

Effect of IMC of toothpastes on Oral Hygiene Behavior among the School Children of Dhaka City

Kashfia Ahmed

Correspondence Author

Senior Lecturer

Department of Business Administration

East West University

E-mail: hasankashfia@gmail.com

Saadia Shabnam

Senior Lecturer

Department of Business Administration

East West University

E-mail: saadiashabnam79@yahoo.com

Dr. A.K.M. Tanzir Hasan

Assistant Professor

University Dental College

E-mail: drtanzir@gmail.com

Abstract

The role of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMCs) for promotion of low-involvement products is enormous. It is becoming even more important when the product is toothpaste- a product inevitable and important to ensure consumers' oral health. It requires the integrated application of several tools to develop health education, mass awareness about oral hygiene, social and community cleanliness with the help of traditional media, advertising, public relations and public advocacy, personal selling and counseling, client/customer relations, and market research. In this article researchers' effort was directed to gauge the effectiveness of such messages among young school going children who are predominantly at their learning stage. Descriptive frequencies of responses can identify the level of general awareness and behavioral aspects that are the result of promotional campaign. Findings of this study can further be used to identify marketers' scope for selecting message focus for greater audience attraction and persuasion.

Keywords: *Oral Behavior, Integrated Marketing Communication, School Going Children, Awareness, Toothpaste.*

1. Introduction

Integrated marketing communications is a term used to describe a holistic approach to marketing communication. Integrated marketing communications is integration of all marketing tools, approaches and resources within a company which maximizes impact on the consumer mind and which results into maximum profit at minimum cost.

According to the American Marketing Association, integrated marketing communications is “ a planning process designed to assure that all brand contacts received by a customer or prospect for a product, service or organization are relevant to that person and consistent over time”

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) involves the idea that a firm’s promotional efforts should be coordinated to achieve the best combined effects of the firm’s efforts. Promotion involves a number of tools to increase demand for the products. IMC begins with the client/consumer and a sharp focus on the behavioral result anticipated, clearly mapped out by practical market research or situation analysis related to the desired behaviors. It requires the integrated application of the disciplines of health education, adult education, mass communication, social and community mobilization, traditional media, marketing, advertising, public relations and public advocacy, personal selling and counseling, client/customer relations, and market research to the ultimate goal of achieving behavioral results.

Bangladeshi society has changed rapidly during the past decade. In this era of rapid urbanization on account of unsatisfactory dietary habits and poor oral hygiene measure the school children are at greater risk of developing dental caries. In the life cycle perspective, childhood and adolescence are crucial periods for the development of health practices. Most behavioral patterns become established in childhood. Good oral health practices are necessary from a young age to ensure positive long term dental health and hygiene. Positively influencing the knowledge, attitude and practice of children towards sustainable good oral health require an integrated health education and health promotion approach.

The term “Oral health behavior” describes the complex activity of individual is oral hygiene habits, nutritional preferences and the pattern of a person’s utilization of dental services.

Maintaining ‘oral hygiene’ is the only decisive factor for preventing as well as controlling most of the dental diseases like dental caries. Previously diseases of the oral cavity have been viewed separately from those of the rest of the body. In recent years however efforts have been made to recognize oral health as an integral part of overall health.

In Bangladesh, toothpaste manufacturers use number of promotional effort like advertising, school dental health program, mobile dental clinic for free dental checkup etc. to promote their products. All these promotional effort highlights the importance of tooth brushing, need of brushing twice daily and importance of teeth for a healthy life. All these health messages reach the school children which are meant to have some behavioral impact on them.

School children spend a good number of hours watching Television and thus they are exposed to toothpaste advertisement several times a day conveying the message that they should brush twice a day for a healthy smile. This purposefully directed behavioral goal are also reinforced by other promotional

efforts like school dental health program, free dental checkup in mobile dental clinic, free sampling of toothpastes etc.

2. Objectives

1. Profiling children's general oral hygiene behavior in terms of brushing technique, time, frequency, duration and information seeking behavior regarding brushing
2. To access the influence of messages on children's oral hygiene behavior

3. Methodology

Research design of the study was exploratory in nature. This study was conducted in two parts, in the first part content analysis of the all integrated marketing communications of all brand of toothpaste were carried out. In the second part effect of IMC of the toothpastes on oral health behavior among the school children were explored. *Sample* respondents were the school going children, from class 1 to class 10 of Dhaka city. For the purpose Viqarunnisa Noon, Motizheel Ideal, Siddeswari Boys, Ispahani Girls', Moghbazar Girls' schools were selected and 150 children were interviewed for that purpose by using convenience sampling technique. *Instrument* to earn respondent brushing information along with the demographic data were the structured questionnaire. Questionnaire was then coded and analyzed using SPSS, version 17.

4. Findings

The respondents of the study were the students aged between 6 to 16. Among 150 respondents 89 (59.3%) were male and 61(40.7%) were female. It was observed that 95% respondents brush their teeth on a regular basis whereas 5% said that they are irregular in case brushing their teeth. The study shows that school going children in Dhaka city are quite familiar with modern brushing materials. Among the respondents

96% use brush and toothpaste for cleaning their teeth. About 3% respondents mentioned that they use toothpowder along with brush. 99% school children mentioned that television is the best IMC tool for them.

