek and Fader 2015: 59). It also has the advantage of being accessible at any time of the day or night (Braun and Moe 2013: 753). Advertisements range from banners to screen pop-ups (Bruell 2014). Manufacturers also develop their own websites for their brands (Dinner, van Heerde and Neslin 2014: 527).

According to Haugtvedt *et al*. (2018: 959), manufacturers were expected to spend more money on digital advertising in 2019 than traditional advertising. This suggests that the internet offers numerous popular opportunities to connect with potential buyers.

2.2.1.4 Direct mail

Direct mail advertising can be defined as the process of sending out offers or promotions to current customers via mail advertising (Benoit 2014). Direct mail is advantageous for marketing campaigns because it is more likely to be read by the intended audience. Furthermore, even if the first letter is unsuccessful, it raises advertising brand awareness (Blake 2016: 155; Vogel 2016).

2.2.1.5 Outdoor signs

Outdoor signs on major roads are designed to be appealing and easily catch the attention of passers-by (Wadud, MacKenzie and Leiby 2016: 1). According to Blake (2016: 2), outdoor advertisements must also be brief and simple because the targeted audience only sees them for a few seconds when passing by. Electronic billboards, which have large displays that can change quickly, are the most expensive type of outdoor sign (Topolsek, Areh and Cvante 2016: 212; Young *et al.* 2017: 135).

2.2.1.6 Television commercials

TV is an exciting medium for promoting a company's products and services (Kim *et al.* 2017: 67). TV commercials offer the ability to reach a large number of people in their homes at the same time, making it an effective advertising tool. In addition, adverts on TV can use sight, sound, and emotions to promote products. As a result, a number of different authors have identified TV as the most effective tool for advertising products to customers (Kim *et al*. 2017: 68; Chang *et al.* 2018: 70).

TV advertising aids in the creation, development, and expansion of brands (Kim *et al*. 2017: 68). According to Chang *et al*. (2018: 4), TV advertising keeps the brand name in the minds of audience members for much longer than a sponsored post on the internet. The ability to advertise directly to potential customers in their homes is the most significant advantage of TV advertising. However, the most significant disadvantage of TV advertising is its high cost and the length of time required to produce advertisements. TV advertising has been identified as the most expensive form of advertising to run (Kim *et al*. 2017: 72; Zenith 2017; Rossi 2017: 656). However, according to Kim *et al.* (2017: 68), TV advertising is one of the most effective ways to promote a product to consumers and therefore one of the favoured methods to promote brand awareness tools of food products (Prowse 2017: 274).

2.2.2 Advertising of food products

Many organisations in the marketing industry, specifically food agencies, make extensive use of traditional media outlets to promote their products to consumers (Smits *et al.* 2015: 311; Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8). Different mediums, such as TV, newspapers, magazines, and radio, are used to inform consumers about their

products and services (Kraak and Story 2015: 107). According to Boyland and Whalen (2015: 332; Backholer *et al.* 2021: 131), most players in the food industry have also benefited from public relations campaigns.

According to Kraak and Story (2015: 108), advertising influences both adult and child food choices. Many commercials feature food. However, according to the Danyang *et al*. (2016), less than one percent of advertising manufacturers spend money on healthy food advertising.

Food advertising on TV is only one type of marketing activity used to promote food products to consumers (Velasquez *et al.* 2021: 706; Prowse 2017: 276), and specifically informing or reminding the audience of the existence and recognition of a brand (Montana, Jiménez-Morales, and Vazquez 2019: 2873). In the United States, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported that approximately two billion dollars are spent each year on food and beverages as a direct result of companies promoting products through the medium of TV (Danyang *et al*. 2016: 2; Lynch 2015).

According to Boyland *et al*. (2016: 1013), TV food advertising has gradually increased and is having a greater influence on children's and adults' food preferences. Controversially, Danyang *et al*. (2016: 2) reported that watching food advertisements on TV can contribute to obesity due to a tendency towards unhealthy dietary consumption behaviour, which includes the consumption of high sugar and high fat foods.

2.2.3 Child-targeted advertising

Advertising on TV aimed at children has always been prominent in child-orientated advertising techniques. Previous research revealed that children are becoming more involved in their own purchasing decisions, not only for themselves but also for the household (Boyland 2017: 224; Driessen *et al.* 2022: 3). Advertising to children can be viewed as one of the factors that contributes to children's overall understanding of the environment. It has the potential to directly contribute to the development of children and adolescents in terms of product knowledge, purchasing skills, and the symbolic meaning of product branding (Cairns *et al*. 2013: 210; Choi *et al.* 2022: 10).

TV is also a socialisation agent because of its presence in children's lives (Whalen *et al.* 2018: 561), with Bell *et al*. (2013: 1) going so far as to refer to TV as a family member, implying that TV has a significant influence on children's development.

According to Harris *et al.* (2017: 212), TV advertisers have influenced children's customer socialisation by ensuring that they recognise the company's product and brand names. According to research, children become aware of company brand logos and can easily recall brand names as well as identify packaging with product brand or logos where necessary (Jeon and Lang 2020). As a result, children appear to be gaining an assertive advantage in product or brand consumption decision making.

Additional research in the field of TV advertising has revealed economic and social dimensions to children's attitudes towards advertising. This is due to the fact that many children socialise together and regularly watch TV for long periods of time (Correa *et al.* 2019). Typical criticisms of TV advertising include the use of false statements and misleading claims, resulting in the promotion of undesirable values such as materialism and the exploitation of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups (Roberts, Pereira and Knots 2019).

Children are an important but contentious marketing target, reinforced by a number of studies which have found compelling evidence that cumulative TV food advertising has an impact on children's attitudes, preferences, and consumption (Thomas *et al*. 2014: 8; Avery *et al*. 2022: 865). Advertisers take advantage of their childishness, according to Maren (2014) cited by Soni and Vhora 2016: 451).

As a result, marketers are said to have an unfair advantage in persuading young children to buy a variety of products. Even children who are able to distinguish between brands can be manipulated by advertisements into persuading their parents to buy brands through what advertisers cynically refer to as a "nag and whine campaign" (Prowse *et al.* 2018: 2; Kunkel *et al*. 2014: 134; Cairns *et al*. 2013: 209).

According to Hinkley and McCann (2019: 2), advertising is a social dimension that involves contradictory beliefs about TV advertising, with some believing that advertising provides information and raises the standard of living. Advertising, in

addition to providing useful information about a brand, allows children to evaluate the attributes of a variety of product offerings and teaches them effective purchasing skills. In general, however, most Americans have negative feelings about advertising, including their overall attitudes towards TV advertising (Pace 2016; Prowse 2017: 268; Gomez *et al*. 2017: 2627).

Some advertising aimed at children can also have an impact on their understanding of the marketplace. According to Rossiter (2013) cited by Baird *et al*. 2017: 3), TV advertising has three potential types of effects on young children, namely cognitive effects which can result in an impaired ability to interpret information received in this mode; an affective influence resulting in emotions and feelings being influenced by said advertising; and, subsequently, the application of pressure on their parents to purchase the products of their choice.

2.2.3.1 Food advertisements directed towards children

Children watch advertisements and learn about various brands and styles, amid social interactions with other children and their families. Because of their purchasing power, young children are obvious targets for food promotion. Hence, the necessity of reinforcing the value of healthy foods in order to compete with hedonic influences is critic (Prowse *et al*. 2018: 2; Khan 2022: 372). Advertisers see children's food consumption as a potentially profitable target market, with young children representing three markets in one: they have their own money to spend, they have potential influence on purchasing decisions, and they represent future customers (Montana *et al.* 2019: 2873; Thomas *et al.* 2014: 2). According to Bandura (cited by Boswell and Kober 2016: 160), social cognitive theory predicts that children's learning behaviour is modelled from what they see on TV.

Advertising firms are becoming more sophisticated in their design and development of advertising strategies and techniques capable of influencing young people (Baird *et al.* 2017: 3). According to Cassim (2010), over the last 20 years, advertising agencies in the United Kingdom and the United States have become aware that children do not purchase many products on their own, but do put pressure on their parents to do so. This has resulted in businesses actively directing marketing efforts towards children.

Prowse *et al.* (2018: 5) stated that food is the subject of 50% of all advertisements directed at children. Some promotional companies advertise unhealthy food items on children's programmes in order to increase sales and make children aware of their product offerings (Boyland and Golden 2017; 224; Cairns 2019: 193). As a result, adolescents are growing up in an environment where they are bombarded with advertisements for unhealthy foods and brands along with other forms of promotion (Harris and Kalnova 2017: 49). The promotion of unhealthy foods to children has become a crisis on a global scale, including South Africa (Owen 2018: 1). The debate over the promotion of unhealthy food to children has revealed that direct advertising to children through various platforms such as TV, magazine, newspaper, and other forms of media has made a contribution towards young children's food preferences (Prowse 2017: 268; Jeon and Lang 2020: 606).

2.2.3.2 Advertising of food directed towards children on TV

Many marketers have chosen TV as the primary medium for reaching this juvenile audience (Kim *et al*. 2017: 69; Brinson and Holiday 2021: 219). One of the areas where this takes place is during children's TV programmes. As TV became more popular, marketers saw this as an opportunity to advertise their food products to the target market via channels that were directed towards children.

When it comes to the advertising of food to children, the media primarily employs persuasion techniques. Nutritional and health claims are used in TV advertisements to appeal to children in a fun and appealing manner (Abrahams *et al*. 2017). As a result, TV advertising added fun and enjoyment to children's lives by advertising food options for them to choose from. TV advertisements, according to psychologists, use techniques to transfer subliminal messages through media channels. According to research, there has been a shift in children's attitudes and behaviours, which has led to them being manipulated by advertisers. However, even in best-choice situations, healthy food advertising games appear to be ineffective at increasing children's healthy food intake (Whalen *et al.* 2018; Choi *et al.* 2022: 10).

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of food marketing on TV aimed at children (Chang *et al.* 2018: 4; Velasquez *et al.* 2021: 706). The

majority of these studies concentrated on the short-term impact of food advertising on TV. According to Uribe and Fuentes-Garcia (2015: 165), TV advertising of food products to consumers is one of the leading factors that expose children to unhealthy food, while Abrahams *et al.* (2017: 429) agree that TV promotion of food has a direct impact on children's food preferences. Additional results have indicated that food marketing on TV has a negative impact on children's food choices, revealing that children change their food choices after seeing food commercials. The choice format played a role, as it was noted that when children were asked to make exclusive choices, they preferred candy to fruit, indicating that children had been exposed to unhealthy foods (Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22; Owen 2018). Of interest was that children who have had more TV exposure also appear to be more receptive to TV food advertisements (Tarabashkina, Quester and Crouch 2016: 32; Bell *et al.* 2013: 6). In India, food advertising directed to children is viewed as exploitative and impressionable, particularly with regard to the promotion of food products on TV, due to their target audiences' lack of the necessary skills and experience (within the context of their specific needs and reality), required to process advertising messages (Boyland *et al*. 2016; Soni and Vhora 2016). It has also been reported in China that children pay more attention to TV commercials and are more likely to request purchase of snacks that they have seen on TV (Kelly *et al.* 2015). Most TV advertisements aimed at young children are for snacks and sweets, which are said to be one of the factors contributing to childhood obesity (Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22; Velasquez *et al.* 2021: 706).

Previous research on TV food advertising also revealed that there are a number of elements and visual factors that appear to lead consumers to buy specific food items, for example, product size, the price of the product, colour, the nutritional value of products and children's appearance on visual inputs (Yarimoglu *et al*. 2018: 36; Kunkel *et al*. 2014: 134). TV advertising appears to be a leading factor that results in consumer decisions to buy specific food items (Bogart, Castro and Cohen 2019: 807; Khan 2022: 372).

TV advertising continues to be a major medium for advertising to children, with much of it dominated by unhealthy food products (Kelly *et al*. 2015). Regulations and policies are frequently regarded as necessary tools for limiting TV advertising and limiting children's exposure to unwanted advertising practices. However, there are ongoing

and heated debates among academics about the relative merits of various restrictive instruments (Danyang *et al.* 2016).

Furthermore, TV advertising has been chastised for objectifying women and female children, which has been linked to anxiety, eating disorders, low self-esteem, and depression (Jeon and Lang 2020). According to Prowse (2017: 277), children view over 40 000 advertisements per year on TV alone, increasing their exposure to advertising, along with the internet, food magazines, and in schools.

2.3 THE IMPACT OF ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Childhood obesity has become a global crisis, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2017: 7), putting children at risk of developing serious health problems later in life, such as type 2 diabetes, sleeping disorders, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and cancers. This epidemic has also been linked to the emergence of breathing problems and an increased risk of fractures (Shaver and An 2015; Alemanno and Garde 2015).

Furthermore, this issue has the potential to cause psychological effects in both children and adults, such as low self-esteem and social problems (Campbell, Smithers and Butler 2016). According to research, obese people, particularly children, are frequently the targets of bullying, mockery, and discrimination from others (Backholer *et al.* 2021: 131). The issue with childhood obesity is that those who are affected often grow into obese adults, increasing their risk of premature death and/or disability (Storcksdieck *et al.* 2014; Avery *et al*. 2022: 865).

2.3.1 Current state of children's health in South Africa

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) child nutrition is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in South Africa. Chronic malnutrition among South African children and adolescents, affects one in four young children. Childhood obesity has also been identified as a worldwide crisis, and its prevalence is increasing around the world. It is noted now as one of the most common diseases affecting children and is identified as contributing towards an increase in chronic diseases in the country. The young adolescent sector of the population is not exempt from this alarming trend.

It is evident that South Africa needs to invest more in prevention of these problems in order to ensure that children not only survive but thrive in difficult circumstances (Lake *et al.* 2019: 18). Salt, sugar, and fat have all been identified as prominent ingredients in food that is promoted to children for consumption (Molelekwa 2019).

Food advertising influences both food choices and food preferences. According to Lieshout (2019), the food advertising industry in South Africa has been shown to have a direct influence on the rise in childhood obesity due to their extensive advertising of unhealthy food to children. Children are viewed as more vulnerable, as they do not understand the potential links between food and health.

According to Lieshout (2019), the percentage of overweight South African children who are between the ages of 2 and 14 years old in South Africa amounted to 16.5% for females and 7.1% for males. It therefore follows that if food advertising directed towards children is not done properly, it can lead to many ethical violations, the majority of which are focused on the advertising of unhealthy food. This, then, contributes towards obesity and other health issues which in turn can lead to non-communicable disease (Boyland 2018: 24; Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22).

2.3.2 The effect of TV advertising on children's health

TV advertising remains popular among adolescents and adults, and is identified as one of the most common ways for young adolescents to be exposed to unhealthy foods. According to international marketing research on advertising most viewed by children, 10% to 30% of all advertisements marketed were for food items and directed towards children, while the remaining 53% to 87% were for unhealthy food items, indicating clearly that advertising of unhealthy food products has affected children globally (Kelly *et al.* 2017: 38).

A number of studies have examined the effects of TV advertising on adolescent eating habits. The majority of these studies concentrated on the short-term impact of food advertising on TV. Research suggests that TV promotion has an effect on children's food preferences, demonstrating that children change their food choices after seeing food commercials (Danyang *et al.* 2016; Kunkel *et al*. 2014: 278). Priming children

more frequently with digital healthy food cues through repeated advertising exposure and increased availability may automatically increase children's healthy food consumption choices through familiarity processes (Brinson and Holiday 2021: 219). Because many TV advertisements aimed at youngsters are for food items with a high content of sugar, fat, salt, and which are of low nutritional value, there have been concerns raised about these types of promotion directed towards children (Baird *et al.* 2017: 14; Cairns *et al.* 2013: 209; Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8).

The effect of TV advertising on children has drawn public attention to the fact that childhood obesity is on the rise among children all over the world. Furthermore, it has been revealed that TV advertising frequently objectifies women and female children and is viewed as contributing to anxiety, eating disorders, low self-esteem, and depression (Wang, Liaukonyte and Kaiser 2018: 1). According to Bandura (cited by Boswell and Kober 2016: 160), social cognitive theory predicts that one of the ways in which children's learning behaviour is modelled is from being exposed to TV advertising, leading them to purchase unhealthy food products. However, Correa *et al.* (2019: 7) stated that children could be motivated through advertising to eat healthily, live a healthy lifestyle, and exercise on a regular basis.

Previous research on food advertising on TV revealed that the internet and other digital platforms of advertising provide for interaction and integrated advertising strategies. However, this has a downside as this can heighten the volume of unhealthy food advertising with many children having access to social media platforms at a young age. This increases the risk of children becoming obese and overweight as a result of increased exposure to unhealthy food when using technological devices such as tablets and other portable devices (WHO 2016).

2.3.3 The impact of unhealthy food advertised to children in South Africa

Advertising on new media, as well as changing marketing techniques, can have a powerful effect on children and are becoming more prevalent (Kelly *et al.* 2017: 38). Over the last two decades, evidence has shown that unhealthy food advertising has been identified as the primary contributing factor to rising rates of obesity among children and adults (Kelly *et al.* 2017: 37; UNICEF 2018: 12, 13; WHO 2017: 7).

However, food companies must work to improve the environment in order to protect children from food-related issues such as obesity. The WHO (2017: 5) has emphasised the importance of the issue. Shaver and An (2015) encourage parents to demand changes in food advertising to support their efforts to encourage healthy eating in their children. Food companies must work to improve the environment in order to protect children from unhealthy food-related issues which cause of obesity. The WHO emphasised the importance of the issue (WHO 2017). According to Shaver and An (2015: 18), parents should also demand changes in food advertising to support their efforts to encourage healthy eating in their children.

The WHO (2016) has recommended that the problem of unhealthy food advertising to children has become one of the international community's top priorities. Alemanno and Garde (2015) state that this issue requires immediate attention because it has the potential to increase health benefits and thus life expectancy. Previous studies have revealed that children are growing up in an environment that encourages weight gain while also being unfavourable to weight loss (WHO 2014). The WHO (2014) has reported that most children are raised in an environment where they are not taught the importance of eating healthy food and exercising regularly to avoid gaining weight.

According to Mbalati (2019), South Africa has one of the world's highest rates of poverty and inequality. As this issue persists, the question of whether children are truly protected from diseases such as non-communicable disease and obesity as a result of the poor diets that our children consume on a daily basis must be addressed. Mbalati (2019) also claims that when compared to the rest of the world, South Africa has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity. The WHO (2016) stated that by the end of 2016, more than 340 million adolescent boys and girls aged 5 to 19 were classified as obese worldwide, including South Africa. It showed that the condition has remained unchanged since then and is spreading at an alarming rate among young children and adults. This has occurred largely as a result of exposure to food advertisements on TV.

2.4 PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD PROMOTION ON CHILDREN'S TV

Through parent-child communication, parents play an important role in raising children and providing them with knowledge and experience (Soni and Vohra 2016: 178). According to Soni and Vohra (2016: 180) parents are concerned about child-targeted advertising because they perceive it to be influential and beyond the scope of parental control. To a large extent, advertising directed at children has caused dissatisfaction among parents and advertisers with regard to the promotion of unhealthy food on children's TV programmes (Wang *et al.* 2018: 4; Choi *et al.* 2022: 10), sparking heated political and public debate (Silva *et al.* 2015; 583; Pace 2016; Moschis 2017: 1384).

