

## **A STUDY OF PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN ADVERTISEMENT IN INDIA**

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### **Abstract**

**The portrayal of women** in advertisements is the most controversial topic of discussion now-a-days. The presentation of women by media is not a new thing. From decades they have been portrayed in ads. In very earlier days she had been presented as housewife, mother, sister i.e. in stereotypical roles. From past two decades her presentation has been enjoying a shift from the stereotypical role to a career oriented, self-dependent and empowered role. Advertising is having a huge role to play in the everyday life of people. To increase the status of women in society, advertisements can play a very important role. She is shown as an independent working woman who don't have to rely on someone for her every single need and infact she has a place beyond the boundaries of her house. In this era although she is becoming independent but she has not left her traditions and good values, she is ambitious and is devoid of all the traditions.

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### **Keywords:**

Portrayal,  
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advertisement,  
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## 1. Introduction

If one compares the ads of yesterday with that of today one can say that women is no more synonymous of homely, individualist or just being provocative. Woman of today is being portrayed on a much larger canvas. She is being shown as multi-tasker, energetic, self-confident and modern. The reasons for change in image of portrayal of women are education, financial independence and decision making power. Her journey from being seen as caretaker of family to being decision maker for the worth of family is reflected in the ads of today. Women are now depicted in numerous contexts like as a girl (*Apsara Dark pencil, Oreo Biscuits*), a young lady (*Rin Detergent Cake*), a prospective mother (*Johnsons & Johnsons*), a career woman (*Surf Excel*), a mother (*Pears, Boost*) and finally as a person who is enhancing the appeal of an ad.

The ads of modern time are presenting more realistic and balanced picture of Indian women. Here are some examples as

1. In the ad of *Hero Honda Pleasure* (Why should boys have all the fun), Priyanka Chopra flock with her friends show freedom of movement. The women have stepped out, realizes their potential in fulfilling dreams and for them also driving vehicle is symbol of liberty they are no more dependent on others now. The ad advocates women empowerment.
2. In the ad of *Tanishq Jewellers*, (tumhari ye rojrojkedaant mujhe bahut achhi lagti hai) Deepika Padukone presenting a necklace to her mom and getting emotional. This ad portrays two generations side by side Deepika Padukone, a financially independent famous actress and her mother, as a mother should be.
3. In ad of *Reliance Fresh*, (khud keliye bhijio zara) Renuka Shahane portraying as a mother whose children have get settled in their own life, lives with her husband and at this stage of life where all her responsibilities are fulfilled, decided to go Goa with her friends only. This ad teaches women to fulfill their dreams irrespective of their age and stage of life.
4. In the ad of Asian Paints Colour Academy, Saroj the Leader, portraying four Girls as the first color all women applicator team of Designer finishes. The Asian paint academy have trained over 25000 painters in 2015, among them were Saroj and her friends. Since then they have completed many sites and helped other women in their neighbourhood earn the dignity they always longed for. This ad throws a message that Girls can do everything. There is no field in which girls have not tried their hands.

5. In the ad of Titan featuring Katrina Kaif talks about when a girl must get married and for what reasons surely not. In this ad she clarifies the various societal reasons for that a girl should not get marry; according to her for one the right time to get married is when one deserves you time. Here she is being portrayed as a girl who can take decisions of her own.

### **Significance of women in advertising**

Woman is the synonym of home maker since centuries. No doubt she is a home maker today but the definition has enhanced the scope of a woman in present time as she is playing a lead role in making important buying decisions for her family. She has become the prime purchaser and therefore plays a dominant role in the purchase activities; her role has undergone a drastic transformation. Besides that the woman consumers have become more demanding. And to cater her ever-changing demands is a great challenge for the marketers. Most of the advertisements shown are either woman oriented or family oriented. The portrayal of woman in 2000s is totally different from that of in 1970s. This changing portrayal of woman in ads has its own merits as well as demerits.