It is reflected from the table 1 that among the respondents 71% brush their teeth at morning before breakfast. Only 14% respondents have maintained proper brushing time which is at morning after breakfast and at night before going to bed. In a cross sectional study in Bangladesh in June 2009 it was found that only 16% brushed their teeth before going to bed and after breakfast.

It is observed from the table that most of the respondents follow the wrong method of brushing. According to the table 81% children among the respondents follow horizontal movement which is not the right method of brushing. Only 15% of the respondents know the proper way of brushing. Farzan et al. mentioned that there are two basic directions in which a brush is used: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal brushing uses the ends of the bristle, and vertical brushing uses the sides of the bristles. Any other direction in which a brush is used represents modification of the basic approach.

From the table it was observed that majority of the children 71% cleaned or brushed their teeth once daily, whereas only 29% brushed their teeth twice a day. In a similar study Farzan et al. found that 73.3% had their teeth cleaned once daily, while 26.7% did the same twice a day.

It is identified from the table that majority of the children that was 72.7% brushed their teeth for 1-2 minutes. While 20% brush their teeth for 3 minutes. Only 7% brush more than 5 minutes.

From table 2 we have observed that for majority respondents (62%) mother was the source guide while for 37% children father is the source guide for brushing.

From table 3 it was observed that mothers of 30 respondents' in spite of having post graduate degree failed to provide proper guidance of appropriate brushing technique to their children.

Table 4 gives the indication that most of the respondents (66%) enjoy informative advertisement of toothpaste. The rest 34% enjoy non informative toothpaste advertisement.

It is reflected from the table 5 that toothpaste advertisement has a positive effect on 74% respondents brushing behavior. Among 111 respondents 82 respondents mentioned that their favorite toothpaste advertisement had a great influence on the method of brushing.

It is evident from the table 6 that 38.7% respondents think that the most important part of the toothpaste advertisement is method of brushing. 16.7% feel that plot or subject of advertisement is the most significant part of toothpaste advertisement.

5. Conclusion

IMC of toothpaste brands has an effect on the oral hygiene behavior of the school going children. The respondents considered that most important parts of their favorite toothpaste advertisements were method of brushing, presence of favorite models, subject and music of the advertisement. It was observed that among all IMC tools television was the most favorite tool to the respondents. From the study it was identified that most of the children developed faulty brushing behavior. Although their parents were mostly graduates, they failed to instruct their child properly. So toothpaste IMCs should communicate the importance of tooth brushing, proper brushing technique, frequency of brushing and duration of tooth brushing. By focusing on oral hygiene education in their IMCs toothpaste companies can increase the sales as well as can contribute on welfare of the society.

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Time	In morning before breakfast	71.3%
	In morning after breakfast	6.0%
	At night before going to bed	4.0%
	Every time after meal	.7%
	In morning before breakfast and at night before going to bed	3.3%
	In morning before breakfast and every time after meal	.7%
	In morning after breakfast and at night before going to bed	14.0%
Method	Horizontal movement	81.3%
	Vertical movement	15.3%
	others	3.3%
Frequency	Once	70.7%
	Twice	29.3%
Duration	1-2 minutes	72.7%
	3 minutes	20.0%
	5 minutes	4.7%
	10 minutes	.7%
	30 minutes	2.0%

Table 1: Brushing Behavior

	Frequency	Percent
Father	55	36.7
Mother	93	62.0
Dentist	1	.7
Toothpaste Advertisement	1	.7
Total	150	100.0

Table 2: Source of guidance of brushing

		Education of Mother					Total
		Post Graduate	Graduate	Higher Secondary	Secondary	Primary	
Method of brushing	Horizontal movement	30	67	13	8	4	122
	Vertical movement	4	11	4	3	1	23
	Others	0	1	1	1	2	5
Total		34	79	18	12	7	150

Table 3: Method of brushing * Education of Mother Cross tabulation

Informative advertisement	66.0
Non informative advertisement	34.0

Table 4: Favorite toothpaste advertisement

		Frequency	Percent
Time of Brushing		9	6.0
Frequency of Brushing		4	2.7
Method of Brushing		82	54.7
Materials of Brushing		6	4.0
Time and method of brushing		8	5.3
Frequency and method of brushing		1	.7
Time, frequency and method of brushing		1	.7
Total		111	74.0
Missing	System	39	26.0
Total		150	100.0

Table 5: Positive affect of advertisement

	Frequency	Percent
Method of Brushing	58	38.7
Presence of favorite models	17	11.3
Music or song of the advertisement	15	10.0
Plot or subject of the advertisement	25	16.7
Dress or style of the models	1	.7
Others	2	1.3
Method of Brushing and Music of the ad	7	4.7
Method of brushing and Subject of the ad	11	7.3
Presence and dress or style of favorite models	1	.7
Music and subject of the ad	1	.7
Method of brushing, music and subject of the ad	6	4.0
Method of brushing, subject of the ad and dress of the models	5	3.3
Method of brushing, dress of the models and others	1	.7
Total	150	100.0

Table 6: Important part of the advertisement according to the respondent