

A Study on Portrayal of Women in Advertisements and Its Effect on Cultural Values

Dr.A.Krishna

Associate Professor, PG and Research Dept.
of Commerce,
Govt. Arts College for Men, Chennai,
Tamilnadu, India.

Selvadurgadevi Kandavel

PhD Research Scholar, Barathiyar
University, Coimbatore,
Tamilnadu, India.

Pawline .M

PhD Research Scholar, Mother
Teresa University, Kodaikanal,
Tamilnadu, India.

ABSTRACT

Today everyone needs to advertise their products to inform the customers about the product, increase the sales, acquire market share, and attain top position in their respective industry. Every business spends lot of money for advertising their products but the money spent will lead to success only when the best techniques of advertising are used for the product. In recent years, advertising has witnessed a significant transformation in attracting customer to buy/use their products/services. The need for advertisements has risen to great levels in print and visual media. One among the transformation is the way women are depicted in advertising, with changing times, reflecting the transformation taking place in society. Advertising is one of the major media that affect our daily life consciously and unconsciously and are responsible to play a significant role in shaping the society in a much broader perspective. Women today are no longer consolidated behind kitchen walls. Their aspiration for stepping out in the world made society to think differently. Marketer wisely utilized this transformation process to launch their product and advertisement strategically. This paper is a part of research work and the report will seek to define the portrayal of women in advertisements and its effect on cultural values. Survey research method is used for the analysis on the basis of gender and age. The literature review indicates that the women are portrayed mainly as an object of attraction. The results argue that the portrayal in advertising is changing the concept of respect about women, spreading uncultured values and also indicate women's physical beauty as an instrument to induce the products demands.

Key Words: Advertisements, Portrayal of Women, Effect on Cultural Values.

INTRODUCTION

The role of women has been changing over the years in various fields around the world like advertising, academics, politics, etc. Today more than 30% of employees in the software industry are women. They are also distinguishing themselves as professionals in different walks of life. Advertising is one of the major media that affect our daily life consciously and unconsciously and are responsible to play a significant role in shaping the society in a much broader perspective.

Women today are no longer consolidated behind kitchen walls. Their aspiration for coming out of the door also taught society to think differently. Marketer

wisely utilised this transformation process to launch their product and advertisement strategically. The way women are depicted in advertising changes with times, reflecting the transformation taking place in society. But has the representation of women advertising changed over a period of time in advertisements? Or does it confirm to some of the traditional notions about women and their role in society? Do the role of women in advertisements have an effect on the culture? That is the question we wish to deal with in this paper.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mary Lou Roberts and Perri B. Koggan (1979) ,"How Should Women Be Portrayed in Advertisements?-- a Call For

Research", in NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 06, eds. William L. Wilkie, Ann Abor, MI : Association for Consumer Research, Pages: 66-72. The author concentrates on how a women should be showed in advertisements and the ways of positive portrayals to the role of women in advertisements.

Portrayal of Women in Indian Advertising: A Perspective Sumanta Dutta Dinabandhu Andrews Institute of Technology & Management; March 1, 2013. *International Journal of Marketing and Technology*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 119-226, 2013. The author has explained the general tendency of using a woman to lend glamour and visual appeal to an advertisement which has become quite common.

Source: <http://projectbee.wordpress.com/2008/01>

The Changing Roles Portrayed by Women in Indian Advertisements: A Longitudinal Content Analysis -- Y L R Moorthi ; Subhadip Roy; Anita Pansari ; *Indian Insitute of Management Bangalore January 2014*; The authors concentrate on the role of women in Indian Television advertising.

The Portrayal of women and the impact it has on Society. Elena Duch Balust, IE University, Bachelor of Communication, November 14, 2013. The Author has concentrated in looking at the portrayal and the representation of woman in our society and what image the media gives of them, and then also examine the impact of this on the public. The Author has also argued whether is a positive or a negative effect on the society.