### **The main reviews supporting the study are:**

#### **Portrayal of Women in Media and Advertisements:**

**Ashok Yakkaldevi (2014)**<sup>1</sup> in his paper “**Portrayal of Women In Indian Media**”, has stated that media was considered as only a reporting device in earlier days, but now-a-days plays a vibrant role in promoting social and economic development of women. It is a mean of shaping, molding & influencing public opinion, the portrayal of women in media oscillates between the images of “mother India” and “the glamour girl”. In 1980s the woman was presented as home maker, in 1990s she was presented as more sensitive but woman was still a sex symbol. In some advertisements she seems to be career oriented and independent girl, while in others she is supposed to forgo her own comfort and keep doing household things without being tired. The writer while presenting both the aspects of portraying women once quoted that the presentation of women in advertisements has worsened over time.

The writer suggests that there is a need for media training institutes to train new journalists so that they can handle issues in a more sensitive way to make media more proactive.

**Hemashree Patowary (2014)<sup>2</sup>** in the paper entitled “**Portrayal of Women in Indian Mass Media**”, has criticized the role of print & visual media towards women & portraying them. The writer says that through positive portrayal of women in media the dignity & status of women can be maintained & hence the inequalities between men and women can be minimized. The patriarchal aspects of Indian society is also reflected by media which tries to depict the picture of women as weak and inferior in front of the whole world. However women are used to advertise everything from undergarments to automobiles but the diverse roles that they play are never acknowledged. The writer has classified feminist media studies into three broad categories as; 1) Liberal feminist media – where women are depicted by media as wives, mothers and daughters as working in traditional female jobs like secretary, nurse or sex objects. 2) Radical Feminism – where male supremacy oppresses women. 3) Socialistic Feminism – where women should be permitted, respected and valued for all types of work. They should be freed from economic and gender specific constraints.

**Parul Nagi (2014)<sup>3</sup>** through her research paper “**Projection of Women in Advertisement: A Gender Perception Study**” tried to study the major factors influencing the choices of the consumers for the portrayal of women in advertising. For the study the researcher used factor analysis technique to draw out results. According to the researcher advertisements make use of women for communicating their message to consumers. But for the purpose sometimes they project women in bad shape.

She concluded that the general roles played by women in advertising are Decorative Role, Recreational Role, Independent Career Role, Self Involved Role, Career Role and Family Role advertisements the women are portrayed in three types as sexual object, house wife and empowered female. In the third type she is portrayed very less frequently. The role portrayed of women is done within male dominant ideology. Males are regarded as strong, independent, macho man, while women are confined to household chores. Besides stereotype images, nudity is also used in portraying women. The writer says that psychologists believe that skilled manipulation of sexual appeals in visual images may arouse subconscious desires that manifest themselves in the purchase of product or service. However sex appeals vary from person to

person, time to time, religion to religion, country to country and society to society. Therefore advertisers should use sexual themes accordingly.

**Rajiv Ranjan Dwivedi (2014)<sup>4</sup>** in his paper “**Women in India Advertisement: A Feminist Observation**” works out the treatment given to women in media as commodity and stereotypes. He says women character in media and advertisement is defined as sex object and in stereotypical roles. According to the writer it is ironical enough that even in the twenty first century inspite of various laws and acts the patriarchal image of women in society is not satisfactory.

Advertisement presents women as smart and intelligent only in terms of their stereotypical roles i.e. as sex objects or as ideal housewives taking care of household chores and duties.

According to the writer the success of advertisements is subject to commodification of women. The writer says that in a country where women are held in high divine esteem the media displays them as no more than sexual commodity in advertisements.

The writer concluded that transformation of women portrayal has led a reduction in the commodity status of women and their portrayal as sex objects, in Indian advertisements.