However, it appears that only a few studies have been conducted to gain a better understanding of parental attitudes towards food advertisements on TV aimed at young consumers (Frechette 2015). Esmaeilpour *et al.* (2018: 476) investigated how TV advertising affects children's understanding and response to advertisements. A number of past studies showed that parents expressed a need to be informed of the contents in food products advertised during children's TV channels. They also voiced their concerns about the resulting unhealthy food choices that might emanate from these advertisements along with the accompanying nagging associated with this (Dasgupta and Nandhi 2016: 32; Soni and Vohra 2016: 47).

A study conducted in one of China's cities on the guidance of young adolescents aged 6 to 13 years (Chang *et al.* 2018: 2) revealed a negative perception towards advertising primarily attributable to the perception of advertising as deceptive and annoying. Due to perceptions such as these, the Chinese government has enacted policies aimed at reducing or eliminating unhealthy food marketing to children (Hawkes 2015: 1962). Children's healthy eating can thus be supported by priming children more frequently with appealing digital healthy food cues that increase the appeal and status of healthy foods and automatically trigger familiarization processes to increase the likelihood of children eating and enjoying healthy foods, so that healthy food can become a regular part of the children's diet (Choi *et al.* 2022: 10). Studies on parental perceptions of children's persuasive powers when shopping with their parents were conducted in Sweden and Spain, finding that parents were subjected to pressure from children

nagging them to make impulse purchases (Kanter *et al.* 2019: 131; Norman *et al.* 2016: 139).

The general consensus thus far is that parents are extremely concerned about food advertising directed at their children (Soni and Vhora 2016: 178). The rise in childhood obesity around the world has become concerning, with many parents attributing it to the marketing of food directly to children on TV (Lapierre *et al.* 2017). Several studies found that food advertising has an influence on children's food choices, purchasing behaviour, consumption patterns, and nutritional knowledge (Cairns *et al*. 2013: 209; Kunkel *et al.* 2014: 267). According to narrative media studies, children benefit from a best-choice situation in which healthy food products are available (Driessen *et al.* 2022: 3). Consequently, the majority of parents, families, and interest groups want junk food advertising to children to be limited or eliminated. Baird *et al. (*2017: 2) found that the most concern was for children under the age of 14, as the perception was that they spent the most time watching TV advertisements.

According to Kelly (2015: 39), children are frequently used as a target market for advertising agencies due to their parents' spending power, the desire to build a lifelong relationship with potential customers, and the knowledge that children have been in the market for a long time. As a result, the market segment for children's products requires special attention because children are more attuned to product packaging, paying more attention to how the product packaging looks in terms of colour, shape, product design, and so on. Advertising agencies understand that if they directly sell food items to children, they are indirectly targeting parents. Advertising makes an effort to design products for children because of the influence they have on their parents' purchasing decisions. Putting pressure on parents is referred to as nagging or pester power. It is critical that advertising agencies consider parental opinions about what products they prefer their children to be informed about. Although children lack purchasing power or the means to do so, there is a perception from parents that they are being subjected to psychological manipulation by their children. They feel that they are being emotionally blackmailed along with their need to express affection to their children, who are placing pressure on them to purchase items that they have been exposed to through advertisements (Kelly *et al.* 2015; Kraak and Story 2015; Khan 2022: 372; Avery *et al*. 2022: 865).

Pramod and Narayan (2019: 2) state that decision making is a process that involves two parties, in this case, parents and children. This process can sometimes result in conflicts caused by disagreements between parent and child due to different goals in making decisions. This is a problem that parents face on a daily basis and needs to be resolved by parents working together with the family, by direct communication with children in an understanding manner (Vollmer and Baietto 2017: 134; Pramod and Narayan 2019: 2).

According to Shaver and An (2015: 32), businesses take into account three different aspects of marketing to adolescents. The first is, where they are directly approached by marketers when they are considered to be legal customers spending their own money. The second is the parents market, in which adolescents influence their parents' purchasing decisions, a practice known as "pester power." Finally, they are regarded as future customers because they maintain the same behaviour they learned as children when they reach adulthood.

Children have the ability to influence purchasing decisions with each household purchase, beginning at the early ages three to twelve years of age. This becomes stressful for parents when conducting their shopping (Balcarova *et al*. 2014; Pramod and Narayan 2019: 4).

Parents believe that TV advertisements influence children's patterns and behaviours (Boyland and Golden 2017: 224). According to Cairns (2019: 193), TV has a negative impact on children, resulting in children demanding, nagging, and pestering their parents to buy the advertised product. The general consensus is that children prefer watching TV to social interaction, physical activity, and developmental activities (Montana *et al.* 2019: 2873; More 2017: 157). However, Morley (2017) argues that TV advertisements teach children about products and brands. As a result, the literature indicates that there is still some dissention with regards to parental perspectives towards the advertising of food on TV, with little research being conducted in South Africa, and none in KwaZulu-Natal, or the eThekwini region. Hence the primary objective, as well as the first sub-objective of this study, is to establish parental perspectives towards the promotion of food advertising aimed at children on TV in the

eThekwini region. As the demographics vary dramatically to those elsewhere in the world, this creates space for additional studies.

2.5 PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF TV FOOD ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN'S EATING HABITS

Parental behaviour in purchasing food involved children's attitudes and was associated with the belief that children have the ability to persuade their parents to make purchasing decisions on their behalf (Kelly *et al.* 2015: 37). According to research, most parents find it difficult to deny their children's requests for preferred brands, often as a result of exposure to TV advertisements.

Food product advertising has been seen to have a direct impact on the choices and behaviour of customers, particularly children (Kelly *et al.* 2015: 34). Furthermore, young children have both cognitive and visual ability to notice product brands and information about products. Pramod and Narayan (2019: 5) suggested that food companies transform children into fans of their products by incorporating entertainment into their advertisements with character animation, internet games and a number of other devices. According to Kraak and Story (2015: 109), advertising strategies for children are established between two fundamental values, which are aspects of food pleasure and other aspects that offer pleasure and fun. Such products are retained in the minds of children and are easily remembered by those who have seen the brand advertised on TV and this can lead them to be influenced to purchase unhealthy food (Pramod and Narayan 2019: 2). According to Social Learning Theory, social endorsers in digital media, such as peer and parent models, are able to increase the reinforcing value of healthy foods and increase healthy food intake in children (Backholer *et al.* 2021: 131). Harris and Kalnova (2017: 49) suggest that children's product choices are influenced by TV advertisements, resulting in unhealthy eating habits (Harris and Kalnova 2017: 47).

Kraak and Story (2015: 108) suggest that it is the responsibility of the company to market healthy food to children in order to develop long-term relationships between parents and children through their TV advertisements. In order to contribute towards this discussion, the second sub-objective of this study is to examine parents'

perceptions of how food promotion on TV influences children's' eating habits and food preferences. This will also contribute towards the main objective.

2.6 LEGISLATION ON THE ADVERTISING OF FOOD ON TV WITH RESPECT TO CHILDREN

Correa *et al.* (2019: 2) accentuated the importance of public health promotion with regards to regulations concerning food advertising to children as soon. The WHO report (2016) states that parents' attitudes towards advertising food towards children and eating behaviour are sometimes influenced by the environment children grew up in, which includes food advertising as well as policies that support the marketing of healthy food to children. The report also revealed that parents are willing to participate in the development of policy rules to reduce junk food advertising to children and encourages companies to only advertise healthy food to children (Harris *et al*. 2017: 211).

In addition, in Europe, advertisements aimed at children are increasingly being subjected to legislative oversight (Prowse *et al*. 2018: 2). Senator Hillary Clinton also wanted to introduce legislation that would require the American Federal Trade Commission (AFTC) to prohibit advertising directed at children, particularly those under the age of five (Baird *et al*. 2017). The discussion has erupted at both national and international levels. Both critics and marketers have differing perspectives on this issue, as does academic literature, which has offered varying perspectives on whether TV advertising is harmful or beneficial to those involved (Moschis 2017: 126), exemplifying the controversy surrounding the issue of children's advertising (Cairns *et al.* 2013: 193). Nevertheless, TV advertising is expected to improve slightly in terms of advertising to children, because advertising agents are required to submit to public health institutions, which monitor the compliance and validity of regulatory guidelines (Montana *et al.* 2019: 2875; Baird *et al.* 2017: 14).

The WHO (2016) issued a set of recommendations to government organisation as a guideline for developing new policies or strengthening existing policy regulations on food advertising, promotion, and communication to children. The WHO's set of recommendations suggested that all government organisations establish such policies

as part of their policy regulation framework, thereby ensuring that they monitor and enforce regulations on those who do not comply with them. The key point in this recommendation is that while states were designated as the primary stakeholders in developing this policy regulation, other stakeholders such as industry were not left out as well as other relevant stakeholders, with all of them being held accountable through their participation in policy implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (Garde and Allemano 2015: 23).

Correa *et al. (*2019: 3) highlighted that this issue should remain top of mind for marketers. Some even went as far as to describe the marketing of unhealthy food towards children as an illegal practice. Whalen *et al.* (2018: 228) discussed the negative impact of food advertising communication aimed at children. The advertising industry has a direct impact on children's consumption patterns (Moschis 2017). According to Kelly *et al.* (2015: 2), food advertising directed at young children under the age of 14 years old is prohibited in many countries. However, Chang *et al.* (2018: 2) argue that TV advertising can be beneficial when combined with educational programmes aimed at young children and teenagers. Advertising to children and adolescents can be seen as necessary in more ways than one.

The Rudd Center (2017) in United States reports that regulation policies in food companies must be enforced and published online to inform the public. According to this report, parents' perceptions is that food industry advertising has a negative impact on their children's consumption (Whalen *et al.* 2018: 2235). It has also been demonstrated that the majority of parents support the regulation of food advertising companies to reduce the advertising of unhealthy food to children, and that such policies would directly assist parents in encouraging their children to eat healthy. Parents welcome these policies, particularly those in low-income families, because these are the parents whose children are the most targeted by the food industry and are also exposed to the majority of unhealthy food marketing in their environment (Powell, Harris and Fox 2013: 453). The Rudd Centre (2017) in United States reports also recommended that all stakeholders should take action to combat the issue of unhealthy food advertised to children. They stated that the monitoring and evaluation of food advertising to children should demonstrate progress and improvements (Powell *et al.* 2013: 453). Furthermore, the recommendation is that parents are

approached to be part of policy making designed to prevent such occurrences from happening again (Uribe *et al*. 2015; Sonntag *et al*. 2015; 8565).

2.6.1 Policies implemented in South Africa for food promotion towards children

Mills (2016: 17) stated that it is important for the South African government to ensure that children are protected from the advertising industry's manipulation. It is critical that the South African government implement and continually review policies that work towards an environment in which children are not influenced by food advertising.

In this case, South Africa's recent approach to policy regulation is similar to that of other countries. South Africa has implemented statutory regulations as well as a self-regulatory mechanism in the form of a code of conduct relevant to the industry and stakeholders' concerns. This example of policy regulatory methods is useful, but in many cases, it relies on the food industry's policies, which have been both criticised and encouraged. However, because these advertising practices influence children's food preferences and, as a result, have an impact on children's health, policy regulation methods have been seen as the best method for guarding the interests of young South African children (Mills 2016: 12).

The South African government has decided to promote what is right and in the best interests of children. It has been stipulated in regulations and policies that advertising directed towards children must be fair and comply with the Advertising Standard of Authority (ASA) (Mills 2016: 16). South Africa has also confirmed the Convention on the Rights of the Child which specifies that the best interests of the children should be a priority, and taken into account at all times when children are involved (Mills 2016; 14; Abrahams *et al.* 2017: 23).

South Africa has shown its commitment to children's rights and the welfare of children, which provides additional protection of children as required by law; thus, all actions involving children and authority that are in the best interests of the children should be prioritised and considered (Abrahams *et al.* 2017: 22). The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution states that children's best interests were to be prioritised in all

aspects (Campbell *et al*. 2016: 78). Section 9 of the Children's Act states that the best interests of children are of the utmost importance in Section 7 of the Children's Act I and should be taken into account. The South African government must enforce the rules outlined in CRC section 18 of the list, which recognises that parent's obligations are to raise and develop the child under their care. The charter also states that the best interests of children are critical, and that parents and the government must continue to play an important role in this regard. The research revealed that the Convention on the Rights of the Child CRC states that the government should assist parents in their responsibility of raising children by ensuring the development of childcare institutions, services, and facilities (Mills 2016: 18).

These policy regulations must be followed not only in traditional forms of advertising, but by all private companies in this country and around the world. According to research, most international countries' regulations for TV advertising are also used to regulate other forms of advertising, such as those mentioned earlier. This has been done at various levels to be successful (Golin and Campbell 2017: 5).

2.6.2 Regulations and specifications of TV food advertising

In South Africa, although the promotion of food to children has been regulated since 2007, the problem of childhood obesity has not gone away, with Mbalati (2019) reporting that the rate of childhood obesity in South Africa has increased from 10.6% to 18.2% over the last decade.

The South African Department Health has mandated that all food advertised to children should be healthy and not misleading in terms of product health claims. The have also demanded that draft regulations be published in order to limit junk food advertising to adolescents. Following the publication of that draft regulation, the South African Department of Health recommended that the South African Nutrients Product Measure (SANPM) be used as one of the models used to monitor the regulations. The use of the SANPM to support regulations was a good plan for the development and validation of the regulation process, as well as to assess all food products with health claims aimed at children, ensuring that all food advertising aimed at children in South Africa is regulated (Wicks 2017; Mchiza, Steyn and Hill 2015).

Although much has been done in this area, it appears from the literature that there is still space for more work. It also appears that parents' might not be aware of the regulations surrounding the area of food promotion. This leads us to our next sub-objective which is to establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children.

2.7 OPINIONS TOWARDS FOOD PROMOTION ON CHILDREN'S TV

The impact of TV advertisements on children's memory and behaviour has been a major topic of debate in most countries around the world over the last two decades (Norman *et al*. 2016). Since 1988, TV advertising expenses have risen to approximately $500 million (Olafsdottir and Berg 2017). Despite the fact that heavy advertising of unhealthy foods is recognized as a major threat to health in developed countries (Elías *et al*. 2021: 3588). A study of children's reactions towards TV advertisements revealed that their food preferences, particularly for snacks, are influenced by their exposure to TV advertisements (Khan 2022: 372). Prowse (2017: 274) confirms that the findings of experimental studies found that children who are exposed to a lot of TV advertisements are more likely to remember the brands they see on TV when they go shopping and with their parents.

Previous research on children's purchasing habits has revealed that children aged 5 to 12 watch TV commercials for 3 hours per day, with an estimated 20,000 advertisements seen over the course of a year (Soni Vohra 2016: 45). The majority of consumer behaviour research, particularly on the impact of advertisements on children, has focused on two major points: one, the impact of TV commercials on shaping behaviour and its positive or negative influence on children's lives and habits, and two, the role of TV commercials on the mental and physical development of children (Velazquez *et al.* 2018; Velasquez *et al.* 2021: 706).

Children have persuasive power and influence on family purchasing decisions (Ahamad and Sekhar 2014: 37). According to research, adolescents behave in three distinct parts in the advertising/market. One, by spending their own money, two, by having a direct influence on family purchasing decisions, and three, by being the future market (Ahamad and Sekhar 2014). The social cognitive theory is also invoked as we

study these commercials since the theory posits that behaviours are shaped not only through individuals' own experiences, but also due to the interactions with the environment (Avery *et al*. 2022: 865; Choi *et al.* 2022: 10).

2.8 CONCLUSION

Over the last decade, there has been heated debate about the issue of food advertising and the impact of TV advertising aimed at children. Parents, along with politicians and consumer groups, have expressed concern about the issue, putting pressure on some countries around the world to find ways to limit the volume of advertising of unhealthy food items to children. The responsibility for protecting young children does not rest solely with the government; parents also have a significant role to play in the issue of food advertising to children.

Previous research in a variety of areas on the issue suggested that all stakeholders, including the public health departments, food industry, policymakers, and media and advertising companies, should take action to improve the situation. However, the findings also revealed that some parents are relatively unconcerned about the extensive amount of junk food promotion to their children.

This chapter covered a number of issues emanating from the promotion of food to children on TV. It started out by introducing the concept of advertising with particular focus on TV, and children as a target audience. From that point the focus moved specifically to the advertising of food products, examining the targeting of children in particular.

This literature reviews also demonstrated the impact of advertising on children's health, as well as current parents' perceptions of food promotion on children's TV. It then proceeded to highlight relevant legislation on this topic, with particular emphasis on regulation for TV food advertising aimed at children. The South African context was also interrogated. It should be noted that the majority of studies revealed that parents were extremely concerned about TV food advertising.

After the literature on this topic was reviewed and interrogated, it was established that there was a gap in the literature with respect to parental perspectives on TV food advertising aimed at children in South Africa with particular emphasis on the eThekwini region.

To address the gap in the literature, objectives were presented and a research study was proposed. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology, detailing how the research objectives will be answered.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A research design is a plan on how research questions will be addressed. Objectives will have been obtained from the original research question, followed by details on where and who the data was obtained from, how it was collected and analysed, along with how any ethical issues were handled (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2019: 173). Therefore, this chapter describes the research methods used to conduct the study as well as the methods used to collect primary data. It begins with an outline of the study type and research design, followed by population, sampling size, sampling method, questionnaire design, validity, reliability, and pilot testing.

This was a quantitative study where primary data was collected in order to obtain an overview of parental perceptions of children's TV food advertising. The methodology used was employed to resolve the following objectives and sub-objectives:

The primary objective of this study was to establish parental perspectives towards the promotion of food aimed at children on television in the eThekwini region.

The following sub -objectives are drawn from the primary objective of the study:

- To determine parents' opinions of food promotion on television directed towards children;
- To examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on television influences children's eating habits and food preferences;
- To establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children; and
- To establish whether opinions differ according to respondents' demographic make-up.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The choice of an appropriate research method is central to the research design. The use of ineffective research methods will result in a failure to meet objectives (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 189). This study made use of a quantitative methodology, which is a conclusive form of research that makes use of large representative samples, following a structured process to collect data (Struwig and Stead 2020). The data collection tool was a structured questionnaire. According to Dawson (2016), this study approach is scientifically concrete, analysing a large number of data points from a selected sample.

Before formulating objectives and constructing a questionnaire, an exploratory study in the form of a literature review was conducted to better understand the nature of the problem, as very few studies on TV food advertising directed at children had been conducted in South Africa. Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 192) agree with the logic that exploratory research is essential when little is known about the problem or issue at hand.

This was a formal study that “begins where the exploration leaves off. It begins with a hypothesis or research question and involves precise procedures and data source specifications. The goal of a formal study is to test the hypothesis or answer the research questions posed” (Cooper and Schindler 2013: 142).

This was also a cross-sectional study. In other words, it was conducted to represent a snapshot of one point in time owing to cost and time constraints. Four shopping centres were selected to ensure that a diverse cross-section of the population was served.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A sample should be closely aligned with the population that is identified in the research question. A carefully chosen sample will enable the researcher to draw conclusions about the population concerned (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2019: 292).

3.3.1 Population

The population can be defined as the entire list of components that should be included in the research. If data analysis is valid, then the study's findings on a sample of respondents drawn from a large population can be generalised to the entire population The study's target population was all parents with younger children living in the eThekwini region, particularly Durban. The difference in age, gender and race was observed because the investigator suspected that these factors would influence the findings. The metro area population of eThekwini in 2021 was 3,176,000, a 0.57% increase from 2020. The metro area population of eThekwini in 2020 was 3,158,000, a 0.41% increase from 2019 (South African Yearbook 2021).

