

*Advertisement and Gender : A Critical Discourse**Analysis**Assistant Prof . Adil Malik Khanfar**University of Basrah - College of Arts***Abstract:**

The Study attempts a Critical Discourse Analysis ( CDA) of gender in some selected advertisements . It is hypothesized that men and women are differently introduced in these advertisements and women are used as sex objects for the persuasive purpose of attracting the targeted audience . In the theoretical side of the study , there is a discussion of the definition and functions of CDA , advertising , and the kind of discourse employed in advertising in addition to highlighting gender role and stereotyping in advertising . Findings of the analysis verify the hypothesis of the study to a large extent . The main conclusion is that advertising discourse is not neutral , and on the contrary , it is very largely biased to the superiority of the role of men in society . Women are objectified for sex appeal and the sex address in the advertisements is direct and open .

## الاعلان والجنس : خطاب نقدي تحليلي

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### الملخص:-

تحاول الدراسة تحليل الخطاب النقدي للجنس في بعض الإعلانات المختارة. ومن المفترض أن الرجال والنساء يتم إدخالهم بشكل مختلف في هذه الإعلانات وتستخدم النساء كأدوات جنسية لغرض مقنع لجذب الجمهور المستهدف. في الجانب النظري للدراسة، هناك مناقشة لتعريف ووظائف الهيئة، والإعلانات، ونوع الخطاب المستخدم في الإعلان بالإضافة إلى إبراز الدور الجنساني والقبولية في الإعلان. نتائج التحليل تتحقق من فرضية الدراسة إلى حد كبير. الاستنتاج الرئيسي هو أن الخطاب الإعلاني ليس محايداً، بل على العكس من ذلك، فإنه منحازة إلى حد كبير لتفوق دور الرجل في المجتمع. وتعتز المرأة على الاستئناس الجنسي، كما أن عنوان الجنس في الإعلانات مباشر ومفتوح.

## 1 . Introduction

Gender variations have been in existence since ever and manifest themselves in the different social , economic , political and cultural settings . Everything that exists or is done in life is mainly defined according to gender preferences or standards . Gender stereotypes in societies are mainly and heavily achieved by the mass media and these stereotypes are most of the time used to produce a universal medium through which the recipients not only respond to and accept but also build preferences . The mass media is also considered a source of infotainment and a way of shaping people's attitudes, opinions and beliefs . Generally , advertising is an important part of the mass media through which it practises influence over societies .

Advertising, as a social discourse , has been investigated in the many disciplines of linguistics , semiotics , psychology , sociology and anthropology . Specialized studies of advertising discourse appeared when advertisement and commercials became a widespread phenomenon and accessible to all people as a very powerful language of persuasion .Those studies were mainly interested in the rhetorical structures in the advertising texts and on how advertising can influence beliefs , morals and ethics of the society .

The primary aim of this paper is to examine advertising and to provide a critical discourse analysis of gender as portrayed in advertising . The discourse analysis discussion in this study aims at revealing the social and psychological aspects of the message within the text rather than its structure and therefore it focuses on the flow of the language and is not concerned with the phonology, morphology , syntax or semantics of the data . Investigation also involves the gender roles as assigned in

advertising . The study is applying Wodak's historical-discourse approach as the model of Critical Discourse Analysis .

To accomplish the aims of the study , the researcher highlights the significance of advertising to media and defines the characteristics of advertisements and the influence of identity , gender and stereotyping in advertising . Practically , the study tests sex , gender and identity in advertising and reviews some existing case studies that provide a similar analysis . Seven advertisements are analyzed to achieve the aim of the study . It is hypothesized in the study that woman is depicted as sexual and physical object of attraction to sell products and services . Hence , this paper will be limited to the sexual objectification of women in advertisements and to the male-targeted type of advertisements only . The main questions that this study tries to answer are how gender roles are assigned in advertising and how women are objectified as a tool of sex appeal. It is very important to mention that the advertisements analyzed in this study are only the male- targeted ones and the researcher suggests female-targeted advertisements for further study . It is also of great importance to mention that the researcher is not necessarily advocating or supporting any of the ideas he is presenting in this study . Besides , the advertisements that are selected and analyzed in this study are exclusively of an American background and environment .