**Tanuja Panda (2013)<sup>5</sup>** has written an article entitled “**Role of Media on Indecent Representation of Women**” and viewed media as beacon light and today it matters more than at any other time. It has been proved as an important instrument of social change in Indian society. According to the author media has emerged as the major exploiter of woman. A systematic overdose of nudity and vulgarity is being forced into the brain of common viewers through Television films, Magazines, Newspapers, Hoardings and posters etc. The impact of Television is more as compared to other sources of the media and a major share of the space on media is occupied by advertisements. The depiction of women in Indian advertising has been a topic of debate now-a-days.

The author suggests that media professionals should be sensitized on gender issues and a reward to be given to those who are able to portray women in positive manner. Similarly a punitive action should be taken against who defy the norms.

**Arpita Sharma (2012)**<sup>6</sup> in her paper “**Portrayal of Women in Mass Media**” tried to highlight both positive and negative aspects of media towards portrayal of women in mass media. The writer considers advertising as the lifeline of business economy. Advertising is practical and successful method of mass communication. As customer is the king, the marketer tries to find his requisite in the product and then highlights the product difference through advertising not the product. Writer states that, “Advertising is a social practice, and it does not operate in a vacuum”. Advertiser thus has social and moral obligation towards the consumers. Thus advertisements should be truthful and ethical. It should not be misleading. The Government judiciary and social action groups are doing positive moves to provide women the dignity in economic, social and personal areas. The National Commission for women since its inception is striving hard to improve the status of women in different forms of communication. It has also banned some of advertisements.

**Kshimasaki (2012)**<sup>7</sup> in an article, “**The Media’s portrayal of women in India and the U.S.**”, tried to highlight the similarities and dissimilarities between the portrayal of women done by media in India and in U.S. In both the countries the negative impact of female stereotype is visible and both the countries are trying to eliminate these.

Gender stereotype and portrayal of women in domestic role has decreased but there is an increase in objectification of women in media over there. The writer also concluded the works done by other writers Brenna Coleman and Lee Wie Mein Jackson. According to Lee Jackson woman is presented as showpiece or an icon of glamour in Indian media and hence there is a little progress in the stereotype image being portrayed by India media. As per the views of Brenna Coleman stereotype image of women in media represent her as sexual object and a passive human and it derogates the image of women.

Featuring the effects of ultra-thin models and unrealistic portrayal of women, the writer says that girls are developing low self-esteem and having eating disorders.

**ShyamaKumari and ShradhaShivani (2012)<sup>8</sup>** in their article “**Female Portrayals in Indian Magazine Advertisements**” have stated that as per the report of FICCI-KPMG 2012, the advertising expenditure done by marketers has increased significantly. The total advertising expenditure India accounted for INR 300 billion contributing 41% of overall media & Entertainment industry’s revenues. Authors after doing content analysis on 120 advertisements selected from three magazines viz., General Interest Magazine – India Today, Women’s Magazine – Femina and Men’s Magazine – Autocar , concluded that female role in magazine advertising were identified as housewife (19.2%), sex object (45%) and as celebrity (21.7%). Indian advertisements as compared to global trend, portrays them as stereotypes. The advertisement assessment in India reveals that most of the advertisers have ignored the significant progress that women have made in the society. The authors suggest that marketing practitioners should review their advertising strategy in order to make their communication more realistic and identifiable by their prospective customers.

**SubhasSingha Roy (2012)<sup>9</sup>** in his paper entitled “**Portrayal of Women in Indian Media in the Era of Neo-Liberal Economy**” attempted to understand the underlying logic of representing women in media especially in electronic advertisement. Today globalization has a deep impact upon the Indian nation. Women in neo-liberal economy or globalized economy get ample of opportunities to develop themselves and to maintain livelihood. Advertisement promotes the commodities for commercial gain and it is also a medium through which culture can be promoted, demoted or redefined. Everyone tries to sale their product as soon as possible. Through advertisements products and services are projected to provoke the public. It is a tool through which companies promote their commodities. For the purpose in advertisements women are employed to promote products and services. In every item they are utilized whether it requires their presence or not. In masculine accessories also women are presented. But for the purpose, only fair complexioned, slim and beautiful looking women are ideal ones. Whereas dark complexion, rural, tribal, fat girls are excluded from the project. Thus for women physical fitness, smartness, good looking, fair complexion are hidden formula to sustain in the market. Thus accordingly only a particular section of women can enjoy the fruit of opportunities in the market.