OBJECTIVES

To examine female role portrayals in present day advertisements;

To study whether the role of woman in advertisements has an effect on our cultural values;

SCOPE

Everyday consumers are exposed to thousands of voices and images in magazines, newspapers, on billboards, websites, radio and television. Every brand attempts to steal at least a fraction of an unsuspecting person's time to inform him or her of the amazing and different attributes of the product at hand.

The challenge of the marketer is to find a hook that will hold the subject's attention.

India is having high population of youngsters and children. So the advertisers are in the need to attract them to buy their products. But they have gone for the extreme limit of portraying women as an object and a content in the advertisements.

So the researcher has planned to exhibit the portrayal of women in advertisements and how it has affected the cultural values through such advertisements. The study mainly targets the public of Bangalore city.

LIMITATION

As the research topic itself states the research work is mainly concerned on portrayal of women in advertisements.

This research works aims on how women are been portrayed in advertisements.

The research also looks in the cultural effect by such advertisements

The research area covered is only south Bangalore

The survey sample is limited only to 100 respondents

Research work carried over is only in the urban areas of south Bangalore and not in rural areas

Almost all respondents are literates and no illiterate people were taken as samples.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Advertisements often depict the woman as a sex object to be admired by a man for his sake, especially in advertisements for health and beauty products.

SAMPLE

The sample size of the respondents is 100 in the urban areas of south Bangalore.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Based on the data collected it is very clear that the respondents selected from Bangalore city were classified into men and women and are in different age group. These respondents were asked questions from the questionnaire.

All age group people has been taken in order to evaluate their perception towards the portrayal of women in advertisements.

35% of the respondents are in the age group of 16-20 years, 18% of the respondents are in the age group of 21-25 years, 25% of the respondents are in the age group of 26-30 years, 15% of the respondents are in the age group of 31-40 years and 7% of the respondents are in the age group of 41 & above years. It is significant that as many as 78% of the respondents are in the age group of 16-30 years.

78% of the respondents coming in the age group of 16 – 30 years old, implies that these may be the right audience for the opinion survey. Perhaps, the researcher wanted to focus on all the age groups, and hence may have sought opinion from this age group also.

Respondents below age of 16 years were deliberately left out, since their maturity may not entitle them to be judgmental in order to identify the contents of the advertisements.

The above table shows that 42% of the respondents are Male and 58% of the

respondents are female. It is significant that both the genders appear to have been given almost equal weight-age for seeking their opinion.

The researcher seems to have tried to get opinion from both Men and Women equally.

Most of the respondents appear to accept portrayal of women in advertisements are as only an object and some also have a opinion in regard to such advertisements influence changes in the cultural values.

Almost 62% of respondents feel that there is an effect on the cultural values on portrayal of women in advertisements. Majority of the respondents are having the opinion to the need for regulation of the content of advertisements.

HYPOTHESIS FRAMED

A research hypothesis is a statement created by researchers when they speculate upon the outcome of a research or experiment. Every true experimental design must have this statement at the core of its structure, as the ultimate aim of any experiment.

Hypothesis means a mere assumption or some supposition to be proved or disproved, framed without any supporting data.

The purpose of framing a hypothesis is to derive direction for the research work. Hypothesis is always framed in a pair, as given below:

NULL HYPOTHESIS: H₀

To study whether the portrayal of woman in advertisements do have an effect on the cultural values.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS: H₁

To study whether the portrayal of woman in advertisements do not have an effect on the cultural values.

This research work is a sincere effort to ascertain the truth in either of these two hypotheses. Hypothesis is tested using Chi-square test.

Chi-Square Test

Chi-square test is one of the simplest and most widely used non-parametric tests in statistical work. Chi-square distribution has many applications in situations that involve testing of the hypothesis concerning discrete nature of qualitative data.

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$$

where

X^2 is Chi-squared,
 \sum stands for summation,
 o is the observed values, and
 e is the expected values.

The quantity X^2 describes the magnitude of discrepancy between theory and observation, i.e. with the help of X^2 test, we are in a position to know whether a given discrepancy between theory and observation may be attributed to chance or whether it test from the inadequacy of the theory to fit the observed facts.

If X^2 is zero, it means that the observed and expected frequencies completely coincide. The greater the discrepancy between the observed and expected frequencies, the greater is the value of X^2 .

