

Portrayal of Women in Indian TV Ads

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Abstract

Most of the people in India believe that the TV ads are trustable and it shows all the details about a product or a service. Advertisements play a very important role in marketing a product or a service. The marketers and the Ad making agencies make TV ads in such a way that exaggerated content is portrayed to the public which induces the public to indulge into the ads and which in turn makes the public to buy the product. The point is that women are portrayed in TV ads and it has worsen in the recent years. Here in this study the researchers have made an attempt to know how the women are portrayed and how does the public see the ads. There are women in the society who are not happy the way some of the ads are telecasted, especially ads of Perfumes for men, soaps etc. They argue that these types of ads discriminate women or the dignity of the women is degraded.

Keywords: Portrayal; Perfume.

Introduction

Marketing refers to the process of ascertaining consumers' needs and supplying various goods and services to the final consumers or users to satisfy those needs. Basically, marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers or users. Advertisement is a powerful tool to favourably affect the opinion of the customers. Audiences are exposed to more TV commercials of luxury goods, including perfumes. Many an advertisement makes use of women for effectively communicating their message to the customers. But while doing so, sometimes the advertisers project women in a bad shape. The purpose of this study is to determine audience perception towards portrayal of women in Indian TV ads. Advertisers are often criticized for portraying women as dependent or decorative.

Advertising is at the front of delivering the proper message to customers and prospective customers. Advertisement, omnipresent in the media and daily life, is constitutive of a widespread cultural practice, circulating commodities as well as knowledge. It has evolved into a powerful marketing tool over the last century. Advertising is one of the "promotion tool" used in marketing endeavours, as one means of communication between the seller and the buyer.

Statement of Problem

Television plays a very vital role in every Indian home. There are governments offering TV sets free as part of their election campaigns. Therefore, it has paved way for the marketers and the ad making agencies to make TV ads in a very glamorous way. Every day there are around thousands of new advertisements being released and in most of them women are the key component. But lately it is evident that women are portrayed as a means of creating mass appeal alone and for the same they have been shown in poor light. When women are portrayed in ads, it becomes important the type of portrayal preferred by the viewers. There are many ads of perfumes, shampoos etc that depict women as sexual objects and some degradable roles. The role of women in Indian TV ads have gone vulgar. Most of the media present women in a way which

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degrades the value of India Women. Thus, the present study attempts to understand and analyse the perceptions of people regarding portrayal of women in ads and their opinion towards it.

Objectives of the study

1. To know the perception of people towards the portrayal of women in advertisements.
2. To find out the portrayed image has any relation with the real life.
3. To study the influence of women in TV advertisements.

Research Methodology

Sources of Data

- ❖ *Primary data* is collected with the help of a questionnaire. A well-structured *questionnaire* is being used for the study. Reliability check was made on questionnaire and the Cronbach's alpha value is more than .50 and so the questionnaire was accepted for this study.
- ❖ *Secondary data* is collected from books, social networking sites, journals, magazines and internet etc.

Sample Design

Sample Population: In this study, data were collected by interviewing female students.

Sampling Technique: Samples are selected from students of Post Graduate, Christ College Autonomous Irinjalakuda on a convenience basis. Stratified proportionate sampling method.

Sample Size: Out of 384 students 90 students were selected for the study.

Scope of the study

The study attempts to know role of women in Indian Tv advertisements. The study is confined to the Post Graduate students of Christ College, irinjalakuda.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is significant relationship between perceptions of people and marital status.

H₂: There is significant relationship between level of perception and time spend in watching TV.

H₃: There is significant relation between ads

which portray women with their family members and ads suggesting women as the decision maker mainly for the products like cosmetics, health etc.

Review of Literature

Madhusmita Das and Sangeeta Sharma (2016), The depiction of women in advertisements often represents unrealistic and unattainable standards of feminine beauty. The "Barbie Doll Figure" is constantly shown through advertising, which is impossible to achieve.

Zainab Kamran Mizra (2016), And the outcome of the study has supported the proposed hypothesis that stereotypes of male gender roles exists today in our society and dominate the overall portrayal.

Madhusmita Das and Sangeeta Sharma (2016), And this study has concluded that advertisements failed to represent women in diversified role, rather depict them as decorative objects whose main concern is to look young and beautiful.

Shyama Kumari and Shradha Shivani (2015), The study has found that the portrayal of females in advertisements is associated with ad liking, believability of ad, brand liking, brand recognition, brand recall and brand image, and has a lesser impact on intention to buy.

Dr. A. Krishna, Selvadurgadevi Kandavel and Pawline. M (2015), the portrayal in advertising is changing the concept of respect about women, spreading uncultured values, that most of the people are unhappy with the contents of advertisements.