**RanuTomar (2011)<sup>10</sup>** in her seminar paper “**Gender and Media: Status of Women Journalist in Hindi Print Media in India**” attempted to explore the struggle for transformation and bridging gap between social identities of women and men. The relationship between media and women has a certain structure where women are trapped as an object. The writer also states that the role of women in media decision making is reflected in the poor representation of women issues and concerns.

**Adrian Furnham and Stephanie Paltzer (2010)<sup>11</sup>** in their paper, “**The Portrayal of Men and Women in Television Advertisements: An Updated Review of 30 Studies Published Since 2000**” have updated the reviews done by Furnham and Mak in 1999 of 14 content-analytic studies of sex roles stereotyping in television commercials based on the McArthur and Resko (1975) content categories, considering 30 studies in over 20 countries published between 2000 and 2008. They examined over 8,000 advertisements. National and cultural differences in gender stereotypes are also considered in the light of this data.

Advertisements have changed over time with technology and fashion. Some products tend to be advertised less, either because they have been constrained or banned (alcohol, tobacco, and children’s toys), and new electronic gadgets, like mobile phones, have been invented (Furnham, 2004). For researchers to capture changes and subtleties in advertising it seems necessary to revisit and revise the established content analytic categories. Changes in media consumption have greatly affected the number and type, but perhaps not so much the content of television advertisements.

Some studies have looked exclusively at certain types of products. Thus Aronovsky and Furnham (2008) looked specifically at advertisements for food products in Britain. Studies have also found some sex differences in daytime and evening commercials with very clear and stereotypic differences in role, age, product appeal and end product. Results revealed advertisers’ awareness of a day-time female audience which reflected a greater proportion of non-stereotypic female depictions. They noted that it would be particularly interesting to look at portrayals in fast food and confectionary products. Researchers found more evidences for sex role stereotypes in Western-made as opposed to Chinese-made advertisements but overall relatively little evidence



of sex-role stereotypes. Certainly examining sex role stereotypes for advertisements for very specific categories of products or services seems the way to proceed in this area.

The writers conclude that advertisements also differ from channel to channel. Sex-roles are portrayed on channels clearly aimed at quite different audiences such as shopping and cooking channels versus science, history or geography channels.

**Ellen Di Salvatore (2010)**<sup>12</sup> in his research paper “**Portrayal of Women in Advertising**” has done content analysis of the evolution of advertisements portraying women in print and television media. The paper highlights the history of women in advertisements. The writer also discusses the effects of media on women. The writer concluded that women are presented in submissive sexual roles. They are used to advertise cleaning products or feminine product. They are shown in stereotypical roles staying at home as mother and fulfilling the sexual desires of males.

After examining the commercial and advertisements in magazines and on TV the writer concludes that women are portrayed for the feminine products and they need to be seen as sexy and men are seen to be masculine type. The stereotype image of women which is rooted from almost 60 years is hard to be broken but advertising agencies are doing hopefully to bring a change.

**Khokan Kumar Bag & Piyal Basu Roy (2010)**<sup>13</sup> in an article entitled, “**Some Basic Observations on Contradictory Representation of Women in Indian Perspectives**” have viewed that technological innovations have brought a radical change in the living standard of people but at the same time it has degraded the social environment as well. Indecent representation of women in various media is a common practice. Undesirable shameful representation of women through Advertisements, Cinema, Television, Newspapers, Magazines etc. have been attracting people to perform offensive activities which are addressing social and moral disaster. Such types of unwanted representations are going on increasing in spite of Government rules and regulations including Indian Penal Code. The authors have also suggested poverty, hobby, globalization, better living, and consumerism as the reasons behind such types of

objectionable representation. The paper tries to highlight the nature of indecent representation of women as an emerging social issue, correlating the facts with deterioration of social environment and criticises its adverse impact with some remedies.