Result

The calculated value is lesser than the table value. If the calculated chi-square value for the set of data (5.358) is lesser than the table value (9.49), the result of **the test supports the hypothesis.**

There is no significant difference between the data sets that can be due to chance alone. In this situation, **the acceptance of the null hypothesis** means that the differences between the expected frequencies and the observed frequencies are not due to chance. i.e., they are due to chance variation; rather,

there is no real difference between them. There is no difference in age in the opinion of accepting that ***the portrayal of woman in advertisements do have an effect on the cultural values .***

RESULTS

The collection of data , its analysis and interpretation and the test proved on basis of hypothesis indicate that portrayal of woman in advertisements have an effect on the cultural values. Most the advertisements portrayed woman in the role of an attractive object or in a sexual content. Some have portrayed them as a home maker or a role of being dominated by men. The opinion by the respondents bring out a clear picture of the need for the change in content of advertisements.

CONCLUSION

Respondents of all age groups seem to have been given an opportunity to participate in the survey, though their number varies in each age group. The Researcher seems to have given equal importance to both the genders for seeking their opinion.

Media seems to greatly impact opinion & attitude of media users. Objectionable content in advertisements seem to be influencing the cultural values, leaving an immutable mark in our minds. The response for the question based on portrayal of women in advertisements

makes us conclude that most of the people are unhappy with the contents of advertisements

However, it has not covered all the advertisements and hence future researchers could cover more number of advertisements. Further, the portrayal of men could also be studied and a comparative analysis would add more insight to the study. A comparative analysis could be done with the advertisements of other nations as this would help the multinational organizations.

REFERENCES

- <http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?id=9532>
- http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2227332
- <http://projectbee.wordpress.com/2008/01/ljmt-volume-3-issue-3-march-2013>
- <http://www.google.co.in/>
- <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?articleid=870693>
- <http://www.managementparadise.com>
- <http://www.docstoc.com>
- <http://www.scribd.com>
- http://www.exchange4media.com/e4m/media_matter/omnibus.asp,
- <http://rajkamal.hubpages.com/hub/India--Advertising>
- <http://www.fareastjournals.com/files/FEJM/MV1N1P3.pdf><http://www.123helpme.com/preview.asp?id=76788>
- <http://kimtechunicc.tempserv4.clientnshosting.net/superior/MBA/5th%20Semester/Thesis/articles/ethics%20in%20ads%20ideological%20correlate.pdf>
- Ethical Implications of Survey Questions | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/info_7746676_ethical-implications-survey-questions.html#ixzz1zGezqePU
- <http://epubl.ltu.se/1404-5508/2004/167/LTU-SHU-EX-04167-SE.pdf>
- International Publishers, New Delhi, Second Revised Edition, Chapters on Research Design
- Dr.Ranganatham.M and Dr.Krishnaswami.O.R., Methodology Of Research In Social Sciences, Mumbai, Himalaya Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Second Revised Edition, Reprint -2009,
- Bagavathi and Pillai.R.S.N., Modern Marketing-Principles and Practices, New Delhi. S.Chand & Company Ltd., Third Revised and Enlarged Edition, Reprint-2006
- Mary Lou Roberts and Perri B. Koggan (1979) , "How Should Women Be Portrayed in Advertisements?-- a Call For Research"
- Portrayal of Women in Indian Advertising: A Perspective Sumanta Dutta
- Dinabandhu Andrews Institute of Technology & Management; March 1, 2013
- The Changing Roles Portrayed by Women in Indian Advertisements: A Longitudinal Content Analysis -- Y L R Moorthi ; Subhadip Roy; Anita Pansari ; Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, January 2014.
- The Portrayal of women and the impact it has on Society. Elena Duch Balust, IE University, Bachelor of Communication, November 14, 2013
- Courtney, E.Alice., and Whipple, T.W. (1974). Women in TV commercials. Journal of Communication, 24 (2) 110-18.
- Belkaoui, Ahmed., and Belkaoui, M. Janice. (1976). A Comparative Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Print Advertisements: 1958, 1970, 1972. Journal of Marketing Research, 13, 168-72.
- Courtney, E. Alice., and Lockeretz, W. Sarah. (1971). A Woman's Place: An Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine
- www.ssrn.com/link/Indian-Inst-Mgmt-Udaipur
BSR.html/isrj.org/UploadedData/5947.pdf