Michael Prieler, Florian Kohlbacher, Shigeru Hagiwara and Akie Arima (2015), the representation of older people in Japanese television advertising has changed but remains unrealistic.

Nooshin Azin and Hossein Heidari Tabrizi (2015), The results demonstrated that the TV advertisements selected in this paper represent gender stereotypes and traditional gender division of labour.

Archana Kumari and Himani Joshi (2015), there is stereotypical representation of gender roles in media and in some ways; it reinforces the traditional patriarchal nations of gender as perceived by the adolescents. Female students have agreed with typical stereotypical representation of women in traditional role or as a sex object.

Tazanfal Tehseem and Iqra Riaz (2015), The study has concluded that the representation of gender in media is of great significance because it influences the perception and ideology of people it affects their lives. Most of adverts tend to portray women

negatively and as a sex object in order to increase the product appeal.

Dr. Kimmy Cheng and Dr. Vivienne Leung (2014), This study has shown a gap between the perceived female images in media content, specifically in the gender-free health-related PSAs, and reality.

Hazir Ullah and Hifsa Nisar Khan (2014), The study has concluded with an assertion that the intensification and normalization of physical appearances and body exposure as standards of feminine beauty upon which women must seek their acceptance in males' fantasy world is harmful for society in general and women.

P.S. Raychaudhuri (2014), The study has found that women consumers are influenced by the advertisements for their purchase requirements; however, they not satisfied with the stereotypical nature of role portrayal and the bias towards fair skin in TV advertisements, and would welcome a reversal of roles for housewives and modern girls respectively.

Himashree Patowary (2014), The study has come with a conclusion that overall effect of the portrayal of women in media is to reinforce rather than reduce prejudices and stereotypes.

Dr. Rajiv Ranjan Dwivedi (2014), The representation of women in media in general and television advertisements in India is based on the gender discrimination wherein women are treated as no better than an object or commodity. Hence, the dissemination of feminist sensitivity is the only remedial possibility sought for effecting the desirable change in the prevailing trends of Indian media at large.

Dr. Snigda Sukumar (2014), The findings have indicated that advertising is necessary to provide information about the product advertised as well as to increase the sale of a product. Women in advertising are projected in fashionable and glamorous roles and they are also portrayed as decorative and alluring.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Ads rarely suggest equal footing of women with men

Sl.No	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
1	Ads often suggest women as dependent on men	9	34	12	28	7
2	Ads rarely suggest women as educated, professionals and career oriented.	1	23	23	33	10
3	Ads rarely show women as dominant over man	7	23	32	16	12
4	Ads rarely show women in executive position rather show in subordinate position in comparison to men	2	11	37	37	3
5	Ads rarely show women as independent decision makers; contributing positively towards the society	2	11	37	37	3
6	Ads often show women as 'sex objects' and I hate it	3	6	15	34	32
7	Ads often portray women with their family members and doing household chores	0	10	6	53	21
8	Ads show female body and body parts excessively and unnecessarily	2	8	10	42	28
9	Majority ads are made with young and beautiful women	1	8	6	31	44
10	Ads suggest women as the decision maker mainly for the products like cosmetics, health and hygiene, kitchen product	0	2	9	49	30
11	Ads generally show women acting a major role for men's products like men's wear, shaving cream, razor etc	9	36	14	21	10
12	In most of the ads women avoid eye contact with the viewers	9	33	38	9	1
13	Ads suggest women mostly as product user rather than authority, even for the cosmetics and kitchen related products	1	10	24	48	7
14	Ads seldom portray women to represent the products of high value like automobiles, share market, insurance etc	3	9	27	46	5
15	Sometimes I feel uncomfortable while watching ads with my family	3	8	14	39	26
16	Ads mostly show women as objects of desire	2	7	31	40	10
17	Women act with sex appeal because they are forced to do so by the Ads makers	11	8	26	38	7

Normality test - Kolmogorov -Smirnov test

- If the value $Asymp.Sig > 0.05$, then the data is normally distributed research.
- If the value $Asymp.Sig < 0.05$, then the research data is not normally distributed.

