

**THE CHANGING MEDIA CONSUMPTION HABITS AND ITS RELEVANCE
TO MARKETING FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS:
A STUDY OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA**

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(V) Abstract

Global experts on the subject of marketing communication have indicated a major shift in consumer media consumption habits. Although it is visibly evident in Sri Lanka as well with different schools of thought having debated the issue with no clear outcome, nor has the initiative been taken to study this area extensively to understand the effects of media consumption habits of Sri Lankan consumers and the level of influence of each of the methods available to marketers.

Marketing organisations on the other hand are facing the dilemma of no reliable information to base their marketing communication investment decisions on. Hence they rely heavily on the recommendations of the advertising agency and the media buying company. This is not without knowing that the advertising agency and media buying agency are both paid commissions on media space they sell to their clients. This situation is extremely difficult to deal with as the agencies' recommendations are biased by the conflicting interest of trying to earn the commissions offered by media companies. Despite this, marketers turn a blind eye due to the lack of credible information for decision making in this area which consumes the highest portion (75 percent to 80 percent) of the company's marketing budget.

This gave rise to the following research problem.

Given the significant shift in the world of consumer media habits, should consumer brand marketing organisations, targeting urban and suburban consumer groups, shift emphasis of their marketing budget from "above-the-line" marketing activities to "below-the-line" marketing activities in order to be more successful in achieving their sales and revenue objectives more effectively and efficiently?

The objective of this study is to examine if the current investment in marketing activity by consumer brand marketing organisations should change from the present heavy