**GosiaGizycki (2009)<sup>14</sup>** in her thesis “**Female stereotypes in 21st Century News and Business Magazines**” used content analysis technique to examine stereotypical depictions of women in 21st century advertisements. The researcher and a research assistant coded a total of 12,458 advertisements from 2000 through 2007 from four magazines viz., *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week* and *Forbes*. It was found that out of these 89% or 11,134 advertisements contained at least one stereotypical depiction. Advertisements having one or more females, either in the absence of men or the presence of one or more men, were coded in this study. The results were compared with that from Lindner's (2004) study. The results from both the studies found that man serves as an instructor or plays an executive role whereas a woman would be prohibited for the same. The biggest difference between both studies was in the area of relative size, where the current study had 16.9% more advertisements that showed women smaller in relative size to men. The differences between the two studies ranged from 0.9% - 16.9%. However, the analysis of the two studies shown that the rate of stereotypical depiction has increased.

The biggest difference found between both the studies was in the area of relative size. The current study had a higher percentage of advertisements that showed the man taller, larger or taking up more space than the woman.

It was shown that female stereotypes are still present in the news and business magazines of 21<sup>st</sup> century. The most highly prevalent stereotype in the magazines *Time*, *Business Week*, *Forbes* and *Newsweek* were found as showing objectification upto 47%. The least common stereotype was movement at 5% among the four magazines. *Time* had the highest number of advertisements available to be coded, as well as the highest number of stereotypes.

**NerisaPillay (2008)<sup>15</sup>** in the thesis entitled, “**The Portrayal of Women in Television Advertisements on Sabc3: A Reflection on Stereotypical Representation**” did analysis of sampled television advertisements drawn from SABC3 to explore the ways that female characters are portrayed in South African advertising and to compare this with how male

characters are portrayed. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the advertisements has been done in order to identify themes and patterns in the representation of women and men. After examination of the advertisements it was found that female characters are still stereotyped and are portrayed in traditional roles, while more significant change was found in how male characters are portrayed. This research proves that separating the two is next to impossible. The presentation of men by media has changed significantly whereas presentation of women requires a change to reflect social reality rather than traditional social norms.

**Emily Blaha (2006)**<sup>16</sup> in the research paper, “**The Portrayal of Women in Magazine Advertisements: Across Four Different Women’s Magazines**” has done content analysis on 40 advertisements coded from four women’s magazines *viz. Instyle, Glamour, Fitness and Good Housekeeping* from 2003 to 2005. It has been found that women are portrayed in different ways in different types of magazines when advertisements are directed towards different audiences. Magazines like *Good Housekeeping* focus toward middle to old age women and present them in a less sexualized manner, whereas, *Instyle* and *Glamour* focus on young women. Thin body image was presented in *Fitness* magazine. The researcher also suggested that the models used in the advertisements were important to the audiences in connection to the advertisements.

**Schaffter (2006)**<sup>17</sup> in her book, “**Privileging the Privileged – Gender in Indian Advertising**” analyzed gender issues in Indian advertisements. The author analyzed 200 advertisements (60 in detail) over a 12 year period from 1994 to 2005.

The study found that the representation of women in Indian advertisements was not just stereotypical but unethical and offensive too that works to the detriment of women and perpetuated undesirable gender hierarchy. The study also found that the Indian advertising industry offered discriminatory behavior to women and qualities attributed to women were mostly negative. Most of the advertising portraying women perpetuated their secondary role in society and invented fresh circumstances that characterized women as inferior to men. The study also showed how little girls were conditioned to become passive, dependent, narcissistic, subservient homemakers eager to please men when they grow up.