In terms of gender, age, and race, the eThekwini Metropolitan (2021) found that females make up 51% of the eThekwini population. The median age of the metro is 27 years, which is older than that of KZN (22 years) and 10% older than that of South Africa (25 years). Only 8% of the population is over the age of 60, while 55% of the population is between the ages of 20 and 59. The black African population accounts for 74% of the eThekwini population, with the Indian population accounting for 18% and the white and coloured populations representing minority groups accounting for 6% and 2%, respectively (eThekwini Metropolitan 2021).

3.3.2 Population frame

The term population frame refers to the elements of the population from where the sample was selected. For this study, the respondents were selected from four major shopping malls chosen from a potential 10 malls. Through the assistance of two postgraduate students, 100 questionnaires were completed at each of the four selected malls (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Population frame for data collection

Bridge City Shopping Centre	Station Road Kwa Mashu
City View Shopping Centre	10 Mathews Meyiwa Road Stamford Hill Road
Kwa Mnyandu Shopping Centre	341 Griffiths Mxenge Highway
The Workshop Centre	99 Samora Machel (Aliwal) Street

3.3.3 Sample

A sample is made up of people who are selected and then agree to participate in a study. The benefits of examining a sample rather than a whole population include cost-effectiveness, speed, convenience, and the potential for improved research quality and reliability (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 192; Dawson 2016).

The number of respondents to be included in a study is referred to as sampling size. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 192), if the population size is 1,000,000 or more, a sample of 384 is sufficient to support the study's findings. Therefore, the sample size for this study was 400 respondents which was regarded as sufficient in terms of statistical evidence to provide adequate input for accurate results.

3.3.4 Sampling method

There are numerous reasons to make use of a sampling method. Some of these include low cost, accuracy in findings, and information gathered at a faster rate.

Nonprobability sampling methods were used in this study to avoid cost and time issues. This entails selecting respondents based on convenience and/or judgement (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 191). However, it must be noted that this study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, making it difficult to handpick candidates as many were not prepared to engage for obvious reasons. This became a limitation which will be discussed later. To avoid selection bias, respondents were also chosen using a systematic sampling method. This necessitated selecting respondent as they enter or exit the shopping centre in accordance with a sequence chosen at random between the numbers 1 and 10. Additional controls were implemented to help guide final selection.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was conducted by face-to-face questioning of respondents using a questionnaire. The formulation of the data collection instrument is described below.

3.4.1 Derivation of the instrument

A draft questionnaire was designed using the information gathered during the exploratory phase. A number of questions were selected from previous validated questionnaires identified in the literature.

Questions were all closed-ended allowing for less errors and a less onerous experience for the respondent. The Likert scale structure was used to design most of the questions so that respondents could easily choose from them, with the remainder of the questions being set up in a multiple choice format. Coherent and straightforward statements provided responses to answer the objectives of the study. It was important to ensure that the available responses were clear and understandable. A Likert scale makes use of a rating scale made available to participants providing a range of answers. This also enables the researcher to accurately code the answers.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections and was four pages long. It was easy and logical to follow, providing five sections, A through to E. It included an introduction describing the significance of the research.

The data collection instrument was structured and purposefully kept brief in order to suit the face-to-face technique and improve feedback from respondents. The instrument used was meticulously edited to avoid errors and ensure that there were no grammatical errors. In a non-contrived setting, respondents were allowed to choose between several alternative options on a scale ranging from one to five.

3.4.2 Collecting the data

According to Hawkins *et al.* (2013: 302) a questionnaire is a systematic way of collecting data from a large group of respondents. Face-to-face questioning was conducted to ensure that the instrument was administered to the appropriate participants in order to collect more data on the topic and to explain different questions (Hawkins *et al.* 2013: 304). A few trained individuals aided in the distribution of the questionnaire to participants. These individuals were given information about the topic so that they could explain to respondents if they needed clarification on any of the questions.

The instrument's design was kept simple and straightforward in order for participants to finish responses on given closed questions, particularly those with Likert scale questions, which are easy to code.

3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

According to Cooper and Schindler (2013: 142), "reliability has to do with the accuracy and precision of a measurement procedure." Validity, on the other hand, describes how well the test measures what it is intended to (Wiid and Diggines 2013: 241; Cooper and Schindler 2013; 144; Leedy, Ormrod and Johnson 2019).

3.5.1 Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess reliability. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 192), a good reliability measurement indicates a scale with no bias, free of errors, and ensures consistency. A value of more than 0.8 is a solid indication, however for most studies, alpha's between 0.6 and 0.8 are more than adequate (Wiid and Diggines 2013: 242). The reliability of a questionnaire is a sign of the solidity and cohesion with which the questionnaire measures the idea and assists in evaluating the accuracy of a measuring instrument. According to Cooper and Schindler (2013: 142), consistency is the degree to which the measurement process is free of random errors.

A large portion of the questions that were used were previously validated and therefore had an adequate Cronbach's measure. However, because of combining questions in groups, and changes to wording as a result of the pilot study, Cronbach's alpha was checked again.

The sample size was adequate to assess the reliability of the results, with 400 participants responding to the study. The assistants were well informed about the topic of the study in order to provide further information if needed.

Table 3.2 indicates the Cronbach's alpha scores of the two sections. Section B was measured using a single reliability measure to measure the score across all items. The test showed that only B1-B3 formed reliable measures in the construct, and seemed

to be measuring general opinions on food advertising and seemed to indicate that agreement implied acceptance of the advertising. A single variable was formed by finding the average of the scores across the 3 items, call it GENOP. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha. Alpha >.7 indicates a reliable measure. For this composite measure, alpha was 0.929. Section C was also measured with a single reliable measure being found for this construct which included items 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10. The alpha was 0.814, call this INFL. The other sections were not grouped well and were reported individually. Therefore, this indicated that there was a level of inconsistency of scoring by respondents (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Measuring scale in quantitative analysis

Measurement scales	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Items measured
Opinions of food promotions on children's TV	0.929	B1-B3
Perceptions of the influence of food promotions on children's TV on their eating habits and food preferences	0.814	C3-C10

3.5.2 Validity

A pilot study was conducted to establish construct validity. A pilot study is defined as a group of people pre-testing or trying something out. The questionnaire was first sent to a statistician for comments on the nature and structure of the questions. A number of changes were made according to her recommendations.

After that, the pilot was delivered to a sample of 10 participants requesting their opinions and comments on how it came across (see Table 3.3). This was to assist in identifying questions that might be ambiguous or poorly worded before they were made available to a large group. Finally, the questionnaire was shared with two acknowledged research specialists, who made further comments and recommendations. A pilot study is a way to evaluate a questionnaire for both face and content validity. This process resulted in a final set of questions once any changes that were suggested and agreed on were made.

Table 3.3: Pilot test responses

Respondent	Comments	Action
Respondent 1	The questions are reasonable and simple to understand.	Make use of the questionnaire. It is fair and simple to respond.
Respondent 2	The instrument is excellent.	You can make use of the questionnaire.
Respondent 3	The instrument is fair and simple to use.	Make use of the questionnaire.
Respondent 4	It is lengthy and requires time to respond.	Please try to eliminate some of the questions to save time.
Respondent 5	I am pleased with the clarity of the questionnaire.	Make use of the questionnaire.
Respondent 6	It takes time to finish.	Reduce some of the questions.
Respondent 7	Questionnaire looks good to me, and it is simple to code.	Respondents should use the instrument.
Respondent 8	Questions about everything are clear and straightforward.	You can go to gather information.
Respondent 9	The instrument is excellent.	Questionnaire you can use I see no changes
Respondent 10	Grammar is correct and clear.	The instrument can be used to collect data from participants.

When a study is administered, the results may appear to be accurate, but they may contain errors. As a result, it is critical that while administering a study, provisions be noted and considered in order to reduce the likelihood of errors occurring. The questionnaire was designed to be short and simple so that respondents could easily understand them, and to reduce the possibility of errors in the findings. The research assistants were well informed about the study topic, and understood the instrument correctly and could explain any unclear information to the respondents if necessary.

3.6 ETHICAL ISSUES

An ethics clearance letter was provided by the DUT Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) (Appendix C) which permission for the commencement of data collection. A researcher is morally responsible to ensure that studies are conducted according to strict ethical standards. To ensure this the following items were addressed in this study. All respondents were approached personally by the researcher and were informed that participation in the process was entirely voluntary. Confidentiality was assured. All the details of the researcher and reasons for the study were provided to the respondents in the form of a letter of information and consent (Appendix A). To acknowledge their willingness to participate and show that they understood, all respondents were required to sign a consent form. Finally, documents

were also sent to the gatekeepers requesting similar permission to collect information from respondents (Appendix B).

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The information that was gathered was analysed, coded, and edited to eliminate errors, making it simple to comprehend the data and enter it into the SPSS Statistical Package (version 27). The questionnaires were counted and checked to ensure that all participants had completed all questionnaire questions correctly and satisfactorily.

After the data was captured in the system, a variety of analyses were performed on the data. Some of the statistics used in the study were descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations. Frequencies were disseminated in the form of tables or graphs. Other statistical methods such as ANOVA or one sample t-tests were also used in order to establish significant relationships between variables. The data was analysed using SPSS Version 27 software.

The following tests were used in the analysis for the data:

- **Descriptive statistics** are used to describe, present, summarise and organise the data. It includes means and standard deviations. These frequencies are mostly represented in the form of tables and/or graphs
- **ANOVA** is also known as analysis of variance. It is used for three or more groups of data in order to compare relationships between the dependent and independent variables in a study (Kenton 2021).
- **Pearson's correlation coefficient** measures linear association. It represents the strength of the relationship between two variables, which could be positive or negative. The variables need to be measured with the same interval or ratio scales.
- **One sample t-test** tests whether a mean score is significantly different from a scalar value. This type of test method is derived from inferential statistics and is used to determine whether there is significance between two tests of unrelated groups or means (Kenton 2021). This study employed a single

sample t-test in conjunction with Pearson's correlation coefficient as a measure of linear association.

- **Independent samples t-test** which compares two independent groups of cases. It determines whether there is evidence that the means of the two groups are significantly different. It is a parametric test.
- **Cronbach's Alpha** is a reliability measure that tests the consistency of responses with respect to a number of different items on a scale (George and Mallery 2016).

3.8 CONCLUSIONS

The chapter presented the research methodology and design that were used to gather data for this study. This study made use of a quantitative method to collect data, namely, a questionnaire. The results were statistically analysed and are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section covers the data presentation and analysis of the results. The results will be presented in the form of graphs and summary tables to aid in the interpretation and reporting of findings. All of the research findings came questionnaires seeking parental perspectives on children's food advertising on TV in the eThekwini region.

Descriptive statistics which include means and standard deviations, are presented in the form of tables or graphs. Statistical tests used in the study include ANOVA test, one sample t-tests, and independent samples t-tests. Presentation of results will follow according to the structure of the questionnaire (Appendix B).

4.2 OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The objectives and hypotheses of this study are outlined once again in order to remind the reader of the purpose of this chapter.

Objectives:

- To determine parents' opinions of food promotion on television directed towards children;
- To examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on television influences children's eating habits and food preferences;
- To establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children; and
- To establish whether opinions differ according to respondents' demographic make-up.

Hypotheses:

After reviewing the literature, the following hypotheses were established to correlate with the secondary objectives:

H1 Parents have a positive opinion towards food promotion on television directed towards children

H2 Parents perceive that food promotion on television has a positive relationship with children's eating habits and food preferences

H3 Parents have a positive opinion towards regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children

H4 There is a relationship between demographic characteristics and perceptions towards the advertising of food on television directed towards children

4.3 THE INSTRUMENT USED BY THE RESEARCHER

The questionnaire instrument used for this study consisted of 63 items grouped into five sections. These sections (titled A through to E), covered the following topics:

1. Demographics of the respondents.
2. Opinions of food promotions on children's TV.
3. Perceptions of the influence of food promotions on children's TV on eating habits and food preferences.
4. Opinions of current regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children.
5. Opinions of suggested changes to regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children.

The findings have been presented in both descriptive and inferential formats.

4.4 RESPONSE RATE

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed and 393 were returned which provided a 98.3% response rate for this study.

4.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABITY OF THE MEASUREMENT TOOL

Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurements within the instrument, while validity measures whether the test will appropriately measure what is being sought (Wiid and Diggines 2013: 238, 241).

4.5.1 Validity

In the first place, face validity was ensured by using questions that had been previously used to satisfy the requirements of similar constructs.

Both face and content validity were also ensured by carrying out a pilot study, where a number of potential respondents and research experts were asked to attempt the questionnaire and comment on whether the questions appeared to be clear and understandable.

4.5.2 Reliability

A reliable measurement is one that gives similar results every time. Cronbach's alpha is one of the most popular reliability tests for internal consistency and was used to assess this study's reliability. Although measurements larger than 0.8 are best, those between 0.6 and 0.8 are also acceptable (Maree *et al.* 2019: 261) (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Cronbach's coefficient alpha guideline

Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Reliability
a >.9	Excellent
a >.8	Good
a >.7	Acceptable
a >.6	Suspicious
a >.5	Unsatisfactory
a <.5	Unacceptable

4.6 TESTS USED IN THIS ANALYSIS

The following tested were used to analyse the data.

1. Descriptive statistics – these included means and standard deviations where applicable. Frequencies were illustrated in the ensuing tables and graphs.

2. ANOVA – used to assess how likely it is that various groups differ one from the other, a one-way analysis of variance (commonly known as ANOVA) is conducted.
3. Pearson's correlation coefficient – this is a measure of linear association.
4. One sample t-tests – tests the mean score to establish how it might differ to the scalar value and establishes significance.
5. Independent samples t-tests – comparing two independent groups of cases.

4.7 SECTION A – DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

The study gathered data on five demographic variables, namely, age, gender, education, marital status and race. Demographics of the respondents that participated in this study are summarised and presented in a consolidated format in Figure 4.1. Demographics have been broken down and presented for each variable in order to supply further information.

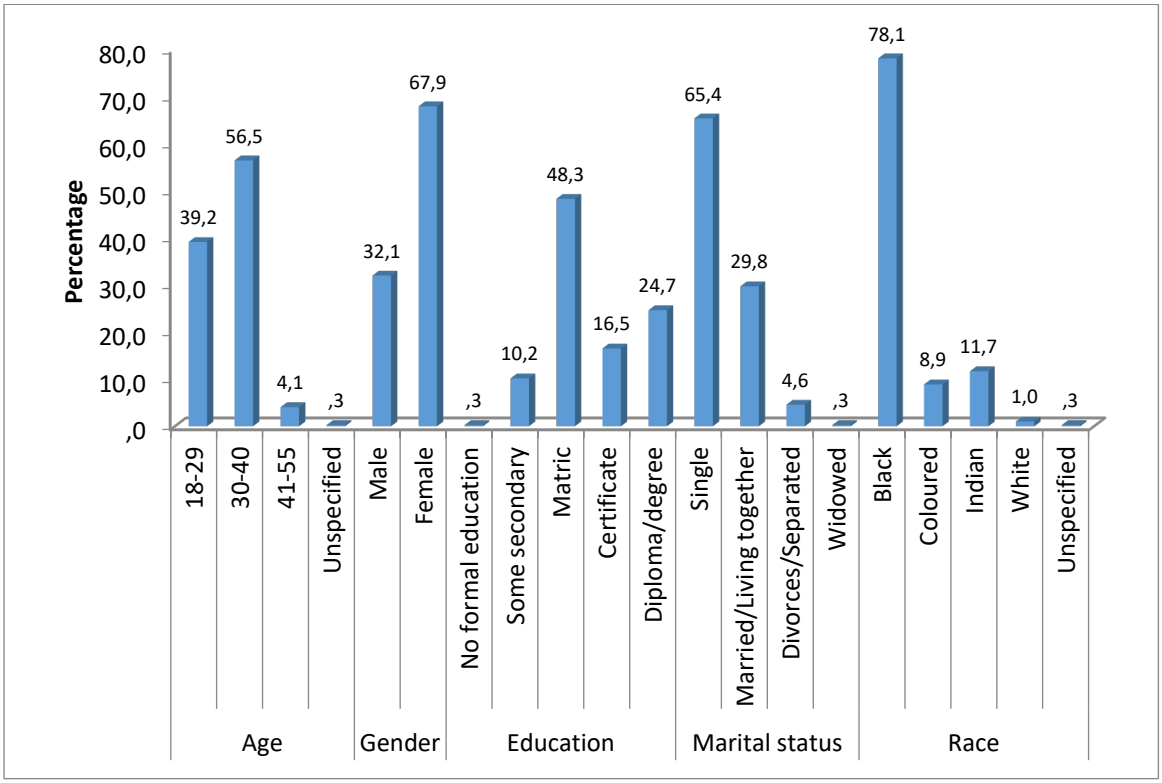

Figure 4.1: Overall demographics of respondents

4.7.1 Gender of respondents

The gender analysis of the study is depicted in Figure 4.2.

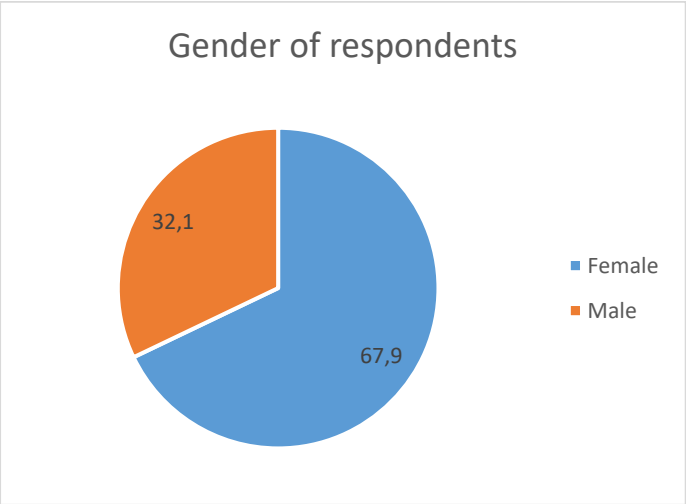

Figure 4.2: Gender of respondents

In terms of gender, 67.9% of respondents were female, and 32.1% of respondents were male. It is therefore apparent that a greater percentage of the respondents were female.

4.7.2 Respondent educational levels

Figure 4.3 depicts the educational status of respondents.

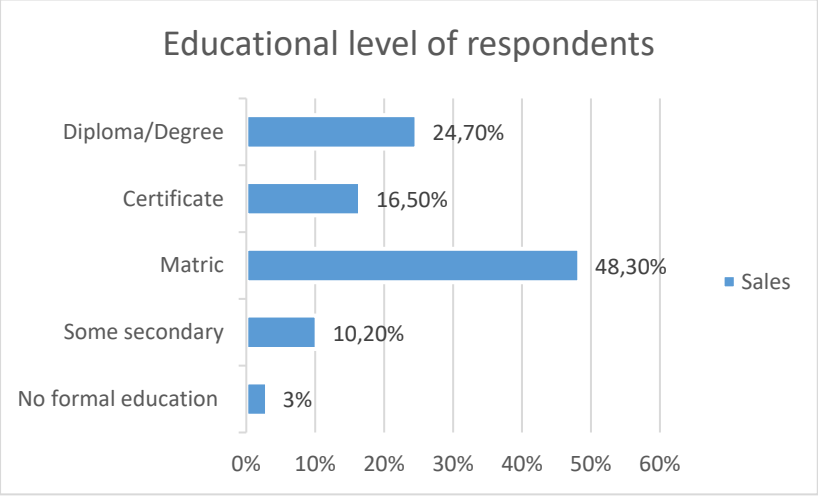

Figure 4.3: Respondents educational level

According to Figure 4.3, the majority of respondents (48.3%) were matriculants, while 24.7% were diploma and/or degree holders. A further 16.5% were certificate holders, and 10.2% had some form of secondary education. Finally, 3% of respondents had no formal education.