## **2. Critical Discourse Analysis ( CDA )**

Critical discourse analysis is a kind of analysis that examines the relationship between power and discourse . It , particularly , investigates the way in which authority , dominance and social inequality are constructed , sustained, reproduced and resisted in the discourse of written and spoken texts . One of the fundamental empirical and theoretical questions in CDA is “how

easily or not the human mind can be tricked , deceived or manipulated through the use of language “ ( Wodak & Chilton ,2005 : 41 ) . The roots of CDA lie in rhetoric , text linguistics , anthropology , philosophy , socio-psychology , cognitive science , literary studies and sociolinguistics as well as in linguistics and pragmatics ( Wodak & Meyer 2009: 1) . Unlike discourse analysis and text linguistics , CDA does not only focus on the spoken or written text as objects of inquiry , but it also provides description of the social processes and structures that give rise to the production of the text and of the social processes and structures for individuals or groups to create meanings in their interaction with the texts ( Ibid : 2-3 )

For Van Dijk (2006: 729 ) , CDA is concerned with the way that discourse , cognition , and society are critically related . It is a multidisciplinary orientation that focuses on the fundamental importance of discourse alongside that of society and cognition . It is not limited to socio-cognitive aspects but it is more concerned with the influence between them . The analyst must keep an eye on the historical , cultural and economic dimensions and other approaches and to deal with the text in the real-world setting . Van Dijk ( 1995:17) sees that “ideologies are typically , though not exclusively , expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication , including non-verbal semiotic messages such as pictures , photographs and movies “.

The notion of power , especially that of groups and institutions, is central in CDA . Different types of power are distinguished according to the different sources employed to exercise such power . The basic thesis is that if we can influence the minds of people in their knowledge or opinions , we can , indirectly by means of persuasion and manipulation control their actions whether they like them or they are against their will .

Fairclough ( 1992: 153 ) defines CDA as

**Discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices , events and texts and (b) wider social and cultural structures , relations and processes to investigate how such practices ,events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony .**

It appears that methods of CDA constitute a useful approach because they are the best methods provided not only for analyzing texts and images adequately but also for putting them in analyzable relations to socio-cultural processes , structures and changes . It is evident that CDA is a useful tool to investigate power and ideology in discourse . In this concern , Wodak (1999: 8 ) thinks that CDA :

**centres on authentic everyday communication in institutional , media ,political or other locations rather than on sample sentences or sample texts constructed in linguists' minds . CDA regards both written and spoken discourse as a form of social practice .... In other words , discourse constitutes social practice and is at the same time is constituted by it .**

Generally , there are three main approaches in CDA ,namely Fairclough's critical approach , Van Dijk's socio- cognitive approach , and Wodak's discourse-historical analysis . Fairclough's ( 1995 : 91 ) first approach is derived from sociolinguistics and the relationship between power and language in the social context . He believes that language use is shaped socially as opposed to individually . He proposes

variation on the use of language according to the form , participants , settings , and the topic of discussion . Fairclough (Ibid ) mentions that even though sociolinguistics emphatically describes the difference in facts , it, however, fails to clarify that the events are products of power struggles and relations . He believes that dialogue is a mode of actions like asking ,warning ,asserting and promising . Fairclough's( 1995:58) : ) three dimensional framework is important for advertisement analysis . It is appropriate for studying socio-cultural changes since this framework makes up a link between social practice and language . The framework is made of three steps : The first one deals with text analysis , the second is a discourse practice like the process of productions and consumption and the third one is socio-cultural practice that gives rise to the communicative event . Fairclough ( Ibid ) first focuses on the text in his three part model . The text includes linguistic analysis that focuses on vocabulary ,syntax , semantic cohesion ..etc. He states that "linguistic analysis is concerned with presences as well as absences in texts that could include representations , categories of participant , and constructions of participant identity or participant relations " .

Typical areas of study in which CDA methods are used include gender inequality , media discourse , political speech , racial segregation , nationalism , and ethnocentrism . Media discourse has heavily influenced gender biased studies . Traditional analytical approaches reveal a biased pattern of sexism and racism in texts , speech , images and illustrations . Early studies focused on the surface structure of media content ; mainly on the content analysis , whereas CDA has included the concept of language analysis . Two theorists in CDA , namely Fairclough and Wodak ,summarize the primary doctrines of

CDA into certain points . A CDA should address social issues , possesses informative and conversational power relations , and involves the ideological work . The theorists also state that CDA's primary focus is on society and culture , and it creates a link between text , language , and the community . The approach is frequently explanatory , interpretive and is presented as a form of social action .

### 3. Advertising

The terms "advertisement "and "advertising "are derived from the Latin "advertee " which means "turn towards " ( Goddard , 2002 : 9 ) . Posters and wall inscriptions promoting goods and services are ancient , dating back to the early civilizations .This is proved in the archaeological evidence found today . In modern times , advertising began in the 1450s with the invention of the printing press . The first advertisement in English appeared in 1472 and it was a handbill tacked on church doors announcing a prayer book for sale . 200 years later , the first newspaper advertisement was a reward for returning 12 stolen horses . The art of advertisement spread after the wide use of radio , television and other forms of media . Advertising became a significant part of the industry that gave rise to the formation of advertising agencies and incorporation of trade in education . The advertising industry evolved from being just making announcements to world companies competing for a segment of the market . This competition led to the innovation of new ways to appeal to the audience's needs , including the use of gender as sexual appeal . In today's society , it is nearly impossible to avoid being exposed to advertising because it occurs in many casual situations regardless of whether it is a sign on a bus passing by , a television commercial or food packages in the grocery store ( Karlsson , 2015 : 1 ) . Nowadays , marketing

through the internet has opened new fronts and presented novel methods for advertisers and led to the net sites revolution at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century . Besides , google revolutionized online advertising and made it an interactive one .