- Kothari, C.R., *Research Methodology—Methods & Techniques*, New Age Advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 8 (1) 92-95.
- Courtney, E.Alice., and Whipple, T.W. (1974). Women in TV commercials. *Journal of Communication*, 24 (2) 110-18.
- Cutler, B. D., Javalgi, R.G., & Lee, D. (1995). The portrayal of people in magazine advertisements: The United States and Korea. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 8 (2) 45-55.
- Das, Mallika. (2000). Men and Women in Indian Magazine Advertisements: A Preliminary Report. *Sex Roles*, 43 (9/10), 699- 717.
- Dominick, J.R., and G.E.Rauch. (1971). The Image of Women's Network TV Commercials. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 16 (3), pp. 259-65.
- Ford, J.B., Voli, P.K., Honeycutt, E. D., Jr., and Casey, S.L. (1998) Gender role portrayals in Japanese advertising: A magazine content analysis. *Journal of Advertising*, 27 (1) 113-124
- Fowles, J. (1996). *Advertising and popular culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gilly, C. Mary. (1988). Sex Roles in Advertising: A Comparison of Television Advertisements in Australia, Mexico, and the United States. *Journal of Marketing*, 52 (2) 75-85.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Cultures and organizations*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Jacob, R. (1992, November 16). "India is Opening for Business". *Fortune*.
- Kassarjian, H.H. (1977). Content analysis in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 4(1) 8-18.
- Kerin, A. Roger., Lundstorm, J. William., and Scigimpaglia, Donald. (1979). Women in Advertisements: Retrospect and Prospect. *Journal of Advertising*, 8(3) 37-42.
- Lerman, Dawn., and Callow, Michael. (2004). Content analysis in cross-cultural advertising research: Insightful or superficial? *International Journal of Advertising*, 23(4) 507-521.
- Matthew, V. (1990). Faces of the Indian Male: A Study of Stereotypes. *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 32(2) 217-225.
- McArEhur, Z. Leslie., and Beth, G. Resko, (1975). The Portrayal of Men and Women in American Television Commercials. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 97 (2) 209-220.
- Milner, L. M., and Collins, J.M. (2000). Sex-role portrayals and the gender of nations. *Journal of Advertising*, 29 (1), 67-79.
- Mitchell, P. C. N., & Taylor, W. (1989). Polarizing Trends in Female Role Portrayals in UK Advertising. *European Journal of Marketing*, 24(5), 41-50.
- Munshi, S. (2000). Wife/mother/daughter-in-law: Multiple avatars of Homemaker in 1990s. *Indian advertising. Media, Culture and Society*, 20(4), 573-591.
- Russell, J.T., and Lane, W.R. (1993), *Kleppner's Advertising Procedure*, 12th ed., Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ
- Sengupta, S. (1992). Role portrayals of women in magazine advertisements. *Media Asia*, 19 (3), 145-155.
- Silverslein, A., and R. Silverstein (1974). The Portrayal of Women in TV Advertising, *Federal Communications Bar Journal*, 27 (1) 71-98.
- Siu Wai-sum., and Au, Alan Kai- ming. (1997). Women in Advertising: A

- Comparison of Television Advertisements in China and Singapore. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning* 15 (5), 235–243.
- Sullivan, L. Gary., and Connor, O. J. P. (1988). Women's Role Portrayals in Magazine Advertising: 1958-1983. *Sex Roles*, 18 (3/4), 181-188.
- Wagner, Louis C., and Janis. B. Banos. (1973). A Woman's Place: A Follow-Up Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine-Advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 10(5), 213-214.
- Whipple, W. Thomas., and Courtney. E .Alice. (1985). Female Role Portrayals in Advertising and Communication Effectiveness: A Review. *Journal of Advertising*, 14 (3), 4-8, 17.