4.7.3 Respondents' marital status

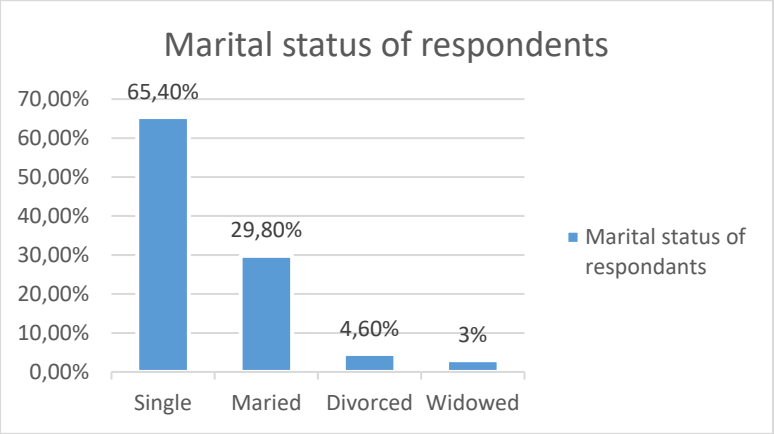

Figure 4.4: Respondents' marital status

As can be viewed in Figure 4.4, the majority of respondents (65.4%) were single, while 29.8% were married, 4.6% were divorced, and 3% were widowed. It is clear that single parents comprised the majority of the sample in this study.

4.7.4 The population of respondents

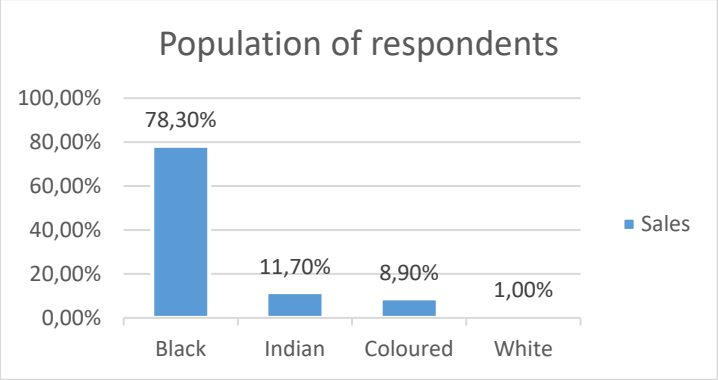

Figure 4.5: Population of respondents

Figure 4.5 shows that the majority of respondents (78.3%) were black African, with Indians accounting for 11.7%. Only 1% of those polled were white, while 8.9% were

coloured. As a result, it is clear that black African parents comprised the majority of the sample in this study.

4.7.5 The age range of children in respondents' households

Figure 4.6 depicts the age ranges of the children that respondents had in their households.

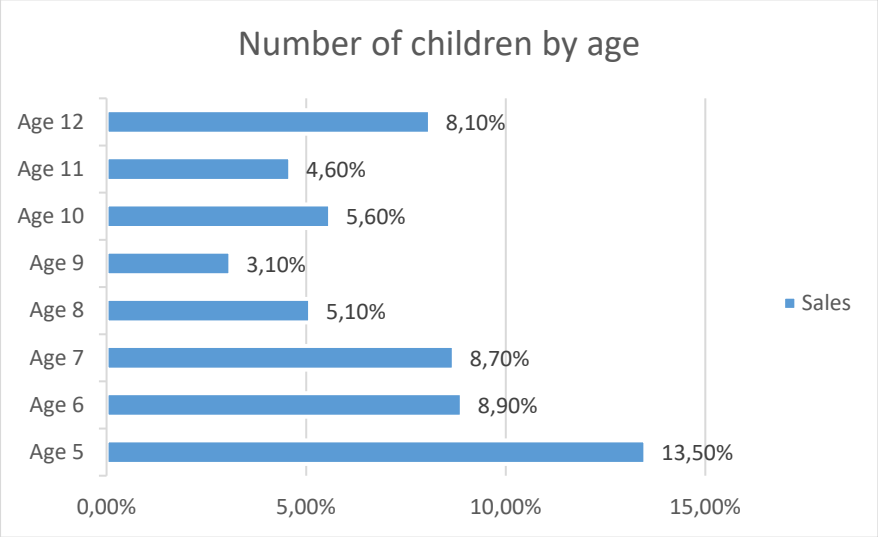

Figure 4.6: Age distribution of children

Figure 4.6 illustrates that 13.5% were children aged 5 years, 8.9% 6 years, 8.7% 7 years, 8.1% 12 years, 5.6% 10 years, 5.1% 8 years, and 3.1% 9 years. The results show a wide range of children between the ages of 5 of 12 years.

4.7.6 The number of televisions in a household

Figure 4.7 depicts the number of TVs in each household.

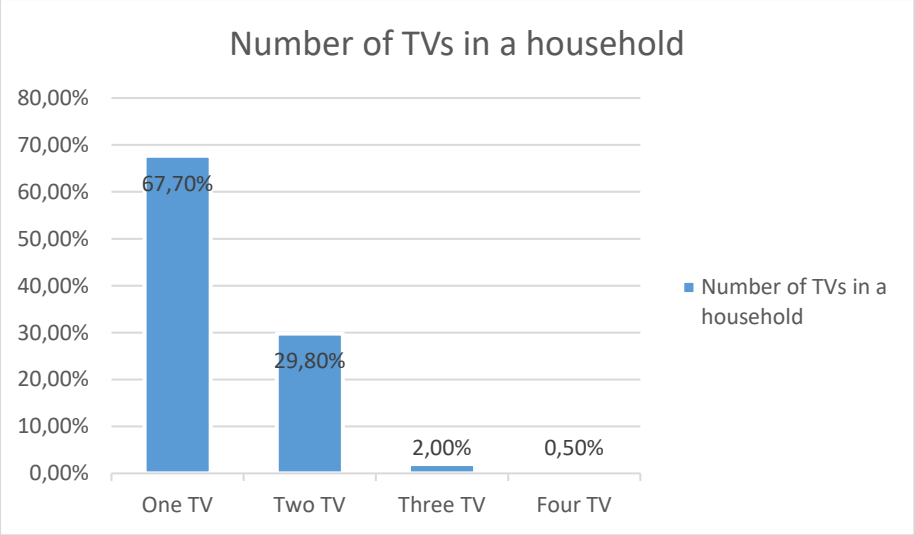

Figure 4.7: The number of TVs in a household

The majority of respondents (67.7%) owned one TV in their home, while 29.8% had two. A very small percentage (2.5%) claimed to have three or four TVs.

4.8 SECTION B – OPINIONS ON FOOD PROMOTIONS ON TV

All statements related to opinions on food promotion were measured by means of a 5-point Likert scale. These ranged from strongly disagree (1) through to strongly agree (5). The frequency of responses was recorded. When the mean values of all the responses to the statements are presented in a visual format a clear picture can be observed of the respondents' perceived opinions towards each statement. These can be viewed in Figure 4.8.

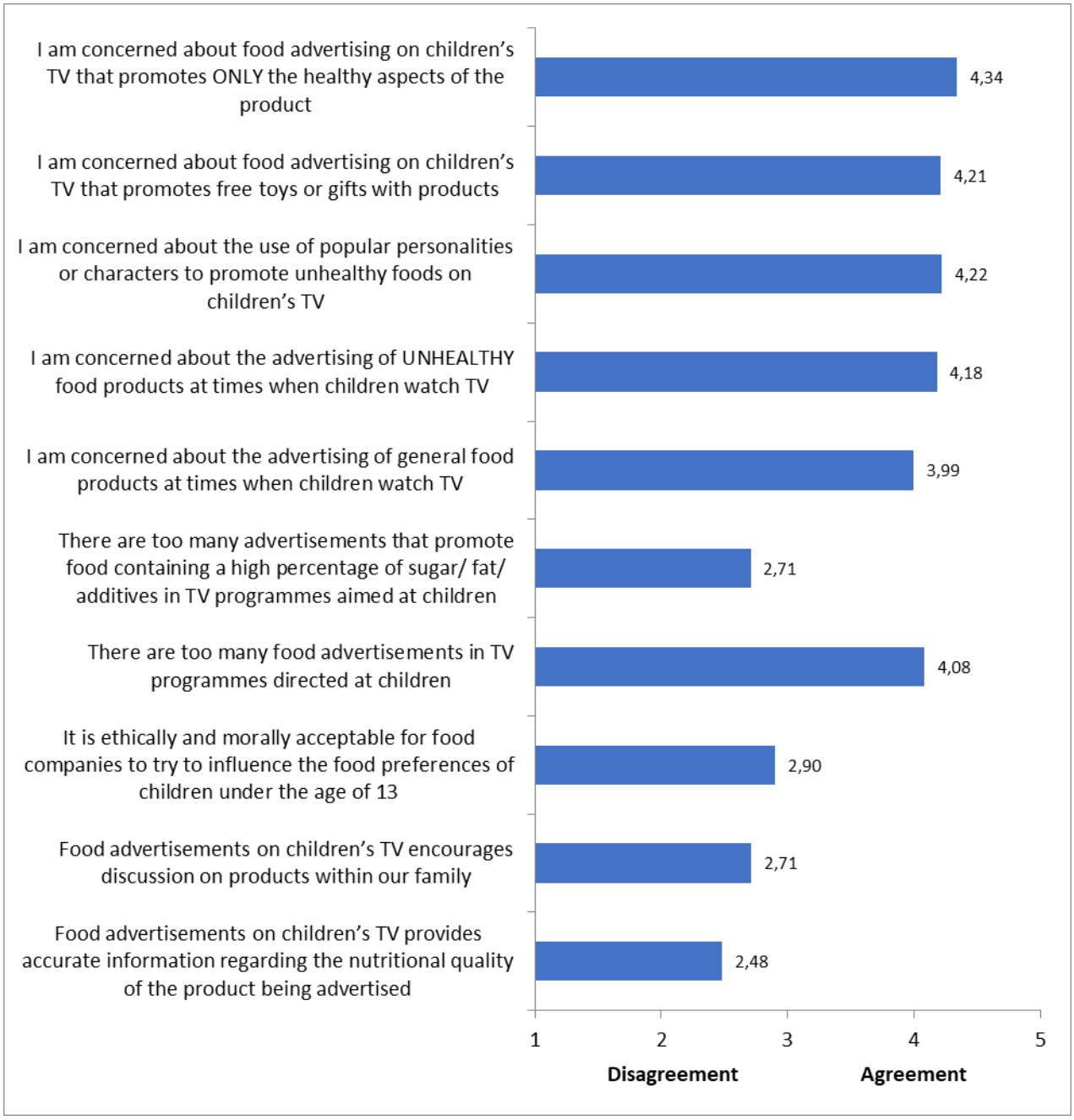

Figure 4.8: Means for opinions of food promotions on children's TV programmes

A one sample t-test was used to measure whether each mean score differed significantly from a specific value. Significant agreement was interpreted as those where the mean was > 3, while significant disagreement was interpreted as those where the mean was < 3. In order to establish significance, statements were tested against a p value of .001. Results for each of these statements are illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Opinions towards food promotions on TV

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)					Mean (SD)	p-value
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
B1 Food advertisements on children's TV provides accurate information regarding the nutritional quality of the product being advertised	140 (35.6)	86 (21.9)	30 (7.6)	111 (28.2)	26 (6.6)	2.48 (1.389)	< .001*
B2 Food advertisements on children's TV encourages discussion on products within our family	84 (21.4)	128 (32.6)	27 (6.9)	125 (31.8)	29 (7.4)	2.71 (1.31)	< .001*
B3 It is ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13	75 (19.1)	110 (28.0)	45 (11.5)	104 (26.5)	59 (15.0)	2.90 (1.38)	0.166
B4 There are too many food advertisements in TV programmes directed at children	1 (0.3)	6 (1.5)	16 (4.1)	307 (78.1)	63 (16.0)	4.08 (0.528)	< .001*
B5 There are too many advertisements that promote food containing a high percentage of sugar/ fat/ additives in TV programmes aimed at children	95 (24.2)	46 (11.7)	140 (35.6)	103 (26.2)	9 (2.3)	2.71 (1.164)	< .001*
B6 I am concerned about the advertising of general food products at times when children watch TV	0	3 (0.8)	47 (12.0)	292 (74.3)	51 (13.0)	3.99 (0.53)	< .001*
B7 I am concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products at times when children watch TV	0	0	29 (7.4)	264 (67.2)	100 (25.4)	4.18 (0.544)	< .001*
B8 I am concerned about the use of popular personalities or characters to promote unhealthy foods on children's TV	0	2 (0.5)	20 (5.1)	261 (66.4)	110 (28.0)	4.22 (0.551)	< .001*
B9 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes free toys or gifts with products	0	1 (0.3)	16 (4.1)	276 (70.2)	100 (25.4)	4.21 (0.512)	< .001*
B10 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product	0	3 (0.8)	11 (2.8)	228 (58.0)	151 (38.4)	4.34 (0.572)	< .001*

* Indicates significance at the 95% level

In response to statement B1, 35.6% of respondents strongly disagreed that *food advertisements on children's television provide accurate information about the nutritional quality of the product being advertised.* A further 21.9% disagreed making a total of 57.5 percent who disagreed in some way. Only 28.2 percent agreed with this statement, 6.6 percent strongly agreed with it, and 7.6 percent had a neutral attitude towards it. A one sample t-test indicated significant disagreement with the statement that food advertisements provide accurate information on the nutritional quality of the product as $p < .001$.

In response to the second statement (B2), 32.6% of respondents disagreed with the statement that *food advertisements on children's television encourage product discussion within our family*, with a further 21.4% strongly disagreeing. 6.9% neither agreed nor disagreed, while 31.8% agreed with the statement, and 7.4% strongly agreed. Overall, there is significant disagreement with the statement that food advertisements encouraged product discussion within a family, since $p < .001$.

A higher proportion of respondents (47.1%) disagreed with statement B3 that it is *ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13*, while 41.5% agreed with it. 11.5% of respondents were unsure about how they felt. However, the statistics for this statement were not found to be significant with a p value of .166.

When asked if there are *too many food advertisements in TV shows aimed at children*, in statement B4, 78.1% of respondents agreed, with an additional 16.0% strongly agreeing. Only 1.5% disagreed with this statement, while the remaining 4.1% neither agreed nor disagreed. There is therefore significant agreement that there are too many food advertisements aimed at children, with $p < .001$

Respondents were asked if they thought there were *too many advertisements in children's television shows promoting foods with a high percentage of sugar, fat, or additives.* 45.6% of respondents were unsure how they felt about statement B5, while 24.2% strongly disagreed and a further 11.7% disagreed. On the opposite end of the scale, 26.2% agreed with the statement with 2.3% strongly agreeing. There is significant disagreement that there are too many advertisements in children's TV shows promoting foods with a high percentage of sugar, fat or additives with $p < .001$.

In response to statement B6, 87.3% of respondents agreed that they were *concerned about general food product advertising during times when children watch television.* A further 12% were neutral. Only 0.8% of those polled disagreed with the statements. Statistics indicate that there is significant agreement with the statement that respondents were concerned about food advertising during times when children watch TV, $p < .001$,

Responses to statement B7 showed that a sizable proportion of respondents (67.2%) agreed that they were *concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products during times when children watched television*, with an additional 25.4% strongly agreeing and 7.4% indicating that they were unsure. No respondents disagreed. There is therefore significant agreement with the above statement since $p < .001$.

In response to statement B8, 66.4% of respondents agreed that they were *concerned about the use of popular personalities or characters on children's television to promote unhealthy foods,* with an additional 28.0% of those polled strongly agreeing. A further 5.1% neither agreed nor disagreed, while 0.5% disagreed with the statement. Overall, there is significant agreement with the statement of concern over the use of popular personalities to promote unhealthy foods on children's TV, $p < .001$.

Responses to statement B9 indicated that 95.6% of respondents agreed that they were *concerned about food advertising on children's television that promoted free toys or gifts with purchase*. While 4.1% of those polled were unsure about the statement. Only 0.3% of those polled disagreed. There is therefore significant agreement with the concern over food advertising that uses free toys or gifts to promote purchases, as $p < .001$.

Finally, a high percentage of 58.0% of respondents agreed with statement B10 that they are *concerned about food advertising on children's television that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product,* with 38.4% strongly disagreeing. Another 2.8% said they were undecided. Another 0.8% disagreed with the statement.

Overall, there was significant disagreement with statements B1, B2 and B5, while significant disagreement was observed with the remainder of the statements, besides statement B3 which was found to be not significant.

An attempt was made to reduce these 10 items to a single item measuring opinions towards food advertising. However, this was not successful. Nevertheless, B1-B3 did group to form a reliable measure. This could be explained by their similarity due to them measuring general opinions on food advertising. They also seem to indicate that agreement implies acceptance of the advertising. A single variable was formed by

finding the average of the scores across the 3 items. It was titled GENOP. Reliability is measured using Cronbach's alpha. An alpha > .7 indicates a reliable measure. For this composite measure, the alpha was 0.929.

4.9 SECTION C – PERCEPTIONS ON THE INFLUENCE OF ADVERTISING ON EATING HABITS

Section C required respondents to rate their perceptions of the influence of advertising food on TV on children's eating habits. This was measured by means of a Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Statements were scored from a 1 (strongly disagree) through to a 5 (strongly agree). When the answers to all the statements were illustrated in a graphical form a visual presentation could be observed as to how the statements are perceived by the respondents. This can be viewed in Figure 4.9.