Of the many definitions given to advertising , Davidson ( 1992: 3 ) sees that it is “a social language , a genre of spectator/reader experience , a technique of persuasion ...almost a world on its own right ,with its own languages , customs and history “. Advertisements are also viewed as “ message systems designed to organize perceptions and create structures of meaning “ ( Williamson , 1978: 12 ). The main function of advertisements as seen by Cook (1992 : 5 ) is that they are means by which goods or services are promoted to the public and they “also amuse , inform , misinform , worry , warn ... though it may be argued that these functions are all in the service of the main function “. Danesi ( 2015 : 1 ) finds that the discourse in the advertisements is used not only for brand advertising , but also as a vehicle to promote social issues and causes and as a central strategy in political campaigning . As a conclusion , the roles for advertising are identified as being the following :

- To influence behaviour of others in the supply chain.
- To create awareness of products , ideas or services .
- To facilitate changes .
- To reinforce the behaviour of existing customers and users .
- To create organizational brand image .

Advertisements could be either commercial or non-commercial . Vestergaard and Schroder ( 1985 : 3 ) divide commercial advertising to that which tries to enhance the general image of a company in the eyes of the public , industrial or trade advertising which advertises products or services to

other companies rather than individual consumers , and finally commercial consumer advertising which is the most common one in the media .

#### 4. Advertisement and Discourse

Cook ( 2001: 113 ) outlines that advertisement is “a carefully-designed and widely distributed multi-modal act of communication “ . In all cases , it should be informative and persuasive . To do so , advertising uses verbal language to express ideas often accompanied by a picture , a symbol , music and / or some computer animation or video . Similarly , modern online advertising conveys its messages by means of intertextuality to influence the targeted audience . One way of addressing is using language either only by itself or with other methods to create stereotypes ( Hermeren , 1999: 40 ) . Hermeren ( Ibid : 35 ) realizes the process of persuasion within advertisement as consisting of four components : comprehension , acceptance , attitude change and retention of the message . In another word , for a message to be functionally persuasive , it should first be comprehended and accepted by the receiver who as a result will create a positive attitude towards what is being promoted by the message . Egorova ( 2014 : 2 ) argues that the advertiser has no interpersonal relation with the viewer and , thus , he can create one by depending on the linguistic sources he has .

As far as cohesion is concerned , Cook ( 2001: 157 ) , finds out that the most distinctive features of advertising is its using of pronouns ( anaphora ) . In discourse in general , the first person ‘ I ’ means the addresser and ‘ you ’ is the addressee . Cook (Ibid) argues that ‘ you ’ in advertising is a kind of double exophora i.e. referring to someone in the advertisement and to the viewer as well . However , this is not always true because sometimes ‘ we ’ is used to involve the addresser and the addressee .The

presence of other participant or participants creates an illusion of a dialogue being carried out between the character in the advertisement and the viewer .

The previous knowledge of the receiver is very heavily depended on ( Egorova 2014 : 12 ). That is why , the advertiser is interested in referring to someone or something that is assumed to be familiar to the viewer who will then decide whether he is in or out of what is attempted to be advertised and promoted ( Yule 1999: 12 ). On the other side , Goddard ( 2002 : 5 ) claims that for an advertisement to be successful, it “ must use our commonly shared resources of language in ways that affect us and mean something to us “ . She means to say that advertisements , as forms of discourse , make powerful contribution to how we construct our identities ( Ibid : 4 ) and sometimes face difficulties to decode messages and /or understand the different address relations in the advertisement ( Ibid : 10 ) . Linguistic resources and linguistic consideration are the cornerstones in any advertisement processing and design . Goldman ( 1992 quoted in Najafian & Ketabi : 2011 : 3 ) assigns the position of language in advertising “ not only as commodities joined to signs , [ but ] commodities that get produced as signs and signs become produced as commodities “ .

Generally , advertising is viewed as a form of discourse that influences the structure of language , the modality of lifestyle and the content of the everyday life communications and relational exchanges ( Mercycline ,2015 : 14 ) . Messages of advertisement have become very significant in our life and culture to the extent that Beasley & Danesi ( 2002:1 ) think that “ brand names , logos , trademarks , jingles , and slogans have become part and parcel of the mental encyclopaedia of virtually everyone who lives in the modern society “ .

