

# International Journal of Advance Research in Computer Science and Management Studies

Research Article / Survey Paper / Case Study

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## *Portrayal of women in Indian TV advertisements: A study of audience perception (With reference to Mysore city)*

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*Abstract: Advertisements play a significant role in communicating messages. Advertisement articulates different ideas, attitudes and values which shape our social life and consumption pattern of consumer. “It articulates meaning to the words and images, though it depends on how we interpret them”. This study will explore the various ways that female characters are portrayed in a sample of advertisements to find out whether portrayals of female characters are fair and accurate representations. The primary data has been collected by administering a well – designed questionnaire. The survey was conducted in the city of Mysore with 100 respondents. Data has been analyzed by using the statistical tools T and ANOVA. 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.*

*Keywords: Advertisements, Women, Television and audience.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Advertisements play a significant role in communicating messages. Bovee (1995) define advertising as the “non-personal communication of information usually paid for and persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media.” Advertisement articulates different ideas, attitudes and values which shape our social life and consumption pattern of consumer. “It articulates meaning to the words and images, though it depends on how we interpret them”.

This study will explore the various ways that female characters are portrayed in a sample of advertisements to find out whether portrayals of female characters are fair and accurate representations. It is assumed that female characters are represented stereotypically; this is the overall finding of studies that have also looked at how female characters are portrayed in advertisements.

The aim is to explore how female characters are portrayed, this cannot be analyzed in isolation from male characters. Drawing on semiotic arguments of social structure and convention, the only way that the portrayal of female characters can be fully understood is by also having an understanding of how male characters are portrayed.

### II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- ❖ To find out the general perception of audience regarding the portrayal of women in TV ads.
- ❖ To find out the differences in perception between the male and female audience regarding the portrayal of women in TV advertisements.

- ❖ To find out the perception difference among the audience regarding the portrayal of women in TV advertisements on the basis of their age group.
- ❖ To explore the perception difference among the audience regarding the portrayal of women on the basis of their level of education.

### III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

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 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 audience of Mysore city.

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Research Design:** Descriptive research

#### SOURCES OF DATA:

##### 1) Primary data/ direct data:

The primary data has been collected by administering a well – designed questionnaire.

##### 2) Secondary data/ indirect data:

The secondary data has been gathered through available printed sources which include magazines, journals, and textbooks, through different websites.

#### SAMPLE SIZE:

The survey was conducted in the city of Mysore with 100 respondents.

#### Statistical Tools:

Data has been analyzed by using the statistical tools T and ANOVA.

#### LIMITATIONS:

- This research works aims on how women are been portrayed in advertisements.
- The research also looks in the cultural effect by such advertisements
- The survey sample is limited only to 100 respondents
- Research work carried over is only in the Mysore city.
- To fulfill the objectives of the study following statistical hypothesis were constructed and tested subsequently.

#### STATISTICAL HYPOTHESIS:

**H1:** There was no mean difference in the perception towards portrayal of women in Advertisements among the demographic classification.

To test the above statistical hypothesis t- test and one way ANOVA were used in accordance with demographic

classification.

To test H1, T-test was used and computed in the following table:

Group Statistics						
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Significant.
Role Portrayal	Male	44	29.20	4.021	-1.092	0.277
	Female	56	30.13	4.307		
Actual and Ideal Self	Male	44	12.14	2.890	2.523	0.013
	Female	56	10.63	3.037		
Lack of Ethics	Male	44	17.11	2.895	0.344	0.732
	Female	56	16.91	2.956		

From the above table following inferences were made.

1. Since  $P = 0.277 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondent on portrayal of women in advertisement – Role portrayal score between male and female respondent at 5% level of significance.
2. Since  $P = 0.013 < 0.05$ , the test was significant at 5% level of significance that is there exist significant mean difference in the perception on women portrayal in advertisement Actual and Ideal Self score between male and female respondents with male respondent has more score than female respondents and it was found to be statistically significant at 5%.
3. Since  $P = 0.732 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Lack Of Ethics score between male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.

#### AGE:

To test H1, ANOVA was used and computed in the following table:

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Role Portrayal	Between Groups	19.009	3	6.336	.354	.786
	Within Groups	1717.151	96	17.887		
	Total	1736.160	99			
Actual and Ideal Self	Between Groups	164.526	3	54.842	6.945	.000
	Within Groups	758.064	96	7.896		
	Total	922.590	99			
Lack of Ethics	Between Groups	78.934	3	26.311	3.310	.023
	Within Groups	763.066	96	7.949		
	Total	842.000	99			

From the above table following inferences were made.

1. Since  $P = 0.786 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Role Portrayal score between male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.
2. Since  $P = 0.000 < 0.05$ , the test was significant at 5% level of significance that is there exist significant mean difference in the perception on women portrayal in advertisement Actual and Ideal Self score between male and female respondents with male respondent has more score than female respondents and it was found to be statistically significant at 5%.
3. Since  $p = 0.023 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Lack of Ethics score between

male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.

### EDUCATION:

To test H1, ANOVA was used and computed in the following table:

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Role Portrayal	Between Groups	103.575	3	34.525	2.030	.115
	Within Groups	1632.585	96	17.006		
	Total	1736.160	99			
Actual and Ideal Self	Between Groups	192.841	3	64.280	8.456	.000
	Within Groups	729.749	96	7.602		
	Total	922.590	99			
Lack of Ethics	Between Groups	22.431	3	7.477	.876	.457
	Within Groups	819.569	96	8.537		
	Total	842.000	99			

From the above table following inferences were made.

1. Since  $P = 0.115 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Role portrayal score between male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.
2. Since  $P = 0.000 < 0.05$ , the test was significant at 5% level of significance that is there exist significant mean difference in the perception on women portrayal in advertisement – Actual and Ideal Self score between male and female respondents with male respondent has more score than female respondents and it was found to be statistically significant at 5%.
3. Since  $P = 0.457 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Lack of Ethics score between male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.

### MARITAL STATUS:

To test H1 T- test was and computed in the following table:

Group Statistics						
	M.S	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test value	Sig.
Role Portrayal	Unmarried	56	29.91	4.672	0.404	0.687
	Married	41	29.56	3.486		
Actual and Ideal Self	Unmarried	56	12.21	2.884	3.562	0.001
	Married	41	10.12	2.821		
Lack of Ethics	Unmarried	56	16.95	2.876	- 0.088	0.930
	Married	41	17.00	3.074		

From the above table following inferences were made.

1. Since  $P = 0.687 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Role portrayal score between male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.

2. Since  $P = 0.001 < 0.05$ , the test was significant at 5% level of significance that is there exist significant mean difference in the perception on women portrayal in advertisement – Actual and Ideal Self score between male and female respondents with male respondent has more score than female respondents and it was found to be statistically significant at 5%.
3. Since  $P = 0.930 > 0.05$ , the test was not significant at 5% level of significance, i.e. there was no significant mean difference in the perception of respondents on portrayal of women in advertisement – Lack of Ethics score between male and female respondents at 5% level of significance.

#### V. CONCLUSION

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

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