Ks test

	N	Normal Parameters ^{a,b}		Most Extreme Differences			Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Absolute	Positive	Negative		
Do you watch TV?	90	1.03	.181	.540	.540	-.427	5.122	0.000
If yes, then how much time you spend (per day) in watching TV	90	1.73	.731	.275	.275	-.209	2.612	.000
Do you find the TV ads interesting?	90	1.99	.351	.446	.432	-.446	4.231	0.000
If yes, what fascinates you the most in an advertisement?	90	2.70	1.732	.257	.257	-.230	2.438	.000
Ads often suggest women as dependent on men.	90	2.89	1.185	.251	.251	-.215	2.384	.000
Ads rarely suggest equal footing of women with men.	90	3.20	1.114	.208	.148	-.208	1.975	.001
Ads rarely show women as dominant over man	90	3.02	1.141	.197	.197	-.148	1.866	.002
Ads rarely show women in executive position rather show in subordinate position (clerk, PA) in comparison to men	90	3.30	.827	.246	.197	-.246	2.331	.000
Ads mostly show women inside home.	90	3.07	.992	.226	.226	-.171	2.139	.000
Ads generally show women acting a major role for men's products like men's wear, shaving cream, razor etc.	90	2.87	1.220	.261	.261	-.179	2.479	.000
Ads suggest women mostly as product user rather than authority, even for the cosmetics and kitchen related products	90	3.53	.837	.300	.211	-.300	2.848	.000
Ads seldom portray women to represent the products of high value like automobiles, share market, insurance etc.	90	3.49	.877	.320	.225	-.320	3.035	.000
Ads often show women as 'Sex Objects' and I hate it.	90	3.94	1.053	.243	.158	-.243	2.308	.000
Ads show female body and body parts excessively and unnecessarily	90	3.96	.993	.296	.171	-.296	2.805	.000
Ads mostly show women as objects of desire.	90	3.54	.901	.249	.184	-.249	2.361	.000
Ads that show women as sexual objects encourages other women to imitate	90	3.09	1.056	.189	.167	-.189	1.790	.003
Women act with sex appeal because they are forced to do so by the Ad Makers	90	3.22	1.139	.230	.159	-.230	2.185	.000
Ads rarely show women as independent decision makers; contributing positively towards the society.	90	3.44	1.029	.239	.164	-.239	2.265	.000
Ads often portray women with their family members and doing household chores (taking care of the food, health, and hygiene of the family).	90	3.91	.882	.351	.238	-.351	3.332	0.000
Majority ads are made with young and beautiful women.	90	4.23	.960	.277	.212	-.277	2.623	.000
Ads suggest women as the decision maker mainly for the products like cosmetics, health and hygiene, kitchen product.	90	4.18	.728	.281	.263	-.281	2.669	.000

Source: SPSS Output.

The normality of the data is tested for this study using KS - Test and it is clear from this table that it is not normal as the values are less than 0.05. So nonparametric test is used here that is Mann-Whitney u test, Chi-square etc.

Mann-Whitney U Test

Objective 1: To know the perception of people towards

the portrayal of women in advertisements.

H1: There is a significant relationship between perceptions of people and marital status.

Mann-Whitney U test was used to estimate the influence of marital status on the perception of people towards the portrayal of women in Indian TV Ads.

Mann-Whitney U test (related to perception and marital status).									
	Ads often suggest women as dependent on men.	Ads rarely suggest equal footing of women with men.	Ads rarely show women as dominant over man.	Ads rarely show women in executive position rather show in sub ordinate position in	Ads mostly show women inside home.	Ads generally show women acting a major role for men's products.	Ads suggest women mostly as product user rather than authority even for cosmetics and kitchen products.	Ads seldom portray women to represent the products of high value.	Perception on portrayal of women.
Mann-Whitney U test	239.500	149.000	131.500	223.000	194.000	228.000	162.000	196.500	87.500
Wilcoxon W	3809.500	170.000	152.500	244.000	215.000	249.000	183.000	217.500	108.500
Z	-.212	-1.726	-2.019	-.505	-.984	-.406	-1.588	-.992	-2.672
Asymp. Sig (two-tailed)	.832	.084	.043	.614	.325	.685	.112	.321	.008

Source: SPSS Output.

The above table is showing the level of significance. It is clear from the table that the relationship between perceptions of people towards portrayal of women in TV Ads and marital status is significant as compared to the P value (.008) is less than Alpha 0.05.

Chi-Square test

H1: There is significant relationship between level of perception and time spend in watching TV

Chi-square test for relation between time spend in watching TV and level of perception.						
If yes, then how much time you spend(per day) in watching TV	Level of Perception			Total	Chi-squared value	P value
	1.00	2.00	3.00			
Less than 1 hour	15 (38.5%) [48.4%]	12 (30.8%) [35.3%]	12 (30.8%) [48.0%]	39 (100.0%) [43.3%]	4.306	.366
1-3 hours	12 (33.3%) [38.7%]	13 (36.1%) [38.2%]	11 (30.6%) [44.0%]	36 (100.0%) [40.0%]		
More than 3 hours	4 (26.7%) [12.9%]	9 (60.0%) [26.5%]	2 (13.3%) [8.0%]	15 (100.0%) [16.7%]		
Total	31 (34.4%) [100.0%]	34 (37.8%) [100.0%]	25 (27.8%) [100.0%]	90 (100.0%) [100.0%]		

Source: SPSS Output.