The study of advertising as a discourse is not new . It can be noticed in a number of publications , especially those that are related to ideology , materialism , sexism.. etc . For example , Cook's book in 1992 *The Discourse of Advertising* investigates the theories of linguistics in advertising and the book of Meyers in 1994 *Words in Ads* examines the sentence construction , the use of pronouns , metaphors, puns and slogans in advertising and it analyses the discourse of advertisements empirically by using a means of investigating their cultural meanings . Evidently , creating a successful advertisement entails developing many competencies to convey the message , but mainly mastery and creativity in language .

Danesi ( 2015 : 5 ) considers rhetoric as the basis of the advertising style and he sees that the advertisers use many sophisticated rhetorical techniques to “construct their discourse genres “ . He believes that like poetry , advertising discourse tends to suggest meanings through metaphor, irony , analogy , illusion , humour ...etc . Rhetoric for Danesi ( Ibid : 6-7 ) works and is reflected in advertisement by the use of : ( the examples given in the brackets are provided by the researcher ) : (1) The conceptual metaphors ( brand names and direct metaphors , Adidas for example ) , (2) linguistic translation of visual images connected to a product or service , La Vach Kiri : the Laughing Cow for example ) , (3) brand names that stimulate our imagination , impelling us to glean sense from the mental image they evoke by coining them as conceptual metaphors , onomatopoeic forms and fine tunes ( light underwear that make you float on air ) ,(4) metonymy and irony ( The catching phrase : Rotana cinema : you can never close your eyes ) (5) what is called “silent advertisement “ where there is only the brand name and the metaphor is implied and not articulated and

needs no language to explicate it ( Macdonald ) . Also Danesi ( ibid: 7 ) lists some other features and strategies of advertising style that bring out its rhetorical nature . They are : jingles and slogans , imperative forms , formulae , alliteration and intentional omission. Williamson ( 1978 : 12 ) sees that advertising is a topic which both causes and reveals divisions in societies . Finally , it is certain that creating a successful advertisement entails developing a message , proper presentation , ample knowledge of the audience , experience and a real mastery of the creativity skills , mainly language .

### **5. Representation of Gender Role in Advertising**

Even before the era of dominance of the media on the large scale of today , disparity in the sex roles was known and recognized and it continued today with the same degree and pace in spite of the several reforms and campaigns especially by the feminist movements to merge the gap between the two genders . The media itself was used and is still used to enhance and strengthen gender inequality . Nowadays , the differences between the two sexes , especially in the west , are fewer and smaller due to the social , political and economic development . However, the media is still having its role in gender disparity but through a new modern culture's perspective . We can very easily say that the media is doing the same job but by a modernized stereotype of gender ( Kidd , 2014 : 112 ) .

From the time ever and right from the beginning of civilization , there has been a clear-cut separation of the gender roles . The different roles assigned for men and women in society are results of their different physical features ( Federici et al , 2007 : 9 ) . Men were characterized as faster and stronger with notable features such as shoulders , hands and feet whereas women were slower and smaller in form and of limited strength .

Men dominated also because of the role they played . The society considered women as being seen but not heard (Ibid : 10 )

With the development of the world in every aspect , the role of the two genders remained stagnant for a while until the feminist movement began to appear in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe ( Crymble , 2012 : 73 ). After that , women began to excel in several areas that were thought to be male dominant in the socio-economic and political fields . Women even became the primary providers in the family .

Stereotyping in advertising depends on the definition of the society's gender role . The society's views differ according to culture , upbringing and affiliation . For example , the west see the Africans and Asians as being too traditional while the Africans and Asians see the west as being too liberal . This is because of the different cultures of the two societies including their views towards men and women ( Conradie , 2013 : 9 ). The differences can be seen in how societies express themselves in music , dance , art and other media forms ; for example advertisements . Advertisements express the different aspects of the cultures according to the local beliefs and practices . Surely , most contents in media that are produced in the west appear as more liberated than those produced in areas of reversed cultures like Africa and Asia .

The first art of gender stereotyping comes from the target audience segmentation . Most of the products that are produced or promoted are either masculine or feminine related ( Maggie , 2014 : 13 ) . This does not only apply to the products but also to the standard styles of advertising . The main target in the advertisement of goods are women because they are the “homemakers “ and responsible for making daily purchases of consumable goods . On the other hand , men create a target

audience for business , products , investment , cars , cigarettes and sport gear .

Activities that are attributed to male target audience include driving cars , working and providing for the family as exclusive to their gender whereas it was almost a taboo for women especially in the Arab world, Asia and Africa to be associated with such activities ( Conradie ,2013 : 16 ) . Some Arabs ,for example, would not allow women to drive cars . As such, advertisers in these areas who target men represent men as the main characters in the commercial . While women are portrayed in a home setting , the men are depicted in work or in a dangerous environment . Always , women play a secondary role as recipients of the benefits of the products that are related and associated to men . However , women nowadays have also become investors , car drivers , employees in offices and also cigarette smokers.