**Kiran Prasad (2005)**<sup>18</sup> in her article, “**Women, Media and Society: Recasting Communication Policy**” which is included in an edited book by herself ‘*Women and media-challenging feminist discourse*’, writes that the development of the society is not possible without the welfare of the women. Women should be given the democratic space where she can talk about her problems. For the purpose the media can be regarded as the best way through which the voice and ideas of women can be transmitted to the mass. So, media should play an important role to develop as well as empower the women by focusing their problems and the most significantly they should portray women as strong and superior but not like the inferior and less respected. The distance between the media and women not only derives the women of their right to information but keeps them in the dark.

**M Haripriya (2005)**<sup>19</sup> “**Women in Advertisement on Television**” in Kiran Prasad (ed.) ‘*Women and media-challenging feminist discourse*’, states that liberalisation and privatisation have definitely infected the today’s consumer market in India. Our urban India is slowly moving towards a western society. The concept of global village and information revolution has led the markets to target the world with one message. The author said that in this process, western culture is being imbibed into our veins. The advertisers have not succeeded in the just and true portrayal of women. There is surely a rebirth process is going on for the Indian women. But this rejuvenation of Indian lady is not being captured correctly by the advertisers. There is a need to voice out for a change in advertising content.

**Dr. Sanjeev K. Sharma (2005)**<sup>20</sup> in his article, “**Depiction of Women in Indian Media – A Case of Introspection for Media Planners**” criticises the ways in which Indian media both print and electronic are portraying women in the era of globalisation. The issues relating to women’s are not discussed in media; rather women are used as a commodity and sex object. Newspapers give no place to rape, crime, politics, scandals, serious debates and discussions on issues related to women. Most of the newspapers publish only the gossips about the TV serials or film actresses.

The writer also states that magazines as well as newspapers have sections for females where they discuss only some personal gynaecological problems of married women or personal love hick-ups of young girls.

In Television serials women are shown as involved in conspiracy, premarital, extra-marital affairs, wearing costly, heavy golden and diamond jewelry, little care about anything else than the individual matters and not even a word about the outside world. He also mentions about the advertisements where women are used to show their body. In most of the advertisements in India be it newspapers or television or magazines, the main ingredient is women and these depict the picture of women as vulgar and cheap.

**Vaishali Shrikhande (2003)<sup>21</sup>** in her thesis, “**Stereotyping of Women in Television Advertisements**” examined the portrayal of women in television commercials and presented the stereotypes associated with women in television commercials.

Content analysis was chosen as a method of inquiry for this study. For the purpose two hundred and twenty six advertisements were recorded from the three chosen networks, ABC, CBS and NBC. No local advertisements or public service announcements were included in the sample. And, no comparisons were drawn between the networks on morning and evening time periods. Each advertisement was initially coded for the central figure, whether the central figure was a male or a female. In addition, each central figure in the advertisement was coded for the following categories: 1) age; 2) product use; 3) occupation; 4) voiceover; 5) product representative; 6) stance; and 7) product types.

The writer concluded that women are still portrayed overwhelmingly in the young, age group, family/home, being their primary occupation. Voiceovers are still predominantly male rather than female, and women are still primarily portrayed as central figures in advertisements for household products. In all the above-mentioned categories there was no change recorded from the past studies. However, women are no longer being portrayed only as product-users in the commercials. They are also being depicted as product representatives and are not depicted as often in subordinate positions.

This study indicates that some changes in the direction of equal representation of men and women have taken place. However, housewife stereotype does exist even today.

**Maria Rosa Berganza (2002)**<sup>22</sup> in her paper, “**Women and Advertising: Evolution Of Stereotypes In Spanish Mass Media**” tried to analyze the image of women in Spanish advertising in 2001 comparing to the advertisements showed in the past.

For the purpose 204 TV commercials from 1957 to 1999 and 1287 TV advertisements from 2001 have been selected in order to show how women stereotypes have developed from the very beginning of television to now-a-days.

