

## MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY IN ADVERTISEMENTS

Keerthy Sunil

Swamy Saswathikananda College Poothotta

### Abstract

Advertising is the techniques and practices used to bring products, services, opinions, or causes to public notice to persuade the public to respond in a certain way toward what is advertised. Besides promoting goods for sale, advertising methods are used to encourage people to support various charities, convey a bunch of meanings. My paper focuses on topic masculinity and femininity in advertisement. In advertisement image of women and men are shown in two different ways. Representations of gender in advertisements provide powerful models of behaviour to emulate or react against. Masculine images typically convey power, strength, virility, athleticism, and competitiveness whereas feminine images show beauty, submissiveness, household works, family goals etc.

**Keywords:** Gender stereotype, Advertisement, Masculinity and Femininity in advertisement.

### Introduction

Advertisements help people gain information regarding new products, methods, concepts and government schemes meant for the public. Advertisement has a tremendous impact on everyone's mind. This influence sometimes be lost lasted in youth, or on each individual mind. We know the use and usage of products that come in the market through advertisement. If there is no advertisement, we wouldn't even aware the need for such products and services. Similarly, advertisement helps a lot of people to give awareness about health matters. Through advertising we point out the timely vaccination as well as the hygiene that we should follow during the transmission of infectious diseases which also protect our health. It helps teenagers to find new and interesting job opportunity through ads and classifieds. Governments display ads to pay the tax on time and abide by the nation's law. Many times, public is not aware of the deadlines and may fail to file their taxes. By ads, governments can ensure that people pay taxes on time.

The ads are a major source of income for many big companies like Google, Yahoo, Newspapers, television channels, etc. Even many major sports events are sponsored through ads by big companies. Though some products are not good enough to perform as promised by ads, they are still promoted. This is done just with business in mind and not customer benefit. Some companies run a long-time advertisement for such useless products to make people get habituated to use them. In doing so, they try to prevent the growth of other better brands. Some of the ads are targeted towards students or children. This sometimes changes the behavior of children or students in their lifestyle, education and other areas. Advertising is shown in many ways. Shown on tv, shows on roadside signs etc. what is the problem is that when we see the image of ads in flex or billboards, we accidently think of it while driving which are distractible during driving. Based on content and messages some ads create a widespread controversy.

## **Masculinity and Femininity in Gender Studies**

Gender studies is an academic area of study they critically examine how gender shape our identities our society and world. It is an interdisciplinary area of study focuses on the complex interaction of gender. Masculinity and femininity are socially constructed ideas attributed to gender of a society. These are basically certain behavior either to behave masculine or feminine. This quality keeps on transferring from generation to generation. Every new child witnessed this quality and start adopting according to gender. Gender is socially constructed so all the quality which are basically given by the society. Masculinity represents as competent which means they are more competent; they have capable of achieving goals they set forth their own idea's goals. Feminine is categories to empathetic their responsibility is to take care of other help other, even for other they were willing to quit their dreams and goals. This are socially constructed and it vary according to mentality of each society. Male are very much calculated before taking a step or achieving goal. Female is sensitive. Male of society are more authoritative They impose their will to other, female accepting the will of male and they're by we can say that male is independent and female are dependent. This all things are socially constructed and it vary according to society. Society makes those difference as feminine and masculine.

In television advertisement male and female represented differently. Women were always related with house hold chores were as men appeared in electronic, office works. And also, there were more women in swim, underwear, aprons, and often showing more skin, being sexualized and objectified as a marketing technique to sell the product, while men were dressed in

suits and casual clothing. The portrayal of gender roles is still a prevalent issue. Major function of advertisement is that it shows the viewers how to live and it also portray how a real women and real men would be. Representations of gender in advertisements provide powerful models of behavior to emulate or react against. Masculine images typically convey power, strength, virility, athleticism, and competitiveness whereas feminine images show beauty, submissiveness, nurturance, and cooperation. Such themes appear repeatedly in popular culture and are often accepted by those who see them as natural aspects of the human condition.

People are very much attracted when they see advertisements, some advertisements are very informative and some are discriminatory in another way. Some advertisements show men's masculinity and their strength and power, in other ways women are recognized as doing household chores and family responsibilities. In Ariel advertisement we can see when a boy is doing household work it is considered as helping hand and when girls doing same thing it is considered as responsibility. Research also found that in most of the advertisement's men are more likely to be shown as leaders, speaking about power and achievement compare to women. 48% of advertisements reinforced gender stereotype. Women are usually shown as ruling the domestic sphere like cooking food, serving food, taking care of their children. While men pose with domestic appliances, women are shown using them. When it is outdoor product like car women were dominated by men. A study shows that number of female drivers doubled in the last 5 years but ads cannot reflect it. In advertisement female beauty is represented as something which can be used as an object to earn money and fame. Placed in sections for fun and relaxation, a