Note 1: The value within () refers to Row Percentage.

2. The value within [] refers to Column Percentage.

It is clear from this table, that P value is greater than 0.05 the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. So there is no significant relationship between level of perception of people and time spends in watching TV.

Findings

- ❖ Out of 90 respondents 34 respondents are disagreeing that advertisements often suggest women as dependent on men.
- ❖ As per study result out of 90 respondents 33.3% respondents are agreeing that Ads rarely suggest equal footing of women with men.
- ❖ It is founded that out of 90 respondents 37% respondents are agreeing that Ads rarely suggest women as educated, professionals and career oriented.
- ❖ 36% of respondents have no argument about the statement that Ads rarely show women as dominant over man.
- ❖ As per study 41.1% respondents have no argument about the statement that Ads rarely show women in executive position rather show in subordinate position in comparison to men.
- ❖ Nearly 38% respondents are agreeing that Ads rarely show women as independent decision makers.
- ❖ 73.5% respondents are agreeing that Ads often show women as 'sex objects' and they hate that.
- ❖ More than half of the respondents (59%) are agreeing that Ads often portray women with their family members and doing household chores.
- ❖ 47% respondents are agreeing that Ads show female body and body parts excessively and unnecessarily.
- ❖ 39% respondents are disagreeing with this statement that ads mostly show women inside home.
- ❖ 83.3% respondents agree the fact that majority ads are made with young and beautiful women.
- ❖ As per study 54.4% respondents are agreeing that ads suggest women as the decision makers mainly for the products like cosmetics, health and hygiene, kitchen product.
- ❖ Out of 90 respondents 36 respondents are disagreeing that ads generally show women acting a major role for men's products like men's wear, shaving cream, razor etc.
- ❖ 42.2% respondents have no arguments about this statement that most of the ads women avoid eye contact with the viewers.
- ❖ 53.3% respondents are agreeing that Ads suggest women mostly as product user rather than authority, even for the cosmetics and kitchen related products.
- ❖ Out of 90 respondents more than half of the respondents are agreeing that ads seldom portray women to represent the products of high value like automobiles, share market, insurance etc.
- ❖ 72% respondents are agreeing with the statement that they feel uncomfortable while watching ads with their family.
- ❖ As per study 73.3% respondents are supporting that they would prefer to see more women in advertising dressed in common fashion rather than extremely beautiful ultra-thin models.
- ❖ Major respondents are agreeing with the fact that ads mostly show women as objects of desire.
- ❖ It is founded that out of 90 respondents 34.4% respondents have no opinion about the statement that ads that show women as sexual objects encourages other women to imitate.
- ❖ Most of the respondents agree with the fact that women act with sex appeal because they are forced to do so by the ads makers.
- ❖ Out of 90 respondents 51.1% respondents are agreeing that women earn a lot of money in ads.
- ❖ According to the Mann-Whitney test it is proved that there is a significant relationship between perceptions of people towards portrayal of women in TV Ads and marital status.
- ❖ According to the Chi-square test it is cleared that there is no significant relationship between level of perception of people and time spends in watching TV.
- ❖ According to the Correlation test it is proved that there is a positive relationship between ads often portray women with their family members and ads suggest women as the decision maker mainly for the products like cosmetics, health, kitchen products etc.

Suggestions

- ❖ The false depiction of women's sexuality should ban on television.

- ❖ The way of presenting women's body in advertisements needs to examine by authorities.
- ❖ The over emphasis on the outer beauty of women should stop.
- ❖ Advertisement makers should not force women to act with sex appeal.
- ❖ Advertisers want to make women equal footing with men.
- ❖ Advertisement makers want to portray women to represent the products of high value like automobiles, share market etc customarily.
- ❖ Advertising Standard Council of India should take drastic steps against advertisements that portray women in undignified manner.

Conclusion

This study has mainly concentrated on the portrayal of women in television advertising in India. The study finds the dominance of the decorative role portrayal of women. Family role found to be the second dominant role portrayal of women in Indian TV advertisements, which implies that though over the years the depiction of women in Family role is decreasing, there is a huge increase in the decorative portrayal of women in advertisements. Even the portrayal of women as professionals and as career minded is rare to see in advertisements. All these indicate that not much progress has taken place in the portrayal of women in Indian TV advertisements. Therefore in this study, it can be understand that portrayal of women in advertisements as caring wife and loving mother cannot be changed as they are an integral part of our society, but the unnecessary portrayal of women as decorative and as sex object may not acceptable.

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