There has been a little but firm progress in the representation of women in Spanish advertisements in the last 40 years. This is due to the diversification of women’s roles in our society. There are still many stereotypes roles, which degrade women’s dignity, although advertisers do not use them as much as decades ago. According to the writer 77% of historical commercials showed women with perfect bodies in the past but now-a-days, girls with perfect bodies appear in 45% of commercials. Although advertisers still use actresses and professional top models to represent an ideal beauty, actual advertising shows more real women.

Similarly advertisers do not use domestic violence at all to sell their products. In the historical analysis advertisements showed 8.8% of female weakness but now it has disappeared. Girls are not weak and inferior to men anymore. Many times the woman is shown as who makes the decision and has a stronger personality.

**MaitrayeeChoudhury (2000)**<sup>23</sup> in the article, “**Feminism in Print Media**” has stated the issue of feminism in the institutional context of the print media. Discussing the modern issue of feminism the writer has opened a new angle to think about the equality, freedoms or liberties for the women. She showed a great concern for the women’s movement for the restoration of the feminine needs and necessities in the era of liberal economy.

**Mallika Das (2000)**<sup>24</sup> done a study and through the article “**Men and Women in Indian Magazines Advertising**” has examined the portrayal of women and men in Indian magazines advertisements. For the purpose over 1,100 magazine advertisements from a wide range of magazines in 1987, 1990 and 1994 were studied. The results of the study indicate that although the portrayals of women and men in Indian magazine advertisements have changed the period, but they are still portrayed in stereotypical ways.

**ShomaMunshi (1998)**<sup>25</sup> in the article, “**Wife/mother/daughter-in-law: multiple avatars of homemaker in 1990s Indian advertising**” analyzed the role which advertising discourses play in the construction of a “New Indian Woman” in her multiple avatars of homemaker. The study concentrated on the ideas that producers of media texts had about their target audience.

The study found that women’s spaces of resistance were created by advertisers themselves. The study also found that these spaces of resistance were a part of the entire dominant social structure, hence showing the relationship between advertising and society. The research showed that advertising discourses and the construction of gender and women’s subjectivities were all inherently interrelated, and they administered and moderated each other. Lastly, the study showed that advertising adroitly combined both ideologies of feminism and femininity within discourses of consumerism.

**M. Shelat (1994)**<sup>26</sup> in a Seminar paper “**Gender portrayals in Indian Advertising (Has the New Man Emerged? Changing Image of Man in Indian Advertisements)**” describes how after the gain of independence in 1947, advertising in India was restricted mainly to the print media since television reached the country only in the late 1960s. According to her study, the print advertisements of the 1950s and 1960s portrayed men as breadwinners of the family, decision makers and professionals while women were portrayed as being inordinately concerned with their physical appearance and cooking meals to please their men and families.

**Rama Jha (1992)**<sup>27</sup> in the book “**Women and the Indian Print Media**” describes about the performance and portrayal of women in media. At first, she talks about the women journalists who deal with the women’s problems, and also mentions that there are some male journalists who turn the problems viewed by the female journalists into jokes. The male journalists are

dominating the whole field of media in such a way that the female journalists cannot be concerned about the real problems of women and so their issues do not get proper limelight to be focused of. The writer also mentions some problems faced by Indian women such as rape, burning of women by their in-laws, beating by husbands, witch burning, illiteracy and portrayal of women in print media never get proper importance because of the negative role played by the male journalists. According to Jha, to portray women properly, importance should be given to publish the realistic problems faced by them.

Results of a study by **William E. Kilbourne (1990)**<sup>28</sup> through, “**Females stereotyping in advertising: An Experiment on Male-Female Perceptions of Leadership**” revealed that people, after being exposed to advertisements that depict women in stereotypical roles, showed significantly more negative attitudes towards women, especially concerning their managerial skills, than after being exposed to advertisements that depict women in professional roles that require such skills. These results suggest that there is indeed a relationship between the way women are portrayed in advertising and people's perception about how women are supposed to behave and the roles they are supposed to occupy within society.