woman presents herself within the boundaries of her body, eroticized and objectified and female sexuality is projected. The Slice advertisement uses the sexual connotation associated with certain sweet food items such as chocolates and applies it to mangoes. This sexuality is also evident through the semi-bare Katrina Kaif in the ad. Overtly sexual advertisements like Lux Soap may represent the use of a subconscious symbolic language that recognizes the indirect link between sexuality and a desire for consumer goods. These explicit images in advertisement give women an emancipated choice of consumption meanings. Male physicality is the source of male power during adolescence and early manhood. These men have excelled in their physical development and power to the point that their semi-nude bodies stand as models of emulation for others. Pictures of women are common in magazines, Women in such contexts are invariably depicted as sexual object for men. Their bodies are scantily clothed, breasts are well-developed, and the women are young and sexually attractive.

In advertisements such as building houses, painting, ads of cement they give prominence to males. In the advertisement of cooking oil, dishwash liquid, washing machine, household utensils women are portrayed. Drastic change in the field of advertisement: In the recent advertisements we can see a drastic change in the depiction of gender stereotypes. For example: the warmth of relationship and the happy moments of the woman during the childhood are portrayed in the Sunlight advertisement, which highlights that the woman is cherishing the good old days and still she is capable of enjoying the company of the children irrespective of her age. The woman empowerment is portrayed through the advertisement Hammam. Girls should be independent to face any adverse

circumstance in the `current society. There are many other ads which speak on the equality of all the genders in the society, Though the govt had taken several measures to uplift the transgenders, it was in vain, but these ads give a new ray of hope for changing their lives. Nowadays we can see the change in the role of men and women, men also are also a part of household chores such as washing, cleaning the utensils etc.

### **Methodology**

Discrimination on the basis of gender can be seen in every walk of our life whether it is in the field of sports, arts and in advertisements too. The basis of this discrimination is to be critically analysed and the key aspects to be dealt with. Since media plays a pivotal role in bringing about changes in the attitude of the people and advertisements can influence the people to a great extent, a study on gender stereotypes in advertisements will help the people to get an awareness on the discrimination that existed in the past and the positive changes which we can see in the present scenario.

So, I critically examined the differences in this regard and observed closely how the distinctions on the basis of gender are portrayed. This was done by reading, watching videos and highlighting the instances which depicted women as home maker and men as powerful for e.g.: as house makers and men as the masters. Advertisements have been distinguished and studied in different ways such as advertisements focused on children, advertisements that show the difference between male and female etc, have been analysed and studied.

### **Result**

In television advertisement male and female represented differently.

Research also found that in most of the advertisement's men are more likely to be shown as leaders, speaking about power and achievement compare to women. 48% of advertisements reinforced gender stereotype. Women are usually shown as ruling the domestic sphere like cooking food, serving food, taking care of their children. While men pose with domestic appliances, women are shown using them.

In the recent advertisements we can see a drastic change in the depiction of gender stereotypes. The woman empowerment is portrayed through the advertisement. Nowadays we can see the change in the role of men and women, men also are also a part of household chores such as washing, cleaning the utensils etc. Apart from these, advertisements try to uplift the life of transgender through the vivid portrayal.

### Conclusion

The world has got a lot competitive. Everyone wishes to be ahead in the competition. In this regard, advertisement proves to be very useful for businessmen and traders. Advertisement is done for several different things. Employment column lists job vacancies that prove to be highly advantageous for unemployed candidates. Matrimonial advertisement serves as one of the trusted and effective channels to find bride or groom for marriageable prospects. Advertisement proves to be beneficial and informative to people in all walks of life. A few years down the line, we used to view advertisements via traditional mode such as newspapers, movie theatre, magazines and walls of buildings, but today television has become the most important way to spread information about any product or service to people. Advertisements are very informative and some are discriminatory in another way. In advertisement image of

women and men are shown in two different ways. Representations of gender in advertisements provide powerful models of behaviour to emulate or react against. Masculine images typically convey power, strength, virility, athleticism, and competitiveness whereas feminine images show beauty, submissiveness, household works, family goals etc. Nowadays advertisement made drastic change in depiction of gender stereotype. There are many other ads which speak on the equality of all the genders in the society.

### References

**Kumar. Sunitha** Representation of women in advertisement. International journal of Advanced Scientific Technologies in Engineering and Management studies. vol.3. January 2017

**Barr O M William.** Representations of Masculinity and Femininity in Advertisements. Advertising and society review. vol 7. issue2.2006.

**Gee Rachel.** The representation of women in advertising hasn't improved in a decade. Marketing week. 21 June 2017.

Feminism in India. Do Our Ads Stereotype Women? | Feminism In India & Engendered <https://youtu.be/GMQDaXB1G8o> Dec 5 2018

C S S World Masculinities and femininity. Gender Studies Part 12. <https://youtu.be/vVm-wcryoLE> March 15 2021