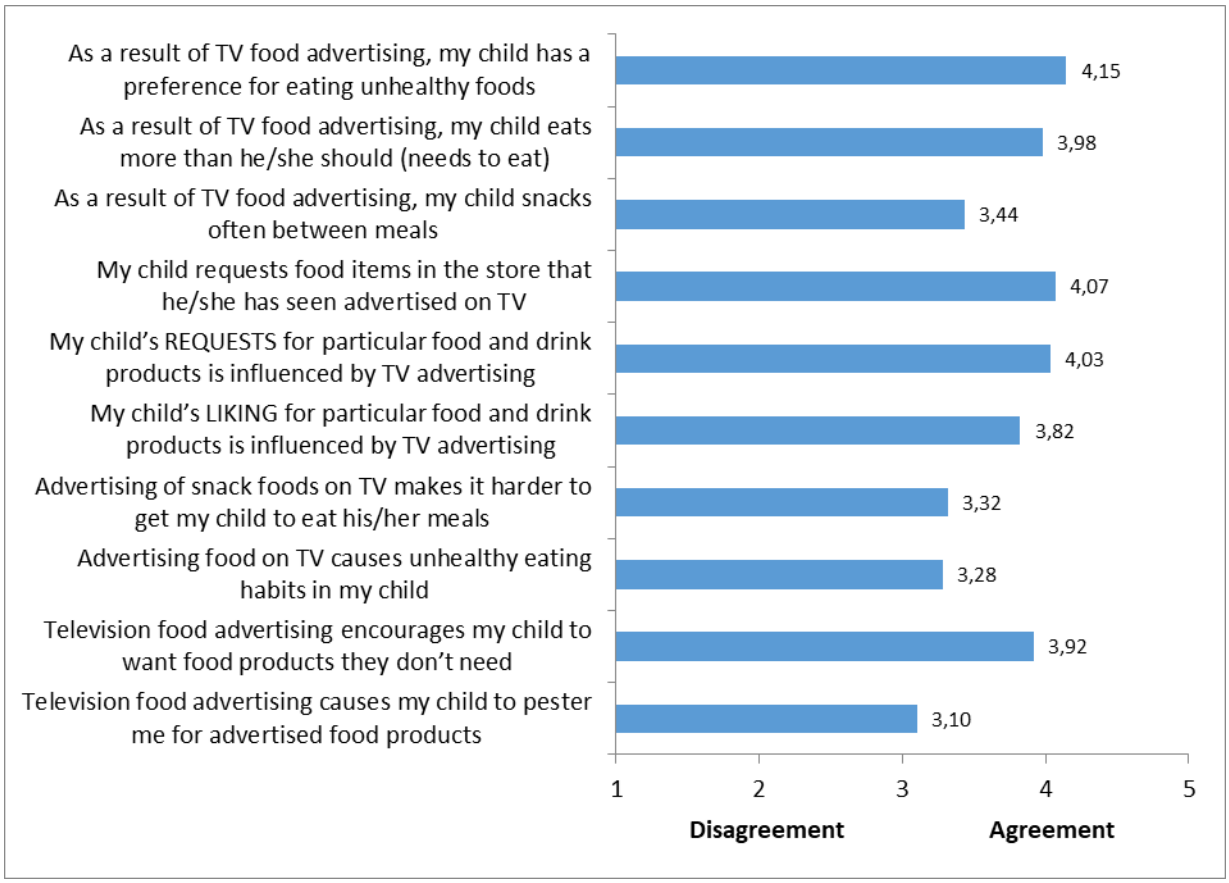

Figure 4.9: Perceptions of food advertising on eating habits

Results are interpreted as significant agreement if mean > 3, while significant disagreement is evident when mean < 3. Results relating to perceptions of the influence of advertising on eating habits were all measured by means of a one sample t-test to show how the mean score differs from the scalar value. All statements representing this variable were tested against a p-value of .001. Figures indicate statistics relating to responses that contribute towards the mean, the t-test results as well as p-values indicating significance. Significance is established at the 95% level. The results for these statements are illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Perceptions on the influence of advertising on children's eating habits

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)					Mean (SD)	p-value
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
C1 Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products	15 (3.8)	95 (24.2)	141 (35.9)	118 (30.0)	24 (6.1)	3.10 (.965)	.033
C2 Television food advertising encourages my child to want food products they don't need	0	7 (1.8)	61 (15.5)	283 (72.0)	42 (10.7)	3.92 (.572)	< .001*
C3 Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child	23 (5.9)	99 (25.2)	65 (16.5)	156 (39.7)	50 (12.7)	3.28 (1.147)	< .001*
C4 Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals	35 (8.9)	79 (20.1)	66 (16.8)	152 (38.7)	61 (15.5)	3.32 (1.211)	< .001*
C5 My child's LIKING for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	0	8 (2.0)	111 (28.2)	217 (56.2)	57 (14.5)	3.82 (.692)	< .001*
C6 My child's REQUESTS for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	1 (.3)	2 (.5)	37 (9.4)	297 (75.6)	56 (14.2)	4.03 (.529)	< .001*
C7 My child requests food items in the store that he/she has seen advertised on TV	0	3 (.8)	35 (8.9)	286 (72.8)	69 (17.6)	4.07 (.539)	< .001*
C8 As a result of TV food advertising, my child snacks often between meals	3 (.8)	113 (28.8)	37 (9.4)	190 (48.3)	50 (12.7)	3.44 (1.060)	< .001*
C9 As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat)	0	5 (1.3)	69 (17.6)	248 (63.1)	71 (18.1)	3.98 (.639)	< .001*
C10 As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods	3 (.8)	12 (3.1)	51 (13.0)	186 (47.3)	141 (35.9)	4.15 (.812)	< .001*

* Indicates significance at the 95% level

A total of 36.1% of respondents agreed with statement C1 that *TV food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products*, while 24.2% disagreed, 3.8% strongly disagreed, and 35.9% did not agree nor disagree with the statement. The results of this statement are not significant as $p > .00$

A total of 82.7% of respondents agreed with statement C2 that *Television food advertising encourages my child to want food products they don't need.* While 15.5% percent neither agreed nor disagreed, a further 1.8% percent disagreed with the statement. There is significant agreement that TV food advertising encourages children to want food products they don't need, $p < .001$.
39.7% of respondents agreed with statement C3 that *Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child*, while 12.7% strongly agreed and a further 16.5% were not sure about the statement. However, 25.2% disagreed and a further 5.9% strongly disagreed. There is therefore significant agreement that advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in children, $p < .001$.

With respect to statement C4, *Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals*, a total of 54.2% of respondents agreed, while 16.8% of neither agreed nor disagreed. A further 20.1% disagreed, and 8.9% strongly disagreed. Results indicate significant agreement with statement C4, $p < .001$

The responses to statement C5, *my child's LIKING for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising,* showed that a 56.2% of respondents agreed with the statement, with a further 14.5% strongly agreeing. While 28.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, a small 2.0% of respondents disagreed with the statement. Results indicate significant agreement that children's liking for food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising, $p < .001$.

In response to statement C6, *My child's requests for particular food and drink products are influenced by TV advertising*, 75.6% agreed with the statement and 14.2% strongly agreed. A further 9.4% neither agreed or disagreed, while 0.5% disagreed, and 0.3% strongly disagreed. Indications are that there is significant agreement that children's requests for food and drink products are influenced by TV, $p < .001$.

Results for statement C7, that *My child requests food items in the store that he/she has seen advertised on TV*, indicated that 72.8% of respondents agreed with the statements, while 17.6% strongly agreed. 8.9% neither agreed nor disagreed, and a further 0.8% disagreed. There is significant agreement with the statement that food items are requested in the store as a result of children being exposed to TV advertising for said products, $p < .001$.

48.3% of respondents agreed with statement C8, *as a result of TV food advertising, my child snacks often between meals,* while a further 12.7% strongly agreed. However, 28.8% of respondents disagreed, and 0.8% strongly disagreed A further 9.4% remained neutral and neither agreed nor disagreed. In conclusion, there is significant agreement that food advertising encourages snacking between meals, as $p < .001$.

Results for statement C9, *as a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat),* indicated that 63.1% of respondents agreed with the statement and18.1% strongly agreed. While 17.6% neither agreed nor disagreed and further 1.3% disagreed.

Finally, in response to statement C10, as *a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods,* revealed that 74.3% of respondents agreed with the statement, with 35.9% strongly agreeing and 13.0% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. A small percentage of further 3.1% disagreed and 0.8% strongly disagreed. These results indicated significant agreement that TV food advertising contributed towards a preference for unhealthy foods, $p < .001$.

Furthermore, this section was also measured with a single reliable measure for this construct is found that includes items 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10.

Alpha was 0.814. Call this INFL, other sections were not grouped well then, they were reported individually. Therefore, this indicated that there was a level of inconsistency of scoring by respondents. As such, the reliability test was used to measure reliability of responses of the items composing the questionnaire instrument and thus the

applicability of the instrument to be used in the context of improving parental perspective of TV food advertising aimed at children: A case of eThekwini region.

4.10 SECTION D – OPINIONS OF CURRENT REGULATIONS REGARDING THE PROMOTION OF FOOD TOWARDS CHILDREN

Section D invited respondents to rate their opinions on current regulations with respect to the promotion of food to children. Respondents were given the option of responding on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) through to strongly agree (5). The test results gained from this variable were analysed by means of a one sample t test. The responses describe various opinions towards current regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children. These are listed in Figure 4.10, along with a graphical representation of the means established for each statement.

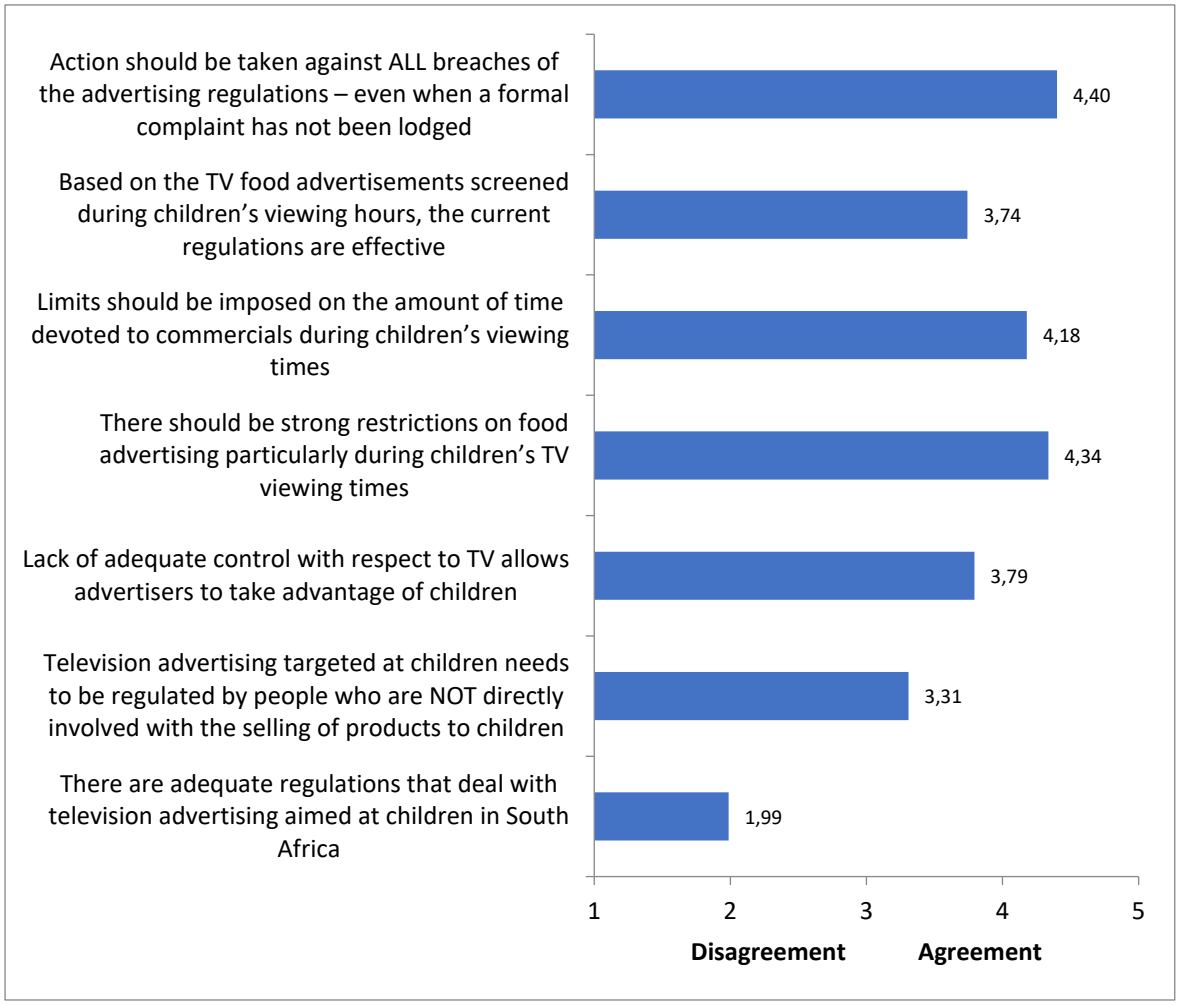

Figure 4.10: Opinions of current regulations on TV

The statements for current regulations on TV were analysed, frequency tables were created, and statements were tested against a p-value of.001. According to the responses in Table 4.4, the majority of statements were significant at the .000 level of significance. Significance is indicated at the 95% level. The test results of this composite are all significant at the .001 level of significance. The statistics in Table 4.4 show that all statements were significant at the .000 level of significance.

These responses described the opinions of different people regard the current regulations on TV advertising of food aimed at children. The statements are listed in Table 4.5. Results of the one sample t-test are also itemised in Table 4.5 where the significance is demonstrated for all statements with $p < .001$ in every case. In other words, certain responses are significantly more common than others in each case. The results for these statements are illustrated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Opinions of current regulations on TV

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)					Mean (SD)	p-value
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
D1 There are adequate regulations that deal with television advertising aimed at children in South Africa	110 (28.0)	204 (51.9)	55 (14.0)	19 (4.8)	4 (1.0)	(1.99) . 842	< .001*
D2 Television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children	34 (8.7)	82 (20.9)	31 (7.9)	219 (55.7)	26 (6.6)	(3.31) 1.135	< .001*
D3 Lack of adequate control with respect to TV allows advertisers to take advantage of children	1 (0.3)	7 (1.8)	115 (29.3)	218 (55.5)	51 (13.0)	(3.79) .690	< .001*
D4 There should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times	2 (0.5)	0	26 (6.6)	200 (50.9)	164 (41.7)	(4.34) .647	< .001*
D5 Limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times	1 (0.3)	6 (1.5)	34 (8.7)	232 (59.0)	119 (30.3)	(4.18) .666	< .001*
D6 Based on the TV food advertisements screened during children's viewing hours, the current regulations are effective	1 (0.3)	14 (3.6)	133 (33.8)	181 (46.1)	63 (16.0)	(3.74) .775	< .001*
D7 Action should be taken against ALL breaches of the advertising regulations – even when a formal complaint has not been lodged	4 (1.0)	11 (2.8)	11 (2.8)	164 (41.7)	202 (51.4)	(4.40) .767	< .001*

* Indicates significance at the 95% level

A total number of 79.9% of respondents disagreed with the statement D1 *that there are adequate regulations that deal with television advertising aimed at children in South Africa*. A further 4.8% agreed with the statement. It should be noted that 1.0% strongly agreed with the statement while 14.0% neither agreed nor disagreed. The results of this statement are significant as $p < .001$

In the second statement (D2), 55.7% of respondents agreed and 6.6% strongly agreed with the statement *that television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children*. However, 8.7% strongly disagreed and 20.9% disagreed while 7.9% neither agreed nor disagreed. The results of this statement were significant with $p < .001$.

Statement D3 - *a lack of adequate control with respect to TV allows advertisers to take advantage of children* had a low level of disagreement amounting to a total of 2.1%. Conversely, 55.5% agreed and13.0% strongly agreed. A further 29.3% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. Indications are that there is significant agreement that a *Lack of adequate control with respect to TV allows advertisers to take advantage of children*, $p < .001$.

A high proportion of 50.9% of respondents agreed with that statement in D4 that *There should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times*, while 41.7% strongly agreed with the statement. A further 0.5% strongly disagreed, while 6.6% neither agreed nor disagreed. There is significant agreement with the statement that there should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times, $p < .001$.

Total of 89.3% of respondents agreed with the statement in D5 *that limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times*. A further 0.3% of respondents strongly disagreed, while 1.5% disagreed. 8.7% neither agree nor disagreed.

46.1% of respondents agreed with statement D6 that *there should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times*, while 16.0% strongly agreed. A further 33.8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

A further 3.9% of respondents disagreed. Results indicate significant agreement that *there should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times,* $p < .001$.

Finally, the answers to statement D7 that *action should be taken against ALL breaches of the advertising regulations – even when a formal complaint has not been lodged,* showed that 51.4% strongly agreed with the statement, with another 41.7% agreeing. Only 3.8% of respondents disagreed with the statement and 2.8% neither agreed nor disagreed. The results indicated significant agreement that *action should be taken against ALL breaches of the advertising regulation*s, $p < .001$.

No single reliable measure was found with respect to these items and as such they should be seen as individual measures.

4.11 SECTION E – OPINIONS TOWARDS REGULATIONS REGARDING THE PROMOTION OF FOOD TO CHILDREN

A number of statements were directed to participants, to test their opinions towards suggested changes in regulations with respect to the promotion of food to children. For each statement the respondent was required to select from a scale of responses, ranging from strongly disagree (1) through to strongly agree (5). Means were established and a t-test was run to establish the significance of each statement. The means for each statement are illustrated in Figure 4.11.