It is the goal of the visual features of the commercials to create an attraction to the target audience . Advertising designers try their best to create a perfect visual representation of what looks presentable to the society . As an example of that is the face-ism and beauty phenomenon in the infomercials ( Matthew , 2007 : 516 ). Physical beauty in women is a point of attraction in the society while an attractive man is distinguished by his body features and personality . Advertisers use beauty to appeal to people of the opposite sex . For instance , if a product is targeted at men , then the advertisement will most likely introduce an attractive female to entice the men and vice versa if the product is targeted to women .

Men are also stereotyped as people who should be well-built , strong ,athletic and successful ( Kosut , 2012 : 22 ) . The man is also accompanied by a beautiful woman at his side and is

usually seen to be dressed in an expensive suit or outfit , driving a fancy car or partaking in an expensive lifestyle . The message that this portrayal communicates is that a man's success is defined by the property he acquires and the women he chooses to accompany him . In most communities , a person is not “ complete “ if he does not have property and a wife or a family .

The other gender stereotyping in advertising is the use of nudity and sex to sell . This is mainly applied to females and occasionally to men . Women play the role of seduction whereas men are the unsuspecting prey . Previously , this depiction was limited to beauty products and related items , but then it has spread to other areas in advertising . Men's nudity is used when appealing to the female market and female nudity is portrayed when appealing to men as the audience ( Margret et al , 2013: 161).

It is also noticed that gender stereotyping also applies to children in commercials . Little girls are shown as being people who prefer their mother's company at home , helping out in the kitchen and playing with dolls or other girls indoors whereas the young boys are more expressive in speech , and always playing outdoor sports or involved in athletic competitions . This depiction is an indication of how the media influences society to form stereotypes out of the young age as well .

### **5. 1. The Effect of Media Stereotyping in the Society**

The media plays a significant role in influencing and shaping the culture of communities . People have a tendency to consume media content as a reflection of the community's current situation or a reflection of a life they desire to have or avoid .Most countries have regulation bodies that dictate the type of content aired on broadcast channels and restrict nudity , abusive

language , segregation or promoting vices like theft or violence . However , they lack the full ability to regulate all content other than the ones mentioned because the interpretation of a message is dependant on the audience and not the communicator .

Advertising contributes mainly to the formation and spread of the existing stereotypes . Most of the commercials produced are fit for general audience , except for the products that are meant for adult use only; for example , condoms or alcohol ads . This means that the business reaches a large target audience of both genders and different ages and races . According to psychologists ,a message consumed via media stays in a person's subconscious memory and later offers itself as an option when an individual has to make a choice about a product or action to take ( Hackley , 2003 : 179 ) .

The face-ism and beauty phenomenon have had the greatest influence on adolescent behaviour . The media through advertising has set a standard of beauty that the teenagers try to imitate and emulate . It has led to the prevalence of cases such as anorexia to fit within a certain body weight preference , body modifications like bleaching , and the increased use of cosmetics products . Men , on the other hand , have resorted to the use of supplements or enrolment in body fitness programs to fit the desired look of masculinity ( O'Brien 2009: 11 ) .

The media also preaches that women should focus more on their appearance than empowering themselves through education and employment . According to the advertisements , all a woman needs to prosper in life are good looks , an attractive body , and a wealthy man as a companion. The advertisements also teach girls that education is the key to getting what they desire in life . Teenage boys are also taught that their success is defined by gaining wealth and having an attractive partner . Their

masculinity is determined by their physical appearance and involvement or association with a lifestyle of smoking , drinking , or being active in sports .

### **6. Methodology and Data analysis**

The study carries out an analysis of 7 advertisements that are chosen for their relation to its main concern i.e. gender role in advertisement . They are mainly American since the verification of the hypothesis of the study can be notably achieved throughout this kind of advertisement due to the liberal culture towards men and women in America . The advertisements chosen are all commercial . In all of them , Language ,and not only the picture, is intended to make the element of persuasion in the advertisement. Wodak's Historical-Discourse approach is the modal of analysis system in this study .

Wodak's historical approach is recognized for its effort to work multi-methodically and through an interdisciplinary way by using various empirical data such as background information and presupposition . The approach transcends language itself and focuses on the historical , socio-political and psychological aspects . Its triangulation strategy focuses on contextualizing a concept based on grammar , linguistic variables , and the social and historical context of the meaning within the sentence . Wodak ( 1999: 8 ) also deduces that there exists a dialectical link between speech practices and the context of social , institutional and situational structures . This implies that the situational , social and institutional settings affect speech and at the same way the same speech affects the discursive and non-discursive socio-political processes. This approach also contemplates inter-discursive and inter-textual variables ; which means that discourses are linked to each other in the first variable and texts are interrelated in the second one .