Appendix

Questionnaire For Collecting Primary Data

Demographic Details

1. Which age group do you belong to?

- a) 16-20
 b) 21-25
 c) 26-30
 d) 31-40
 e) 41 & Above

2. Gender of Respondent?

- a) Male b) Female

3. Have you seen the following advertisements?



- a) Yes b) No

4. **Do you think that now-a-days advertisements use women only as decorative objects for influencing and diverting the mindset of people**

- a) Agree b) Disagree

5. **Does most advertisements over-emphasize physical beauty and sexuality of women in an exaggerated manner.**

- a) Agree b) Disagree

6. **Does portrayal of woman in advertisements affect our cultural values**

- a) Yes b) No

7. **Do you think there is a need for regulation of the content of advertisements.**

- a) Agree
 b) Disagree
 c) Don't Know

PICTURES SUPPORTING THE STUDY



CHI-SQUARE TEST WORKING

<p>Null Hypothesis</p>	<p>The portrayal of woman in advertisements do have an effect on the cultural values.</p>
-------------------------------	---

<p>Alternative Hypothesis</p>	<p>The portrayal of woman in advertisements do not have an effect on the cultural values.</p>
--------------------------------------	---

OBSERVED FREQUENCY

Age	Yes	No	Total
16-20 Years	18	17	35
21-25 Years	7	11	18
26-30 Years	17	8	25
31-40 Years	8	7	15
41 & Above Years	2	5	7
Total	52	48	100

EXPECTED FREQUENCY

Age	Yes	No	Total
16-20 Years	18.2	16.8	35
21-25 Years	9.36	8.64	18
26-30 Years	13	12	25
31-40 Years	7.8	7.2	15
41 & Above Years	3.64	3.36	7
Total	52	48	100

CALCULATED VALUE

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
18	18.2	-0.2	0.04	0.002
17	16.8	0.2	0.04	0.002
7	9.36	-2.36	5.5696	0.595
11	8.64	2.36	5.5696	0.645
17	13	4	16	1.231
8	12	-4	16	1.333
8	7.8	0.2	0.04	0.005
7	7.2	-0.2	0.04	0.006
2	3.64	-1.64	2.6896	0.739
5	3.36	1.64	2.6896	0.800
			Total	5.358

Content	Age
Significance Level	5%
Degree of Freedom	4
Calculated Value	5.358
Table Value	9.49

Result: The calculated value is lesser than the table value. If the calculated chi-square value for the set of data (5.358) is lesser than the table value (9.49), the result of the test supports the hypothesis.

DATA COLLECTION**Table-1: AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Sl. No.	Age Range of the Respondents	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	16-20 Years	35	35%
2	21-25 Years	18	18%
3	26-30 Years	25	25%
4	31-40 Years	15	15%
5	41 & Above Years	7	7%
	Total	100	100%

Table-2: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No	Gender	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	42	42%
2	Female	58	58%
Total		100	100%

Table-3: NOW-A-DAYS ADVERTISEMENTS USE WOMEN ONLY AS DECORATIVE OBJECTS FOR INFLUENCING AND DIVERTING THE MINDSET OF PEOPLE

Sl. No.	Responses	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	Agree	58	58%
2	Disagree	42	42%
Total		100	100%

Table-4: MOST ADVERTISEMENTS OVER-EMPHASIZE PHYSICAL BEAUTY AND SEXUALITY OF WOMEN IN AN EXAGGERATED MANNER.

Sl. No.	Responses	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	Agree	58	58%
2	Disagree	42	42%
Total		100	100%

Table-5: PORTRAYAL OF WOMAN IN ADVERTISEMENTS AFFECT OUR CULTURAL VALUES

Sl. No.	Responses	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	62	62%
2	No	38	38%
Total		100	100%

Table-6: THERE IS A NEED FOR REGULATION OF THE CONTENT OF ADVERTISEMENTS.

Sl. No.	Responses	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	Agree	52	52%
2	Disagree	19	19%
3	Don't Know	29	29%
Total		100	100%