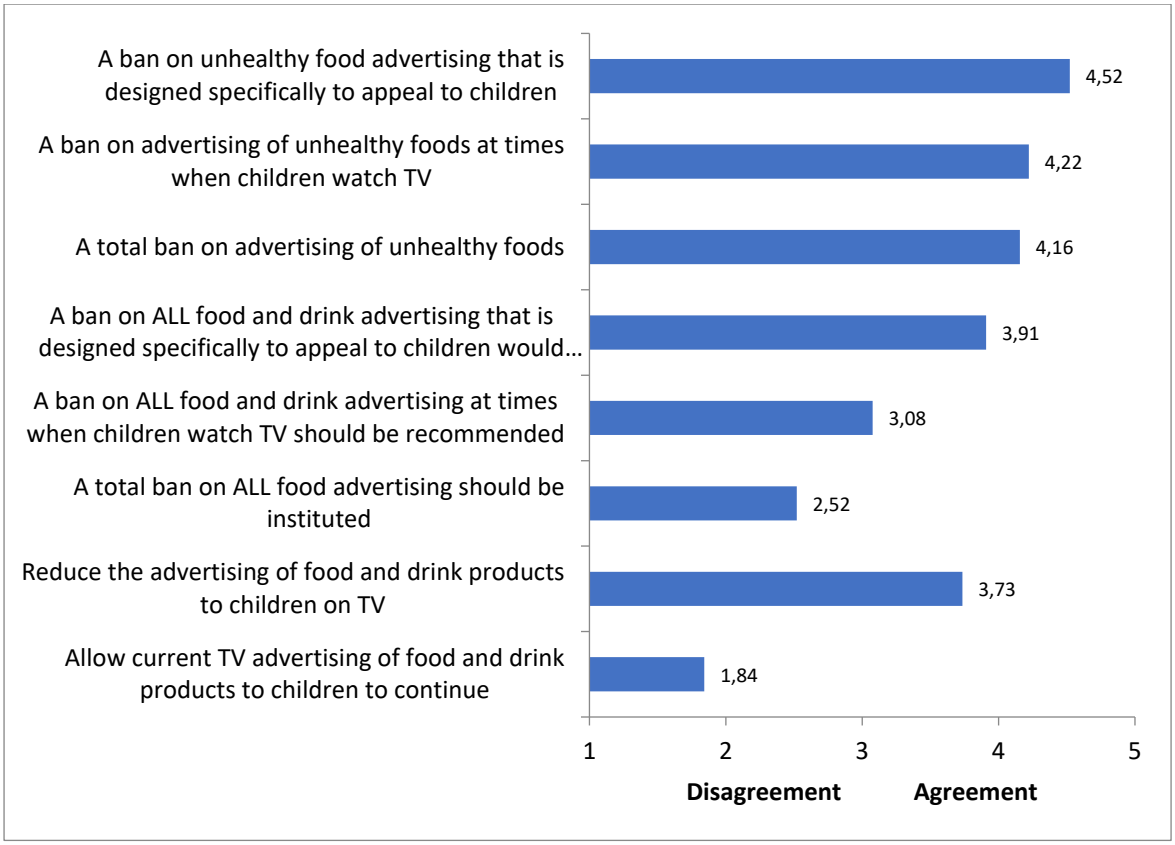

Figure 4.11: Changes to regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children

All items related to suggested changes in regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children were analysed and are presented in Table 4.7. Results related to suggested changes to regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children were all measured by means of a one sample t test to show how the mean score differs from the scalar value. A p-value of < .001, indicated significance at the 95% level was employed. The t-test results as well as p-values indicating significant agreement or disagreement for each statement are presented. All statements besides E4 were found to be significant with p< .00

Table 4.5: Respondents' suggestions for changes to regulations governing food promotion to children

Item	Responses as Frequency (%)					Mean (SD)	p-value
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		
E1 Allow current TV advertising of food and drink products to children to continue	132 (33.6)	213 (54.2)	27 (6.9)	17 (4.3)	3 (0.8)	1.84 (0.790)	< .001*
E2 Reduce the advertising of food and drink products to children on TV	34 (8.7)	82 (20.9)	31 (7.9)	219 (55.7)	34 (8.7)	3.73 (0.723)	< .001*
E3 A total ban on ALL food advertising should be instituted	62 (15.8)	166 (42.2)	70 (17.8)	86 (21.9)	8 (2.0)	2.52 (1.063)	< .001*
E4 A ban on ALL food and drink advertising at times when children watch TV should be recommended	42 (10.7)	44 (11.2)	156 (39.7)	142 (36.1)	8 (2.0)	3.08 (0.991)	.127
E5 A ban on ALL food and drink advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children would be appropriate	1 (0.3)	2 (0.5)	67 (17.0)	284 (72.3)	38 (9.7)	3.91 (0.551)	< .001*
E6 A total ban on advertising of unhealthy foods	1 (0.3)	2 (0.5)	19 (4.8)	283 (72.0)	87 (22.1)	4.16 (0.53)	< .001*
E7 A ban on advertising of unhealthy foods at times when children watch TV	1 (0.3)	0	6 (1.5)	289 (73.5)	96 (24.4)	4.22 (0.48)	< .001*
E8 A ban on unhealthy food advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children	1 (0.3)	0	4 (1.0)	175 (44.5)	211 (53.7)	4.52 (0.54)	< .001*

*Significant at the 95% confidence level

Statement E1 suggesting that the government *allows current TV advertising of food and drink products to children to continue,* met with 54.2% of respondents disagreeing with the statement and a further 33.6% strongly disagreeing. Only 5.1% agreed with the statement. 6.9% of respondents neither agree nor disagreed with the statement. There is therefore significant disagreement that *current TV advertising of food and drink products to children be continued as* $p < .001$.

A total of 64.4% of respondents agreed with statement E2 *that* there should be a *reduction of the advertising of food and drink products to children on TV.* A further 20.9% disagreed while 8.7% strongly disagreed. 7.9% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. There is therefore significant agreement with the statement to *reduce the advertising of food and drink products to children on TV*, $p < .001$.

The responses to statement E3 that *a total ban on ALL food advertising should be instituted,* show that 42.2% of respondents disagreed with the statement, and an

additional 15.8% strongly disagreed. A further 23.9% agreed. 17.8% neither agree nor disagree with the statement. There is significant disagreement with the statement that there should be a *total ban on ALL food advertising should be instituted,* $p < .001$.

With respect to statement E4 that *a ban on ALL food and drink advertising at times when children watch TV should be recommended,* shown that a 38.1% of respondents agreed with the statement. However, a further 11.2% disagreed and 10.7% strongly disagreed. A further 39.7% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The results of this statement are not significant as $p (.127) > .001$.

82% of respondents agreed with the statement E5 that *a ban on ALL food and drink advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children would be appropriate*. 0.5% disagreed, 0.3% strongly disagreed. A further 17.0% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Results indicate significant agreement with the suggestion that a *ban on ALL food and drink advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children* would be appropriate, $p < .001$.

In response to statement E6, suggesting *a total ban on the advertising of unhealthy foods,* shown a 72.0% agreement with this statement, while 22.1% strongly agreed. A mere 0.8% disagreed and 4.8% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Indications are therefore that there is significant agreement with the statement that that there should be *a total ban on the advertising of unhealthy foods*, $p < .001$.

A total of 97.9% of respondents agreed with the statement E7 *a ban on advertising of unhealthy foods at times when children watch TV,* with only 0.3% strongly disagreeing. 1.5% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. In conclusion, there is significant agreement that a there should be a *ban on the advertising of unhealthy foods at times when children watch TV*, $p < .001$.

Lastly, in response to statement E8, stating that there should be *a ban on unhealthy food advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children,* 53.7% strongly agreed with the statement and 44.5% agreed, amounting to a total of 98.2%. Only 0.3% strongly disagreed and 1.0% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

These results indicated significant agreement that *a ban on unhealthy food advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children*, $p < .001$.

4.12 DIFFERENCES ACCORDING TO DEMOGRAPHIC MAKEUP OF RESPONDENTS

In order to assess how likely, it is that various groups differ one from the other, a one-way analysis of variance (commonly known as ANOVA) was conducted. This analyses the differences within and between groups of data with respect to their means scores from one dependent variable (Struwig and Stead 2020; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2019). These differences are represented by the F ratio. The higher the F ratio in an ANOVA, the higher the variation between sample means relative to the variation within the samples, and the lower the corresponding p-value (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2019).

In the case of this study, the ANOVA test was used to interpret the results of each item across demographics. When the conditions for ANOVA were not met, a Welch's test was conducted. Specific differences were also found with additional ad hoc analysis such as the Games-Howell post hoc test and the Tukey's post hoc test. Each item was reported individually because of the different tests used for each construct to indicate the significant difference of each item across demographics. Only items that demonstrated significant differences will be reported.

4.12.1 Significant differences according to age

The ANOVA test was used to interpret the results of each item according to the respondents' age groups. Only one statement for Section B was found to display significant differences between age groups, Welch $(2; 51.274) = 6.510$, $p < .003$). This is illustrated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Welch test across age groups for Section B

Statement	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig
B5 There are too many advertisements that promote food containing a high percentage of sugar/ fat/ additives in TV programmes aimed at children	6.510	2	51.274	.003

*significant at p<.01

Table 4.7 shows each item reported individually across age groups. Tests were conducted according to the sections in the questionnaire.

There is a significant difference in response to B5 (*There are too many advertisements that promote food containing a high percentage of sugar/ fat/ additives in TV programmes aimed at children*) across age groups, Welch (2; 51.274) = 6.510, p = .003. Results from Games-Howell post hoc analysis indicates the over 40 age group agree significantly more with this sentiment than the 18-29 age group (0.14) and the 30-40 age group (.004).

In the case of Section C, Table 4.7 begins by indicating the results of the ANOVA test with respect to age groups, showing that there were significant differences between age groups for a number of items. The means for each age group are available in the Appendices (Appendix G, Table G3).

Table 4.7: ANOVA test across age groups for Section C

Items	Age	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*Sig*
C1 Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products	Between Groups	7.445	2	3.723	4.053	.018
	Within Groups	357.266	389	.918		
	Total	364.712	391			
C3 Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child	Between Groups	12.728	2	6.364	5.951	.008
	Within Groups	499.964	389	1.285		
	Total	512.776	391			
C4 Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals	Between Groups	11.370	2	5.685	3.925	.021
	Within Groups	563.405	389	1.448		
	Total	574.776	391			
C9 As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat)	Between Groups	2.833	2	1.417	3.510	.031
	Within Groups	157.003	389	.404		
	Total	159.837	391			
C10 As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods	Between Groups	4.686	2	2.343	3.589	.028
	Within Groups	253.314	389	.651		
	Total	258.00	391			

*significant at p<0.05

Further analysis indicates the following:
There is a significant difference in response to C1 (*Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products*) across age groups, F (2; 389) = 4.053, p = .018. Results from the Tukey's post hoc analysis indicate that the over 40 age group agree significantly more with this sentiment than the 30-40 age group (0.21).

There is a significant difference in response to C3 (*Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child*) across age groups, F (2; 389) = 4.951, p = .008. Results from the Tukey's post hoc analysis indicate that the 30-40 age group agree significantly more with this sentiment than the over 40 age group (0.13).

There is significant difference in respect to C4 (*Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals*) across age groups, F (2; 389) = 3.925, p = .021. Results from the Tukey's post hoc analysis indicate that the 30-40 age group agree significantly more with this sentiment than the over 40 age group (.044).

There is significant difference in response to C9 (*As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat*) across age groups, F (2; 389) = 3.510, p = .031. Results from the Tukey's post hoc analysis indicate that the 30-40 age groups agreed significantly more than the over 40 age group (.037).

There is significant difference in response to C10 (*As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods*) across age groups, F (2; 389) = 3.589, p = .028. Results from the Tukey's post hoc analysis indicate that the 18-29 age group agree significantly more with this sentiment than the over 40 age group (.043), and again the analysis reveal that 30-40 age groups agree significantly more than the over 40 age group (.021).

4.12.2 Significant differences according to gender

No significant differences were found according to gender.

4.12.3 Significant differences according to qualification

The ANOVA test was then applied to the demographic detail of respondents' qualification levels.

For this particular analysis it was necessary to combine some of the academic groups. Hence, anything lower than matric was placed in a 'Less than Matric' category. The only category where significant differences were noted according to qualification was in Section D.

As shown in Table 4.8, significant difference was only found in response to D5 (*Limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times*) across qualification groups, F (3; 388) = 2.913, p = .034. Results from the Tukey's test indicate that those with matric agree significantly more than those with 'Less than Matric' did (.023).

Table 4.8: ANOVA test across qualification groups in Section D

Items	Age	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
D5 Limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times	Between Groups	3.822	3	1.274	2.913	.034
	Within Groups	169.678	388	.437		
	Total	169.678	391			

*Significant at p < 0.05

4.12.4 Significant differences according to marital status

ANOVA was applied to the marital status of respondents. For this particular analysis the only widowed respondent was placed in the divorced or separated group. This was seen as a reasonable thing to do given that they were also living alone with their children.

As indicated in Table 4.9, the results of the ANOVA test with respect to marital status showed that there were significant differences between marital statuses for respondents according to a number of items. The means for marital status are available in the Appendices.

Table 4.9: ANOVA test across marital status

Items	Age	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
B4 There are too many food advertisements in TV programmes directed at children	Between Groups	2.567	2	1.283	4.685	.010
	Within Groups	106.828	390	.274		
	Total	109.394	392			
B10 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product	Between Groups	2.496	2	1.248	3.869	.022
	Within Groups	125.814	390	.323		
	Total	128.310	392			

*Significant at p<0.05

Section B

ANOVA and Welches tests were run for Section B. The Welches test was run when conditions for ANOVA were not met. Further tests were run to establish where the differences lay. For the ANOVA test, a Tukey's test was conducted to establish where the differences lay. Results are interpreted as follows:

There was significance difference in response to B4 *(There are too many food advertisements in TV programmes directed at children*) across marital status, F (2; 390) = 4.685, p = .010. Results from the Tukey's test indicate that the married group agrees significantly more with the statement than the single group does (.009).

There was significance difference in response to B10 (*I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product*) across marital status groups, F (2; 390) = 3.869, p = .022. Results from Tukey's test indicate that the divorced group agrees significantly more with the statement than the married group (.036).

A Welch test was conducted when conditions for ANOVA were not met. A Games-Howell post hoc analysis was conducted to establish where the difference lay. The result of this test is shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Welch test across marital status group

		Statistic	df1	df2	Sig
B7 I am concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products at times when children watch TV	Welch	3.435	2	52.069	.040

*significant at p<.05

According to Table 4.10, there is a significant difference in response to B7 (*I am concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products at times when children watch TV*) across marital status groups, Welch (2; 52.069) = 3.435, p =.040). Results from Games-Howell post hoc analysis indicated that the married group agrees significantly more with this sentiment than the divorced group (.036).

Section D

ANOVA tests were then applied to Section D statements to establish if there were any significant differences in responses between different marital status groups (see Table 4.11). A Tukey's test was also applied to establish where the differences lay.

Table 4.11: ANOVA test across marital status groups in Section D

Items	Age	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
D2 Television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children	Between Groups	7.787	2	3.893	3.054	.048
	Within Groups	495.864	389	1.275		

*significant at p<.05

Results indicated that there were significant differences in response to D2 (*Television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children*) across the marital status groups F (2; 3.054) = 3.839, p = .048. The Tukey's test indicated that the singles group agreed significantly more with the statement than the divorced group (.040) did. The analysis further revealed that the married group agreed significantly more than the divorced group did (.0497).

4.12.5 Composite groups

An attempt was made to reduce statements for the various sections (as in B, C, D and E), to single measures for each. However, this was not entirely successful. Nevertheless, the following can be reported.

Section B

With respect to Section B, only statements B1 – B3 could be part of a single reliable measure (see Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: Reliability measurement of items in Section B

Category	Statement no	Statement	CA
GENOP	B1	Food advertisements on children's TV provides accurate information regarding the nutritional quality of the product being advertised	0.929
	B2	Food advertisements on children's TV encourages discussion on products within our family	
	B3	It is ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13	

The assumption is that they are more similar than the other statements and identify with general opinions on food advertising. Therefore, agreement with these three statements appear to indicate a general acceptance of advertising of food items. The remainder of the items are not as specific with regards to advertising.

Therefore, the single variable for the three items was termed GENOP (for general opinions). These three items were found to be reliable according to Cronbach's Alpha (CA) where a reliable measure would be one that is > 0.7. CA for these three items is 0.929. The remaining items for this section cannot be successfully grouped.

Section C

In terms of Section C, a single reliable measure was found which included items 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10 (see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Reliability measurement of items in Section C

Category	Statement no	Statement	CA
INFL	C3	Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child	0.814
	C4	Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals	
	C5	My child's LIKING for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	
	C8	As a result of TV food advertising, my child snacks often between meals	
	C9	As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat)	
	C10	As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods	

The Cronbach Alpha for this group of items was 0.814 which is > 0.7 and hence reliable.

Taking these two composite groups into account with respect to the demographic groups, the following results were noted. The only category where significant measures were found according to the Welch test was in the age category. A Games-Howell post hoc test was used to measure difference with respect to age group (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14: Welch test across age group from two composite measures

		Statistic	df1	df2	Sig
GENOP	Welch	13.005	2	43.640	.000
INFL	Welch	5.189	2	40.263	.010

*significant at p<.05

Significant differences were established according to the GENOP composite measure between respondents according to age groups. The Games-Howell post hoc test indicated that the 'over 40' age group agreed significantly more than the 18-29 age group (.001), as well as the 30-40 age group (.001).

There was also a significant difference with the INFL composite measure between respondents' age groups, with the results from the Games-Howell post hoc test indicating that the 30-40 age group agreed significantly more with the statements than the 40-age group (.024).

4.13 CONCLUSION

The chapter began with a presentation of the statistical analysis of the data collected. It also presented the quantitative analysis methods used in the study to achieve descriptive statistics and other related statistics used in the study. The findings were presented in the form of pie charts, bar graphs, and tables, which aided in providing a detailed analysis of the study. It began with descriptive statistics identifying the demographics of respondents.

The second section sought to ascertain parents' perceptions of food promotions on TV. This was done to determine whether TV food advertising had any effect on advertising food to children, as well as parent perceptions. This was done using frequency, and the responses were recorded. All statements in this section were tested for significance at the 95% level using responses as frequency. The p value of 00.1 was used as the level of significance.

Finally, in this section, the ANOVA test was performed on each item across demographics to determine significance. Welch or Tukey's tests were also used when certain conditions were not met.

A discussion of the results obtained in this chapter follows in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter contained a presentation of the research results. This chapter provides a discussion of the previous chapter's findings. These findings are discussed in relation to the Chapter 4 findings.

The study objectives are revisited and discussed, highlighting how they connect with the literature and the current study's findings. Finally, the outcomes of the discussion are used to draw conclusions.

The discussion of the findings is organised according to the study's objectives.

5.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

TV food advertising directed at children has been reported in South Africa for the past decade. The issue of food promotion to children has been studied in many countries, but it remains a contentious topic in the public sphere (Prowse 2017: 274; Elías *et al*. 2021: 3588; Dikmen *et al.* 2022: 1). Previous research confirms reports a deluge of food advertising aimed at children in both developing and developed countries, especially on TV (Olafsdottir and Berg 2017: 2921; Brinson and Holiday 2021: 219: 217; Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22). Researchers from various countries have found that children exhibit product recall and can talk about what they have seen on TV advertising (Soni and Vohra 2016; 142; Wang and Lobstein 2018; Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8). However, parental responsibility alone cannot be expected to overcome exposure to food advertising on TV directed at children without the assistance of the government and relevant stakeholders (Vohra and Soni 2016: 34; Nesraddine *et al.* 2019; Boyland *et al*. 2021: 22).

5.3 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The study's main aim was to gain an understanding of parental perspectives on TV food advertising aimed at children. This was a case study based specifically on the eThekwini region. In order to achieve this aim, the following objective and sub-objectives were formulated.

Main objective:
To establish parental perspectives towards the promotion of food aimed at children on television in the eThekwini region.

Sub-objective 1:
To determine parents' opinions of food promotion on television directed towards children

Sub-objective 2:
To examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on television influences children's eating habits and food preferences;

Sub-objective 3:
To establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children; and

Sub-objective 4:
To establish whether opinions differ according to respondents' demographic make-up.

5.4 SUMMARY OF METHODS USED

A description of the analysis of the results in outlined in Chapter 4. In order to interrogate the meaning of this, a discussion of these results is outlined in this chapter, with respect to each objective. The main objective was to establish parental perspectives towards the promotion of food aimed at children on television in the eThekwini region. The following sub-objectives were interrogated in order to achieve this objective.

5.5 SUB-OBJECTIVE 1

This sub-objective sought to determine parents' opinions of food promotion on TV directed towards children. The literature review in Chapter 2 investigated the issue and provided a thorough understanding of food promotion on TV directed at children and other forms of advertising, along with past studies results with respect to parental opinions in other contexts and countries.

5.5.1 Previous research relating to sub-objective 1

The literature review established a number of findings from research conducted elsewhere in the world. Although there were a few studies in other countries for TV advertising of food aimed at children, the majority of the research was conducted in first world countries, particularly European countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, Belgium, Australia, Sweden, and Spain, as well as China and India (Becker *et al.* 2019: 25).

For many decades, food advertising to children has received regular attention, but it remains a contentious issue, with little favourable press coverage (Velasquez *et al.* 2021: 706; Soni and Vohra 2016: 451; Velazquez *et al.* 2018: 2). Nonetheless, marketers continue to use television as one of the most common promotional tools to advertise children's products (Choi *et al.* 2022: 10). As a result, many children are subjected to TV commercials on a daily basis. (Boyland *et al*. 2015: 238; Choi *et al*. 2022: 10; Boyland *et al.* 2021: 22).