The following is a discussion of the data selected for this study:

1 . *Clothing Calvin Klein* advertised their product in a way that promoted gender stereotyping . They introduced two different advertisements for male and female clothing with two different taglines. The tagline for the male clothing reads “make money in my Calvin’s” whereas the female one reads “I seduce in my Calvin’s “ . The phrase “make money “ that is directed to men certainly means working to earn a living whereas the word ‘seduce’ is clearly associated with the feminine notion of women using sex to attract men . Analysis of the two phrases within the same context reveals that the commercial directly states that while men work to make money , women simply use their sexuality instead . The advertisement is , in a way , stating that , from a social perspective, women are typical seductresses while men are hard workers working to make money . The advertisement also implies that women are openly admitting to using their sexuality as a means of getting recognized by men and they are not ashamed of that . This is an indication of the social fact that women had played a more traditional role of being the homemakers whereas men were the providers . Therefore , we can say for sure that the text used in this advertisement makes use of the historical reflection of the women’s role in society .We can also think of this advertisement as an example to show the difference between language used in the past and present . whereas , openly speaking about sex was a taboo in many societies and a word like ‘seduce ‘ , which plainly insinuates sexual activity , could not be used in any form of media , it is now exploited straightforward as a means of direct sex appeal .

2. *Ford* had an advertisement of women locked up in the boot with tagline “Leave your worries behind with *Ford*’s extra-large boot “. In countries of Southeast Asia , and particularly India , the language of this advertisement may be understood as an acceptance of women kidnapping . People in India and these countries are still struggling against the vice of violent crimes against women such as kidnapping , rape and assault and this makes the commercial distasteful among these people . Women have for a long time been viewed as marginal in the society in comparison to men . Furthermore , they are more prone to being victims of rape , kidnapping and theft because they are physically ‘weak ‘ in comparison to men . The advertisement is an attempt to glorify the message of women as the weaker gender , and emphasizes that the car *Ford* has room for many women to fill in because of their weak body-built and implicitly kidnapping many women is no longer a problem in this car . Indirectly , it creates a perception that it is okay to violate women by kidnapping them . Kidnapping by itself is not a vice . Potential kidnappers will not be afraid of kidnapping women because they are already exposed to the notion that women are weak and unable to defend themselves . This kind of car will help to assert this fact in the society more and more . On the contrary , this company helps the kidnappers and provides a car large enough to carry as many of these weak kidnapped creatures as wanted . The problem is not the kidnapping itself , but in finding a car large enough to carry the kidnapped . Now it is no longer a problem with this car .

3. *Warner’s clothing company* promoted their women underwear products by developing a campaign that used the image of a pear fruit with the tagline “This is no shape for a girl “. The phrase “shape for a girl “indicates that there is a certain opinion

formed for the acceptable female shape . According to Warner's clothing company , a lady shape should definitely not be like a pear , and because of that , ladies of a pear shape who do not feel comfortable in their shape, can find means of altering it by buying their product . Again this advertisement conveys the message that the identifying factor of femininity by which we primarily recognize women is their physical forms .

Women may be well knowledgeable and experts in other trades but even though not having a particular kind of shape is reason enough to dismiss and overlook their capability . It also dictates that women should not love themselves for who they are , and try their best to fit into the society's expectations( men particularly ) instead . It is noticed that commercial produced in the earlier eras were less concentrating on the physical aspect in women because of the sensitivity of publically speaking about sex or related matters . Thus , that issue in the gender role may not have been so much relevant and prevailing as it is today but the current explosion of media forms has further spread it .

4. *Acura IT Outsourcing organization* came with an advertisement captioned "some tasks are better sourced ". The image used in the advertisement is a nude full-figured or overweight woman lying in front of a man holding his head in disbelief . The meaning implied in the language and image of the advertisement is that full -figured women are not capable of satisfying men in bed . The language used in the advertisement portrays a hidden sexual interpretation and clarifies the concept of accepted beauty in the society . Definitely , overweight women do not represent this accepted beauty . As for the main message of the advertisement , the organization intended to say that there are other companies but they are incapable of performing the IT tasks satisfactorily ( like the overweight

women in bed ) and , therefore , you should ask for the IT services in this company to avoid disappointment . Again , this is a reflection of the general society's perception of gender roles that men are better at handling complex tasks than women . The language used in the advertisement asks people to seek IT in this organization services . It is an implication that the woman used in the advertisement has already failed at the task even before attempting it . Generally , the media portrays men as hard workers who are capable to achieve and complete tasks in the best way whereas women can get off with failure . Even though women are still viewed as being incapable of handling some tasks , this seems to be an improvement from how they were perceived before . Historically , women were not allowed to participate in problem-solving tasks that were not domestically related . Apparently enough ,this advertisement , in a way , confines the women's role to that of a sexual nature . Surprisingly , the abuse of women is very clear and it is ironically used as a means to glorify men's role in society in a very biased mode .