Previous research has shown that parents play an important role in raising children and providing them with knowledge and experience through parent-child communication (Soni and Vohra 2016: 179). Parents were concerned about child-targeted advertising, believing that it is influential and yet often falling outside of the realms of parental control (Backholer *et al.* 2021: 131). A study conducted in China directed at parents of children aged between 6 and 13 years found that Chinese parents had a negative attitude towards TV advertising in general and children's advertising in particular (Chang *et al.* 2018: 70; Esmaeilpour *et al.* 2018: 476). Negative perceptions were primarily attributed to advertising being perceived as deceptive and annoying (Kanter *et al.* 2019: 129). This is despite the Chinese

government implementing policies to reduce the marketing of unhealthy food directed towards children (Chang *et al.* 2018: 70; Choi *et al*. 2022: 10).

To a large extent, advertising directed towards children has caused parental dissatisfaction with the promotion of unhealthy foods on children's' TV programmes (Wang *et al.* 2018: 11), sparking heated political and public debate around the world (Silva et al. 2015: 47; Pace 2016; Moschis 2017: 1384).

5.5.2 Current findings relating to sub-objective 1

In this study, 94.1% of respondents agreed with the statement that there were too many food advertisements linked to TV shows aimed at children, while 58% agreed with the statement that they were concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promoted ONLY the healthy aspects of the product, while the remaining 42% disagreed.

Further results revealed that 87.3% of respondents were concerned about general food product advertising during times when children watched TV, while 92.6% were concerned about the advertising of unhealthy food products during times when children watched TV. Furthermore, 94.4% were concerned about the use of popular personalities or characters promoting food on children's TV.

Only 47.1% of respondents disagreed that it is ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13, while 93.1% of respondents disagreed that food advertisements on children's TV encourage product discussion within their family, and 54% of respondents disagreed that food advertisements on children's TV encourage product discussion within the family.

5.5.3 Conclusion – sub-objective 1

This study indicated significant agreement with most of the statements, particularly in Sections B and C of the questionnaire. This research showed the discontent of parents in the eThekwini region with TV food advertisements for children. In general, respondents had negative attitudes and opinions towards TV food advertising that was

aimed at children, with many of the responses to questions about promoting food to children and the majority of respondents showing significant agreement. These results concurred with those achieved in previous studies conducted elsewhere in the world revealing that TV food advertising aimed at children was problematic for parents. Overall, the findings revealed that there is a negative attitude towards TV food advertising aimed at children, as well as a negative perception of all food promotions involving the promotion of food products to children.

5.6 SUB-OBJECTIVE 2

Sub-objective two set out to examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on television influences children's eating habits and food preferences.

The findings of this study revealed that children prefer specific food items that they see advertised while watching their programmes on TV. This will then have an indirect influence on purchasing decisions, as well as produce 'pester power' (Driessen *et al.* 2022: 3; Sahoo *et al.* 2015: 187). The results of this study provide further evidence to prove that such products are retained in children's minds and are easily recalled by children who have seen those brands advertised on TV.

5.6.1 Previous research relating to sub-objective 2

This section describes the research identified in the literature review on parents' perceptions of how food promotion on TV influences children's eating habits and food preferences.

Parents play an important role in raising children and providing them with knowledge and experience through parent-child communication (Esmaeilpour *et al.* 2018: 476; Soni and Vohra 2016: 178). Parents are concerned about child-targeted advertising, according to Soni and Vohra (2016: 180), because they believe it is influential and beyond parental control. To a large extent, advertising directed at children has resulted in dissatisfaction among parents and advertisers regarding the promotion of unhealthy food on children's television programs (Wang *et al*. 2018: 4; Choi *et al.* 2022: 10),

sparking heated political and public debate (Kanter *et al.* 2019: 131; Pace 2016; Moschis 2017: 1384).

However, only a few studies appear to have been conducted to gain a better understanding of parental attitudes toward food advertisements on television aimed at young consumers (Backholer *et al.* 2021: 131; Boyland *et al.* 2021: 22). Esmaeilpour *et al.* (2018: 476) investigated how children's understanding and response to advertisements is influenced by television advertising. Several previous studies found that parents desired to be informed about the contents of food products advertised on children's television channels. They also expressed concern about the potential for unhealthy food choices as a result of these advertisements, as well as the accompanying nagging (Dasgupta and Nandhi 2016: 32; Kanter *et al.* 2019: 129).

Soni and Vohra (2016: 178), conducted research to learn about the needs of children and the impact of TV food on children in India. The study discovered that young children have an ability to choose what they want, specifically the cognitive ability to notice product brands and information about the products, as well as visual memory and product-related conversations with friends. This study focused on children's behaviour distinct from the parental perspective of TV food advertising to children.
Moschis (2017: 1384) discovered that advertising set strategies for children based on dimensions of food pleasure and fun. Therefore, it is apparent that there is a link between the consumption of food with the concept of pleasure and fun that is conveyed to children.

5.6.2 Current Findings relating to sub-objective 2

In response to the statements that were connected to this sub-objective, a number of significant findings were made. Firstly, 83% of respondents agreed with the statement that TV food advertising encouraged their children to want food products that they did not need. Furthermore, more than half of the residents (52%) agreed that the advertising of food products on TV resulted in the promotion of unhealthy eating habits with respect to their children.

Furthermore, 54% of respondents agreed that the advertising of snack food on TV made it difficult to get their children to eat their meals, while 56% of respondents agreed that their children's preference for specific food and drink products was influenced by TV advertising.

There was overwhelming agreement from 90% of respondents that their children's requests for specific food and drink products were influenced by TV advertising, with a further 73% agreeing that their children were more likely to request food items in the store that they had viewed on TV.

A further 61% of respondents agreed that their children snacked more frequently between meals as a result of TV food advertising.

Finally, 81% of respondents agreed with the statement that their children ate more than they should as a result of TV food advertising, while 74% agreed TV food advertising resulted in their children preferring to eat unhealthy food.

Out of ten statements, one showed a significant agreement: *my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods as a result of TV food advertising*. According to the findings, 74.3% of respondents agreed with the statement. Further results revealed significant agreement with the preceding statement, $p < .001$.

5.6.3 Conclusion – sub-objective 2

It was fascinating to see how many of the above results mirrored those of other countries around the world. Previous findings concurred with the current findings. Most parents appear to be more responsive to TV food advertising aimed at children, with those with small children being especially responsive. One possible explanation is that when children watch TV, their parents might be preoccupied with other things. Parents of young children often have a lack of time, and so are happy to use TV as a distraction for children (Bogart, Castro and Cohen 2019).

5.7 SUB-OBJECTIVE 3

This objective sought to establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children. According to the findings attached to this sub-objective in South Africa, the effect of promoting food to children has been regulated since 2007, but the problem of childhood obesity has not gone away. with Wicks *et al*. (2017) reporting that the rate of childhood obesity in South Africa has increased from 10.6% to 18.2% over the last decade.

5.7.1 Previous research on sub-objective 3

Correa *et al*. (2019: 2) emphasized the importance of public health promotion in terms of food advertising to children as soon as possible. According to the WHO report (2016), the environment children grew up in, which includes food advertising as well as policies that support the marketing of healthy food to children, influences parents' attitudes toward advertising food to children and eating behaviour. According to the report, parents are willing to participate in the development of policy rules to reduce junk food advertising to children and encourage companies to only advertise healthy food to children (Harris *et al*. 2017: 211; Mehta and Bhardwaj 2021: 8; Backholer *et al*. 2021: 20). Correa *et al.* (2019: 8) proposed that public health bodies put in place regulations regarding food advertising to children as soon as possible.

In South Africa, advertising has been regulated through policies related to TV food advertising aimed at children. It has been stipulated in regulations and policies regarding restricting food advertising to children that advertising directed at children must be fair and comply with the Advertising Standard of Authority (ASA) (Mills 2016). Although food promotion to children in South Africa has been regulated since 2007, the problem of childhood obesity has not gone away, according to Mbalati (2019), the rate of childhood obesity in South Africa has increased from 10.6% to 18.2% over the last decade. The South African Department of Health has mandated that all food advertised to children be healthy and that product health claims be accurate. They have also asked for the publication of draft regulations to limit junk food advertising to adolescents.

According to research, although parents accept responsibility for guiding their children's' food choices (Elas et al. 2021: 3588; Wiegand and Reinarts 2019: 25). They may feel undermined or disempowered as a result of unhealthy food marketing (Driessen et al. 2022: 3; Wheeler 2019: 122; Dikmen et al. 2022: 1), and they may advocate for stricter regulatory policies to support them. (Loosea et al. 2021; Driessen et al 2022: 2; Dikmen et al. 2022:1). In studies conducted in Australia, the United States, Pakistan, India, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Indonesia, parents consistently expressed concern about their children's exposure to unhealthy food marketing (Khan 2022: 372; Yarimoglu et al. 2018: 35; von Nordheim et al. 2022: 169; Baird et al. 2017: 2-12). However, available data, as well as the scope and nature of these perceptions and beliefs towards food marketing, differs across media and settings.

The WHO (2016), set of recommendations suggested that all state organisation establish policies as part of the policy regulation framework which will ensure that regulations are monitored and enforced with respect to those who do not follow the rules. The impact of food advertising to children in South Africa has been regulated since 2007, but the problem of childhood obesity persists. Mbalati (2019) report that the rate of childhood obesity in South Africa has risen from 10.6% to 18.2% in the last decade. As a result, policy regulations must be followed not only by traditional forms of advertising, but also by all private companies in the South Africa and around the world.

5.7.2 Current findings relating to sub-objective 3

According to the findings of this study, a significant number of respondents disagreed with the statement that there were adequate regulations in South Africa dealing with TV advertising aimed at children. The previous research yielded similar results on the issue of regulations.

There was widespread significant agreement from respondents that children's TV advertising should be regulated by people who are not directly involved in the sale of products to children. This concurred with previous research which demonstrated the significance of regulatory policies that are specifically intended to benefit children.

According to the findings of this study, regulations regarding product advertising to children should not be made by people who are directly involved with promotion; instead, other parties in the advertising space should be consulted.

A large majority of respondents agreed that food advertising should be strictly limited, particularly during children's TV viewing times. According to the study's findings, young children should be protected from food advertising to children. The results of the preceding statement were significant.

Most parents are willing to take an active role in ending this practice, and they see TV food advertising directed towards their children as a deceptive marketing practice that is potentially harmful.

A total of 89.3% of respondents agreed that commercial time during children's viewing times should be limited. According to the findings, young parents were eager to support limitations. Furthermore, this study concluded that rules governing children's viewing times should be put in place. Finally, the findings revealed unethical advertising practices in food advertising, particularly that directed at children.

46.1% of respondents agreed with the statement that food advertising should be severely limited, especially during children's TV viewing times. The findings indicate that the above statement is widely accepted. As a result, the findings in this section were $p < .001$ significant. Respondents to the statement agreed that strict restrictions, particularly during children's TV viewing times, should be implemented.

Finally, 93.1% of respondents agreed that all violations of advertising regulations should be prosecuted, even if no formal complaint has been filed. The results revealed a significant agreement with, $p < .001$. As a result, the findings of the study revealed a significant agreement in response to the preceding statement.

5.7.3 Conclusion – sub-objective 3

This information can help to do good practice in advertising, particularly when directed at children. Involving parents in decision making, for example, will be beneficial,

especially for young parents who understand the market better than children. Parents are more likely to support regulations governing children's food advertising on TV and children's health. To be trusted in advertising to children, anyone promoting food to young children should take cognisance of advertising regulations and strive to be transparent in their public advertising.

5.8 SUB-OBJECTIVE 4

This sub-objective sought to determine whether opinions differed based on the demographics of respondents. The study examined five demographic factors: age, gender, education, marital status, and race. There were no significant differences across gender, according to the findings attached to this sub-objective.

5.8.1 Previous research on sub-objective 4

Although there was a wealth of information on the other three objectives, previous research revealed less with respect to demographics of study participants and their perceptions with respect to the advertising of food products to children. This chapter describes the research identified in the literature review on parental perceptions towards TV food advertising aimed at children, in terms of the demographic makeup of respondents.

Previous research had examined a number of aspects of demographics. Khaniwale (2015) stated that personal characteristics such as occupation, socioeconomic status, level of education, gender, age, family composition and marital status had a direct influence on perceptions towards child directed advertising of food on TV. According to Fleming-Milici and Harris (2018), females were more concerned about child-targeted advertising than males were.

5.8.2 Current findings relating to sub-objective 4

A number of significant findings were made with reference to sociodemographic variables in this current study.

5.8.2.1 Age

Several tests conducted in the previous chapter revealed that the 30-40 age group agreed significantly with a number of statements in comparison with the over 40 age group. The statements that were more relevant to the 30-40 age-group were the following:

- Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products.
- Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child.
- Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals.
- As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat) across age groups.

Finally, the 18-29 year age group and the 30-40 year age group (in comparison with the over 40 age group) felt more strongly about the statement that TV food advertising resulted in their child preferring unhealthy foods. The over 40 age group rarely have small children compared to the 18-29 group who are still parenting young children as new mothers and fathers, that could be a possible explanation for this situation.

5.8.2.2 Education

With regards to the demographics of qualification, it was found that only one statement was of significance. This refers to the statement that “limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children’s viewing times”. Statistics indicated that those with matric (which included all educational levels above matric), were more inclined to agree with this than those who did not. An assumption would be that the more educated individuals are, the more likely they would be to consider the issue of their children being exposed to excessive TV.

5.8.2.3 Marital status

A number of items indicated differences in perception according to their marital status. Firstly, the married group was more inclined to agree with the statement that there were “too many food advertisements in TV programs directed at children” as well as a

“concern that food advertising on children’s TV only promoted the healthy aspects of the product”. Further tests revealed that the married group agreed more strongly than the divorced group with the statement that “they were concerned about the advertising of unhealthy food products at times when children watch TV” as well as the statement that “advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are not involved with the selling of products to children”.

5.8.2.4 Gender

It was found that there were no significant differences involving gender.

5.8.3 Conclusion – sub-objective 4

This study established a link between demographic variables such as age, marital status, race, gender, and education and the evaluation of TV advertising to children. It was interesting to note that many of the current results were similar to those from other studies conducted around the world. Areas in agreement with previous findings include the discovery that people between the ages of 30 and 40 was not studied very often before this group were more concerned about TV food advertising aimed at children. Furthermore, there is significant agreement that those who are not married (single) were highly concerned about the issue of advertising, and that 30 to 40 group are more qualified respondents than other group on this study had responded to the issue of food advertising to children than those with a lower education matric and less than matric.

These findings revealed that single, unmarried people appear to be more concerned about TV food advertising aimed at children. One possible explanation is that because most are young and educated, they can easily identify the problem. This could also be influenced by the fact that young parents are working, have less time to supervise their children's TV viewing habits and would therefore have additional concerns about what they might be exposed to.

This has implications for reforms with regards to TV food advertising to children who lack the knowledge to make an informed decision.

5.9 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the results outlined in Chapter 4 in terms of the objectives and the literature reviewed. This study found that parents were dissatisfied about the advertising of unhealthy food advertise to the children. These findings can be helpful to the following parties: parents, the government, marketers and academics as well as food manufacturers. Finally, this research has aided in identifying parents' opinions and their perspectives on the policy regulations imposed on marketers. Thus, not only advertisers, but also food advertisers and parents of young children, could benefit from this information.

A conclusion and recommendations arising from this study follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The study's overall objective was to gain an understanding of parental perceptions of TV food advertising aimed at children: a case of the eThekwini region. This goal was divided into four sub-objectives. Sub-objective 1 was to determine parents' opinions of food promotion on TV directed towards children. Sub-objective 2 was to examine parents' perceptions of how food promotion on TV influences children's eating habits and food preferences. Sub-objective 3 was to establish parent's opinions of regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children. Sub-objective 4 was to establish whether opinions differ according to respondents' demographic make-up.

This chapter begins by discussing the conclusions reached in Chapter 5. The research implications are discussed next, including the implications for marketers, governments, parents, food manufacturers, and academics. This is followed by any constraints that may have had an impact on the results. Finally, suggestions for future research are made.

6.2 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

This study revealed significant agreement with regard to most of the statements that were seeking to address the objectives.

Most parents were concerned about TV food advertising aimed at children, particularly when aimed at small children. Others, on the other hand, appeared to be less interested in the situation since the issue of TV food advertising does not affect children alone but also parents as well.

Parents were more likely to support regulations governing children's food advertising on TV and children's health. To be trusted in advertising to children, anyone promoting

food to young children should take action against any violations of advertising regulations and strive to be transparent in their public advertising

The finding that young parents aged 30-40 years were more concerned about TV food advertising aimed at children than older respondents was consistent with previous findings. Finally, this research was based on parental perceptions of TV food advertising to children.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

This research has implications for the following parties.

6.3.1 The marketers

This research has aided in identifying parents' opinions and their perspectives on policies and regulations imposed on marketers. Anything that assists marketers in understanding their market could be helpful in the preparation of future communication strategies.

For example, parents stated that they wanted less food advertising on TV aimed at children and are prepared to exercise some influence on the matter. Some parents believe that this type of marketing is used to promote unhealthy foods to their children, although parents are in the minority.

6.3.2 The government

Parents are concerned about advertising directed towards their children, perceiving it as influential and beyond the scope of parental control. Previous research has shown that children have purchasing power. For this reason, this research should be beneficial to the government, in particular it should it have some influence on policy in relation to the advertising of food towards children.

6.3.3 Parents

Parents are concerned about advertising directed towards their children, perceiving it as influential and beyond the scope of parental control. Previous research has shown that children have purchasing power. Food manufacturers

Perceptions are that food manufacturers have a lot to answer for, with many believing that food manufacturers in South Africa bear some responsibility for the rise of childhood obesity. It has been noted that food advertising is perceived to influence both food choices and preferences. As public health experts continue to place pressure on food manufacturers to improve child targeted food advertising, any information that supports the understanding of this topic will be useful.

6.3.4 The academic field

This research has contributed towards the body of knowledge with regards to the marketing and/or the advertising of food products directed to juveniles. This study focuses mainly on the eThekwini area of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. A number of recommendations for further studies have been promulgated in 6.5.

6.4 LIMITATIONS

While conducting the empirical research, a number of limitations were discovered that applied to this study. These should be taken into consideration, when interpreting the results.

6.4.1 The Covid-19 pandemic

The scope of this investigation was limited to the eThekwini region, specifically Durban. The study was to focus on four major shopping malls in the greater eThekwini region: Bridge City Mall in Kwamashu, Pavilion in Westville, Gateway in Umhlanga Rocks, and Galleria Mall in Amanzimtoti. The selection of these four Shopping Centres was made to ensure that a diverse cross-section of the population was served. However, because of the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of shopping centres listed above did not respond to the request to participate in data collection to their premises. Therefore, a decision was made to use four alternative shopping malls to participate in the study, which were Bridge City Mall in Kwamashu, Kwamnyandu Shopping Centre in Umlazi, Workshop Centre in Durban, and City View Shopping Centre.

6.4.2 Coverage bias

A limitation of this study was one of coverage bias. As a result of the problem with accessing the original shopping centres (as discussed above), the sample ended up being demographically skewed, with some demographic groups being poorly represented in the sample. Therefore, it became evident that the sampling technique did not necessarily represent the population that was it was intended to.

6.4.3 Reliability

As reported above, there were some issues with data collection. This was probably the cause of some of the sections not grouping well enough to obtain composite measures for the constructs / sections. For this reason, a number of the results were reported individually, rather than as groups. Therefore, a cautionary note is extended for those who might consider generalisation or replication of this research.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A suggestion for further study would be to consider alternative forms of advertising directed towards children. With the advent of social media, many children are exposed to advertising via alternative channels, in particular those available on the internet. In addition, a more in-depth examination of children's behavior that might emanate from said advertising. With South Africa's vast income gaps a comparison could also be considered, as the advertising that children are exposed to, and their buying behavior might be vastly different according to income and education.

Finally, rather than the single quantitative method used in this study, additional research could be conducted using qualitative research methods. This would overcome the limitation of not being able to gather the additional perspectives participants may have had on the questions provided, and it would aid in obtaining more in-depth perspectives with regards to the subject matter.

6.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the conclusions from the study, and described the limitations that had arisen during the course of the study. Potential implications of the results of the study for a number of parties, including parents, the government, marketers and academics as well as food manufacturers were noted. Finally, suggestions for future research were made.

This study was designed to examine parental perspectives towards the advertising of food on TV aimed at children. The study was a quantitative one and was carried out by means of a structured questionnaire. Findings were made that could be of interest to academics as well as food marketers and manufacturers.

The government could also be an interested party owing to the study including parental opinions on legislation with regards to the advertising of food towards children. A discussion took place in Chapters 5 and 6 with regards to the findings of the study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letters of Information and Concern

Department of Marketing and Retail Management

Durban University of Technology
41 – 43 ML Sultan Road
DURBAN
4001
15th August 2021

Dear Respondents

At the Durban University of Technology Durban Campus, I am pursuing a master's degree in marketing. In order to carry out the program, a research study must be carried out.

In the eThekwini region, I have chosen to conduct a study on parental attitudes towards food promotion aimed at children on television. I believe it is critical for parents to understand food promotion and to know what is in the food that is advertised to their children. Your participation in responding to this questionnaire could help to improve and regulate TV food advertising to children in South Africa. As a result, I will be interviewing parents from various locations throughout the eThekwini region, particularly Durban. The research report will be available at the DUT library.

By responding to this questionnaire, I hereby request your consent and full support in conducting this study. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Thanking you

Vusi Mpungane

LETTER OF INFORMATION: A PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE OF FOOD ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION AIMED AT CHILDREN: A CASE OF THE ETHEKWINI REGION

My name is Vusi Innocent Mpungane, and I am pursuing a Master's degree in Management Sciences at Durban University of Technology through a research study with Dr. KM Corbishley.

This means that in order to fulfil this goal, I will write a dissertation and publish in at least one journal. I'd like to invite all parents to take part in this research project. The study's goal is to determine parental attitudes towards food advertising to children on television in the eThekwini region. The study will also seek to ascertain parents' perceptions of regulations governing food promotion to children. The participation of your staff and visitors would allow me to interview your staff who interact with shoppers. The interview will aid in addressing some of the study's research objectives. Respondents will be asked to participate voluntarily, and all responses will be kept completely private. They will be free to refuse or withdraw from participation at any time and will not be under any pressure.

It is expected that the interview will last between 5 and 10 minutes. There is no monetary incentive for taking part in the study. You are under no obligation to consent to this participation because the study is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, please do so and be aware that the information gathered from this interview may be analysed and used in the study, or it may be published online and kept in the institution library as a source of information.

However, participants' anonymity will be maintained. No individual will be identified or named in any way. If you would like to be kept up to date on the results, please contact me, Vusi Mpungane, at 073 5535205 or vdlamini9@gmail.com, or my supervisor, Dr. KM Corbishley, at 031 373 5393.

Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Vusi Mpungane

Appendix B: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE ON FOOD ADVERTISING AIMED AT CHILDREN ON TV

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate parental attitudes toward food advertising to children on television in the eThekwini region. Your participation in responding to this questionnaire could help to improve and regulate TV food advertising to children in South Africa. This questionnaire's responses are anonymous and will only be used for academic purposes.

Pre- screening Questions

(i) Do you have any children from the age of 5 to 12?

Yes	No

(ii) Do any of your children watch TV where they are exposed to advertisements promoting food items such as fast foods, sweets and other snacks?

Yes	No

If they respond YES to both of the above questions, continue with the questionnaire. Otherwise, thank them for their time and stop.

For each question select the ONE response option that best applies to you.

Section A: Demographics of the respondent

A1 Age group

18-29	30-40	51-55	56+

A2 What gender were you assigned at birth?

Male	Female

A 3 Highest completed academic qualification

No formal education	Some/all Primary school	Some High school	Matric	Certificate	Diploma/ Degree	Other

A4 Marital Status

Single	Married / Living together	Divorced/ Separated	Widowed

A5 Population group

Black African	Coloured	Indian / Asian	White

A6 How many children do you have from the age of 5 to 12? _____

A6.1 If only ONE child: What is the age of your child? _____

A6.2 If MORE than one child: What is the age of your...

Youngest child? _____

Oldest child? _____

A7 How many TVs are there in your household? _____

PLEASE NOTE: In the questions below, when reference is made to 'your child', replace this with 'at least one of your children' if you have more than one child in the age group 5 - 12

Section B: Opinions of food promotions on children's TV

Indicate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongl	Disagre	Neutral	Agree	Strongl
B1 Food advertisements on children's TV provides accurate information regarding the nutritional quality of the product being advertised					
B2 Food advertisements on children's TV encourages discussion on products within our family					
B3 It is ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13					
B4 There are too many food advertisements in TV programmes directed at children					
B5 There are too many advertisements that promote food containing a high percentage of sugar/ fat/ additives in TV programmes aimed at children					
	Strongly	Disagre	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
B6 I am concerned about the advertising of general food products at times when children watch TV					
B7 I am concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products at times when children watch TV					

B8 I am concerned about the use of popular personalities or characters to promote unhealthy foods on children's TV					
B9 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes free toys or gifts with products					
B10 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product					

Section C: Perceptions of the influence of food promotions on children's TV on their eating habits and food preferences

Indicate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
C1 Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products					
C2 Television food advertising encourages my child to want food products they don't need					
C3 Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child					
C4 Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals					
C5 My child's LIKING for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising					
C6 My child's REQUESTS for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising					
C7 My child requests food items in the store that he/she has seen advertised on TV					

C8 As a result of TV food advertising, my child snacks often between meals					
C9 As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat)					
C10 As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods					

Section D: Opinions of current regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children

Indicate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly	Disagre	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
D1 There are adequate regulations that deal with television advertising aimed at children in South Africa					
D2 Television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children					
D3 Lack of adequate control with respect to TV allows advertisers to take advantage of children					
D4 There should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times					
D5 Limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times					
D6 Based on the TV food advertisements screened during children's viewing hours, the current regulations are effective					
D7 Action should be taken against ALL breaches of the advertising regulations – even when a formal complaint has not been lodged					

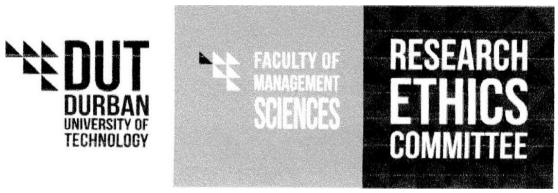
Section E: Opinions of suggested changes to regulations regarding the promotion of food towards children

Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following suggestions regarding TV food advertising:

	Strongly	Disagre	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
E1 Allow current TV advertising of food and drink products to children to continue					
E2 Reduce the advertising of food and drink products to children on TV					
E3 A **total ban on ALL food** advertising should be instituted					
E4 A **ban** on ALL food and drink advertising **at times** when children watch TV should be recommended					
E5 A **ban** on ALL food and drink advertising that is **designed** specifically to appeal to children would be appropriate					
E6 A total ban on advertising of **unhealthy** foods					
E7 A ban on advertising of **unhealthy foods at times** when children watch TV					
E8 A ban on **unhealthy** food advertising that is **designed** specifically to appeal to children					

Thank you for your time.

Appendix C: Ethics clearance letter



MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (FREC)

3 March 2020

Student Name: **Mr VI Mpungane**

Student No: 21005671

Dear Mr VI Mpungane

MASTER OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: MARKETING

TITLE: A parental perspective of food advertising on television aimed at children: A case of the EThekwini region.

Please be advised that the FREC Committee has reviewed your proposal and the following decision was made: **Approved – Ethics Level 2**

Date of FRC Approval: 3rd March 2020

Approval has been granted for a period of two years from the above FRC date, after which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the form located at the Faculty. This form must be submitted to the FREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the FREC according to the FREC SOP's.

Please note that ANY amendments in the approved proposal require the approval of the FREC as outlined in the FREC SOP's.

Yours sincerely

_____

Prof JP Govender

Appendix D: Gate keepers' letters

Date: 30 March 2021

Dineo Moerane

Workshop Shopping Centre

99 Samora Machel street,

Durban, 4000A PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE OF FOOD ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION AIMED AT CHILDREN: A CASE OF THE ETHEKWINI REGION

I hereby acknowledge your request to recruit participants from The Workshop Shopping Centre

for the above name research

I have read and understood the attached statement regarding the research and hereby give permission for this research to be conducted.

Dineo Moerane
(Exhibitions Coordinator)

Yours Sincerely

the Workshop SHOPPING CENTRE FREE PARKING CENTRE MANAGEMENT

*Please include any stipulations / clauses the company may have about the recruitment of human participants.

DURBAN

DUT

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

RESEARCH

ETHICS

COMMITTEE

Date: 30 March 2021

Thelma Zietsman

City View Shopping Centre 10

Mathews Meyiwa Road

Stanford hill road

Durban 4000A PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE OF FOOD ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION AIMED AT CHILDREN: A CASE OF THE ETHEKWINI REGIONI hereby acknowledge your request to recruit participants from VUSI MPUNGANE. for the above name research have read and understood the attached statement regarding the research and hereby give permission for this research to be conducted.

Yours Sincerely

THELMA ZIETSMAN.

City View

CENTRE MANAGEMENT OFFICE

10 MATHEWS MEYIWA ROAD, GREWILLE, 4m1

P.o. BOX 47658, GREYVII..LE, 4023

TEL: (031) 3096737 | FAX: (031)3092606

www.cnyview.co.za

*Please include any stipulations / clauses the company may have about the recruitment of human participants.

Appendix E: Turnitin report

Thesis Final

by Vusumuzi Mpungane

Submission date: 31-Oct-2022 04:02PM (UTC+0200)
Submission ID: 1940423311
File name: Turnitin_copy_V_Mpungane_171022.docx (455.27K)
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Thesis Final

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Appendix F: Editor's certificate

DR RICHARD STEELE
BA HDE MTech(Hom)
HOMEOPATH
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Practice No. 0807524
Freelance academic editor
Associate member: Professional Editors' Guild, South Africa

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rsteele@vodamail.co.za

EDITING CERTIFICATE

Re: **VUSI INNOCENT MPUNGANE**
DUT Master's dissertation: **A PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE OF FOOD ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION AIMED AT CHILDREN: A CASE OF THE ETHEKWINI REGION**

I confirm that I have edited this dissertation and the references for clarity and language. I returned the document to the author with track changes so correct implementation of the changes and clarifications requested in the text and references is the responsibility of the author. I am a freelance editor specialising in proofreading and editing academic documents. My original tertiary degree which I obtained at the University of Cape Town was a B.A. with English as a major and I went on to complete an H.D.E. (P.G.) Sec. with English as my teaching subject. I was a part-time lecturer in the Department of Homoeopathy at the Durban University of Technology for 13 years and supervised many master's degree dissertations during that period.

Dr Richard Steele
29 October 2022
per email

Appendix G: Additional Tables and Figures

Table G1: One Sample Test for Opinions of food promotions on children's TV

Test Value = 3						
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Statement	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	M D	Lower	Upper
B1 Food advertisements on children's TV provides accurate information regarding the nutritional quality of the product being advertised	-7.373	392	.000	-.517	-.65	-.38
B2 Food advertisements on children's TV encourages discussion on products within our family	-4.352	392	.000	-.288	-.42	-.16
B3 It is ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13	-1.389	392	.166	-.097	-.23	.04
B4 There are too many food advertisements in TV programmes directed at children	40.582	392	.000	1.081	1.03	1.13
B5 There are too many advertisements that promote food containing a high percentage of sugar/ fat/ additives in TV programmes aimed at children	-4.983	392	.000	-.293	-.41	-.18
B6 I am concerned about the advertising of general food products at times when children watch TV	37.235	392	.000	.995	.94	1.05
B7 I am concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products at times when children watch TV	42.994	392	.000	1.181	1.13	1.23
B8 I am concerned about the use of popular personalities or characters to promote unhealthy foods on children's TV	43.821	392	.000	1.219	1.16	1.27
B9 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes free toys or gifts with products	46.768	392	.000	1.209	1.16	1.26
B10 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product	46.465	392	.000	1.341	1.28	1.40

Table G2: One Sample Test for Perceptions of the influence of advertising

Test Value = 3						
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Statement	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	M D	Lower	Upper
C1 Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products	2.144	392	.033	.104	.01	.20
C2 Television food advertising encourages my child to want food products they don't need	31.751	392	.000	.916	.86	.97
C3 Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child	4.882	392	.000	.282	.17	.40
C4 Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals	5.205	392	.000	.318	.20	.44
C5 My child's LIKING for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	23.557	392	.000	.822	.75	.89
C6 My child's REQUESTS for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	38.630	392	.000	1.031	.98	1.08
C7 My child requests food items in the store that he/she has seen advertised on TV	39.379	392	.000	1.071	1.02	1.12
C8 As a result of TV food advertising, my child snacks often between meals	8.136	392	.000	.435	.33	.54
C9 As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat)	30.414	392	.000	.980	.92	1.04
C10 As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods	27.940	392	.000	1.145	1.06	1.23

Table G3: One Sample Test for Opinions of current regulations

Test Value = 3						
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Statement	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	M D	Lower	Upper
D1 There are adequate regulations that deal with television advertising aimed at children in South Africa	-23.826	391	.000	-1.013	-1.10	-.93
D2 Television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children	5.385	391	.000	.309	.20	.42
D3 Lack of adequate control with respect to TV allows advertisers to take advantage of children	22.758	391	.000	.793	.72	.86
D4 There should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times	40.921	391	.000	1.337	1.27	1.40
D5 Limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times	35.030	391	.000	1.179	1.11	1.24
D6 Based on the TV food advertisements screened during children's viewing hours, the current regulations are effective	18.959	391	.000	.742	.67	.82
D7 Action should be taken against ALL breaches of the advertising regulations – even when a formal complaint has not been lodged	36.144	391	.000	1.401	1.32	1.48

Table G4: One Sample Test for Opinions of suggested changes to regulations

Test Value = 3						
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Statement	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	M D	Lower	Upper
E1 Allow current TV advertising of food and drink products to children to continue	-29.016	391	.000	-1.158	-1.24	-1.08
E2 Reduce the advertising of food and drink products to children on TV	20.118	391	.000	.735	.66	.81
E3 A total ban on ALL food advertising should be instituted	-8.932	391	.000	-.480	-.59	-.37
E4 A ban on ALL food and drink advertising at times when children watch TV should be recommended	1.530	391	.127	.077	-.02	.17
E5 A ban on ALL food and drink advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children would be appropriate	32.635	391	.000	.908	.85	.96
E6 A total ban on advertising of unhealthy foods	42.465	391	.000	1.156	1.10	1.21
E7 A ban on advertising of unhealthy foods at times when children watch TV	49.959	391	.000	1.222	1.17	1.27
E8 A ban on unhealthy food advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children	54.805	390	.000	1.522	1.47	1.58

Table G5: Test –one-sample t-test for Opinions of food promotions on children's TV

Statement	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
B1 Food advertisements on children's TV provides accurate information regarding the nutritional quality of the product being advertised	393	2.48	1.389	.070
B2 Food advertisements on children's TV encourages discussion on products within our family	393	2.71	1.310	.066
B3 It is ethically and morally acceptable for food companies to try to influence the food preferences of children under the age of 13	393	2.90	1.380	.070
B4 There are too many food advertisements in TV programmes directed at children	393	4.08	.528	.027
B5 There are too many advertisements that promote food containing a high percentage of sugar/ fat/ additives in TV programmes aimed at children	393	2.71	1.164	.059
B6 I am concerned about the advertising of general food products at times when children watch TV	393	3.99	.530	.027
B7 I am concerned about the advertising of UNHEALTHY food products at times when children watch TV	393	4.18	.544	.027
B8 I am concerned about the use of popular personalities or characters to promote unhealthy foods on children's TV	393	4.22	.551	.028
B9 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes free toys or gifts with products	393	4.21	.512	.026
B10 I am concerned about food advertising on children's TV that promotes ONLY the healthy aspects of the product	393	4.34	.572	.029

Table G6: Test –one-sample t-test for Perceptions of the influence of advertising

Statement	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
C1 Television food advertising causes my child to pester me for advertised food products	393	3.10	.965	.049
C2 Television food advertising encourages my child to want food products they don't need	393	3.92	.572	.029
C3 Advertising food on TV causes unhealthy eating habits in my child	393	3.28	1.147	.058
C4 Advertising of snack foods on TV makes it harder to get my child to eat his/her meals	393	3.32	1.211	.061
C5 My child's LIKING for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	393	3.82	.692	.035
C6 My child's REQUESTS for particular food and drink products is influenced by TV advertising	393	4.03	.529	.027
C7 My child requests food items in the store that he/she has seen advertised on TV	393	4.07	.539	.027
C8 As a result of TV food advertising, my child snacks often between meals	393	3.44	1.060	.053
C9 As a result of TV food advertising, my child eats more than he/she should (needs to eat)	393	3.98	.639	.032
C10 As a result of TV food advertising, my child has a preference for eating unhealthy foods	393	4.15	.812	.041

Table G7: Test –one-sample t-test for Opinions of current regulations

Statement	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
D1 There are adequate regulations that deal with television advertising aimed at children in South Africa	392	1.99	.842	.043
D2 Television advertising targeted at children needs to be regulated by people who are NOT directly involved with the selling of products to children	392	3.31	1.135	.057
D3 Lack of adequate control with respect to TV allows advertisers to take advantage of children	392	3.79	.690	.035
D4 There should be strong restrictions on food advertising particularly during children's TV viewing times	392	4.34	.647	.033
D5 Limits should be imposed on the amount of time devoted to commercials during children's viewing times	392	4.18	.666	.034
D6 Based on the TV food advertisements screened during children's viewing hours, the current regulations are effective	392	3.74	.775	.039
D7 Action should be taken against ALL breaches of the advertising regulations – even when a formal complaint has not been lodged	392	4.40	.767	.039

Table G8: Test –one-sample t-test for Opinions of suggested changes to regulations

Statement	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
E1 Allow current TV advertising of food and drink products to children to continue	392	1.84	.790	.040
E2 Reduce the advertising of food and drink products to children on TV	392	3.73	.723	.037
E3 A total ban on ALL food advertising should be instituted	392	2.52	1.063	.054
E4 A ban on ALL food and drink advertising at times when children watch TV should be recommended	392	3.08	.991	.050
E5 A ban on ALL food and drink advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children would be appropriate	392	3.91	.551	.028
E6 A total ban on advertising of unhealthy foods	392	4.16	.539	.027
E7 A ban on advertising of unhealthy foods at times when children watch TV	392	4.22	.484	.024
E8 A ban on unhealthy food advertising that is designed specifically to appeal to children	392	4.52	.549	.028