5. Gender sensitivity is most influentially depicted in the advertisement of the "Always Like a girl " campaign . In this advertisement , which is addressing young males , use of the phrases "run like a girl ," fight like a girl " or "throw like a girl " are used , whether directly or ironically , to confirm that the society still thinks less of the female sex . By itself , the phrase "like a girl " depicts the female gender as being lacking , short of and unable to achieve certain tasks and meet certain expectations in society . Both the younger and adult males in the advertisement act in a way that shows the phrase "like a girl " to mean less than what a man is capable of doing .

This line of thought is an evidence that the society prepares young boys from an early stage in their life that they are superior to their female counterparts . Moreover , the advertisement also introduces the same aspect among the younger girls that are yet to be exposed to society's perception of gender roles . They perceive "like a girl " quite differently from the adults and that indicates that children grow up knowing that they are equal . In comparison , the stereotype is , to a large extent , more apparent in case of the adults than the Young or the kids . Again , the language and audience perception of the advertisement is an indication of how the group of adults perceived gender roles before and how they currently perceive it . The young girls grow up being oblivious to the "like a girl "thinking but start to believe the notion that they are less able than men later due to how the media and people around them influence their views and beliefs .

6 . *Old Spice body wash* : A picture of a beautiful woman licking vanilla ice cream with the accompanying words that read as "SURE, SHE'S ATTRACTIVE , SULTRY, EVEN . BUT SHE IS ONLY EATING IT BECAUSE IT TASTES GOOD AND IT IS HOT WHERE SHE HAPPENS TO BE " . The advertiser wants to show an attractive beautiful woman having vanilla ice-cream outdoor after having a shower using the product ( Old Spice ) . The advertisement depicts the woman in a stereotypical and sexual way to attract customers in a cheap and dirty method . Everything in this advertisement ( picture ,colour and language ) refers to sex . The woman is objectified as a sex appeal and as a means of sexual attractiveness . The language used is to attract attention to the product through a stereotyped woman as an object of sex . It uses small and easy phrases to be easily understood or read by all clients . Use of the capital and

underlining of some phrases is an attempt to make the reader or viewer notice more closely the message intended . Generally , this advertisement connects the idea of cleanness and sex and beauty , mainly by language and partially by picture .

Viewer's interpretation is very important element of persuasion in this advertisement , especially the use of the pronoun 'it' and the phrase 'eating it' . Especially males do not need any background to receive the message hidden in the advertisement which is the sexual intercourse with attractive women who use Old Spice in their showers . The pronoun 'it' is used three times to refer to the vanilla ice-cream . However, this 'it' refers to another thing just like the words 'attractive , sultry , hot , even and taste' that reflect other meanings . The use of the adjective 'hot ' is figurative to complete the mental image in the minds of the customers because definitely the ice -cream is not hot . The advertiser merges the picture of the woman with these words to create a mental concept that the audience can understand in the way intended by the advertiser .

It is noticed that the visual elements in this advertisement are strong , but have nothing to do with what they are trying to sell . It is clear that the target is men or even specific sort of women . It appears as if it is a promotion of the ice cream and not the body wash . Language is the decisive indicator of the real intention of the advertisement i.e. to attract people sexually to the product .

7. Marc Jacobs products of perfume for both men and women are good indicative examples of the view towards women as objects of sex appeal . We see women almost in all such advertisements whether they are directed to men or women . Women are depicted as always seducing men and the men are gentlemen ready to be trapped through women to buy the

products . Very beautiful women with Hollywood smile are in front or in the background of the picture attracted to the men who are supposedly the buyers of the product . In another word , the advertisement intends to say : buy this perfume to trap this beautiful lady . There is a direct open call to sex by the main target of sex for every man i.e. such as the beautiful women viewed in the advertisement , but this is only achieved through the magic of this perfume .

The phrase “ For gentlemen only “ ironically refers to women more than to the product i.e. the perfume . It addresses the senses and sensation of both sexes to the sexual intercourse . Specifically in advertisements of perfume , we see equal roles for the two genders . Men are also objectified to attract women to the perfumes produced for them . However , whether the targeted audience is men or women , the means of attraction is one and the same ; it is sex .

## 7. Conclusion

It is necessary to state that the analysis in this study is far from being exhaustive . However , the number and kind of the advertisements chosen serve in the best way the main aim of the study which is to examine advertising as a discourse : how advertisements are presented to persuade a viewer to buy a particular product or to promote the product in as a desirable way as possible . Particularly in this concern , the relationship between the advertiser and the received role of gender in society and how women are objectified as sex appeal have also been described and highlighted .

The main conclusions of the study are the following :

1 . The advertisement is not just a tool to present a product or a service . It is rather a tool of persuasion which has its own ideologies . The producers , through the advertisers , use their

power and ideology to develop and change the behaviour and thought of people . However , if people become aware of this fact , they can resist this effect .

2 . The advertiser tries to impose his own interest and concern ( which is to promote the product ) on the viewer . In order to make this imposition successful , the advertiser has to create an imagined interpersonal relationship with the viewer . For this purpose , advertisers heavily depend on stereotyping ( mostly of beautiful women ) to create this kind of relationship and to convey their messages .

3 . Advertising discourse is not in any sense neutral . It is very largely biased to the superiority of the role of men in society . This is evidently shown in the language and all the other semiotic resources that make the advertisement , particularly the image . Sometimes , the same advertisement is introduced in two versions or at least with two different taglines : one for males and the other for females . The two versions indicate completely two different types of addressing very clearly and purposefully to evoke different tendencies that lead to the promotion and buying of the product .In such advertisements , we can very easily notice what we may call social discrimination and abuse towards women through the gender roles assigned for men and women .Sex is the main ,and to a large extent the only , role assigned to women . Women are depicted as weak , powerless and secondary to men in position and social statue .

We can say for sure that women are used as sexual objects .Sex is always the aim . Pictures and taglines are always used as tools to evoke desire whether explicitly or implicitly to persuade men to buy the advertised product . Sometimes , it seems as if it is an appreciation of the values of beauty and feminism , but close consideration will reveal the other social values that reflect the

real terminal objectives behind the surface scene of the advertisement i.e. the sex appeal . Women and the different gender roles are heavily utilized in certain advertisements of fashion , jewellery , perfume and cosmetics which could be normal for stereotype of women in general . What is odd is that women as sex objects are also used in some unrelated services and businesses like construction , communication , motors ...etc.

4 . The text ( language ) and the image accompany each other in a way that makes it easier to show the message intended . Sometimes , even the mismatch is rhetorically intended because the advertiser is addressing the mind ( through the background knowledge ) and not merely the audio-visual senses . For example , figure , shape and nudity of women are the main elements that are mostly highlighted in one or both of the language and the image . Social values and views will be the basic determinants of attracting the consumers . In another word , the advertisement reflects these values and views very vividly .

5 . Advertisers for a long time assigned women the role as less knowing , less capable and less intelligent than men . They are house makers and not decision makers or problem solvers . On the other side , men are assigned the role of the family providers and protectors . Some advertisers belittle women to the extent that they are treated as commodities or goods that merely and solely function to satisfy the needs of men . Women are depicted as weak and it is tolerable that we abuse them and use violence against them . Some advertisers think and introduce the best ways to humiliate and hurt women .

6 . In advertising , women are only used to attract consumers . They are exploited as a means of sexual temptation . Depicting women in advertisements as sexual substance makes them self-objectified and easy to be dominated and controlled . At the

same time they are the object of the advertisement , they are also the target sometimes . This leads them to see and admit themselves as sexual objects caring for their physical appearance as beautiful , attractive and sexy ( This is not within the scope of this study and the researcher suggests it for further study ) . Consequently , they are socially exploited as an object of sex . This idea is reinforced in advertisements .

7 . The sex address is direct and open . Moreover , it is sometimes expressed in a bad way and a dirty language . Symbolism or allusion is not depended on since socially , it is not so sensitive or taboo , especially in modern times and in most of the societies to use women as sex objects to attract consumers .It is normal in such advertisements to find reference to the organs of sex or the sexual intercourse itself . Historically , this attitude might have changed occasionally but nowadays , things are all settled i.e. there is no place for such taboo in such kinds of advertisements .

8 . Mostly , in all times , there is no real difficulty on the part of the viewer to realize the main intention whether it is explicitly or implicitly interwoven within the elements of the advertisement including language ; simply because the social values are already fixed there in advance in the mind of the public concerning the gender roles . Though the aim of the producer and the advertiser seems as economic in the first place , we can notice the promotion of a certain ideology in such advertisements i.e. degrading women and their role in society and at the same time glorifying the role of man . Presupposition and background knowledge of the viewer ( particularly the man ) represent the basic strategies to realize the original deep message of the advertisement .

9 . The way of objectifying women for sex appeal in advertising can be understood as similar to exploiting them in other similar businesses , particularly prostitution , that also use and treat women as no more than objects ( as body and not somebody ). This tendency of gender role in advertising will not change in the near future unless the social and cognitive attitudes toward the two sexes change . Naturally , language is a reflection of this social and cognitive situation . Moreover ,ironically language is also the tool of serving these attitudes and the consumers will choose under the influence of persuasion of the text and the image i.e. linguistically and non- linguistically .

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