**Lawrence H. Wortzel and John M. Frisbie (1974)**<sup>29</sup> in his paper, “**Women’s Role Portrayal Preferences in Advertisements an Empirical Study**”, interrogates, “*Has Women's Liberation changed women's attitudes toward female role portrayals in advertisements*”?

The authors conducted an experiment to do their study. In this experiment, respondents were asked to "design" print advertisements by matching pictures of products with the pictures of women. Two portfolios were prepared for that: one consisting of pictures of products, the other containing pictures of women. The product portfolio consisted of pictures of three products in each of seven product categories: small appliances, large appliances, women's grooming products, women's personal products, house hold products, foods, and men's grooming and personal products. The portfolio of women's pictures consisted of five pictures depicting women in each of the five roles - "neutral", "family", "career", "sex object" and "fashion object" - for a total of 25 pictures in all. The two portfolios were presented to a convenience sample of 100 young (ages 21 to 35) women. The authors did factor analysis to derive the results.



The most realistic conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that women are rational in their preferences with respect to role portrayals in advertising. They favor to select role preferences on the basis of product function, and not on the basis of ideology.

The backgrounds selected by women with both positive and negative views toward Women's Liberation are based on their appropriateness to the product's usage and on product's end benefits.

### **The change in portrayal of Women in advertising:**

**Dr. Hundal B.S., Dr. Grover Saurabh, Bhatia JasleenKaur (2014)<sup>30</sup>** in a paper “**Multi Facet Role of Women in Advertisements**” have stated that according to past studies the media portrayal of women is related to the broad socio-economic, political and cultural context of a society. Images of women in the media, seems to be the results of a social-construction of reality than the products of media reflection or distortion. Advertisers try to engage consumers through their choice of message tones. They are using a wide variety of emotions to initiate the desired response. The roles of men and women have also changed. The world of the Indian woman is no longer limited to the four walls of her home and the Indian male has to chip in with household chores. Any meaningful examination of media portrayals of women has to be based on specific social, economic, political, and cultural conditions of a given country within a particular period of time. Author has made an attempt to determine the attitude of respondents towards advertising and portrayal of women in advertisements and to assess the present generation views about the new world women. Questionnaire based study (primary) is conducted for the said purpose.

**Prasad Sangameshwaran (2014)<sup>31</sup>** in an article entitled, “**The Changing Face of Women**”, published in The Hindu, Business Line has described the advertising as the “torch bearer of change in society”. According to him portrayal of women is now more than mere homely, individualistic or proactive. He has defined here as multi-tasking, energetic, self-confident & modern in recent commercials. There are so many advertisements that break her stereotype image. The writer says that even the women from the potential segment of spenders and so the marketers consider them in their advertisements and their journey from care taker of family to decision maker is reflected by the marketers in the advertisement. But still the advertising is not

able to portray the actual status of women in the society. The writer wants to interrogate that, “can the advertising changes the way, the average Indian male looks at the women?”

**YLR Moorthi, Subhadip Roy and Anita Pansari (2014)**<sup>32</sup> in their paper, “**The Changing Roles portrayed by Women in Indian Advertisements: A Longitudinal Content Analysis**”, analysed that 30% of employees in software industry are women, similarly the role of women is changing over the years in various fields like advertising, academics, politics etc. According to the writers of the paper a little study has been done on women portrayal in Indian Television and through this paper they tried to fulfill the gap. It has been concluded by them that there is a major difference in the portrayal of women in television advertising in India from 1980 to 2010. In 1990s they were portrayed either as homemaker or as professionals but in 2000, 13.34% of advertisements portrayed them both as professional and home maker. But their role presentation as a product user or presenter has not been changed over years. But there has been a difference in the categories advertised by them. In 1980s only 6% advertisements portrayed women in male dominant products but 8.92% advertisements in the decade of 2000 portrayed her in a male dominant product category. Similarly 33.32% of advertisements portray woman in the woman dominant products as compared to 40% in 1980s and 65.70% in the 1990s. Whereas, the percentage of advertisements that are portraying woman in neutral products is the highest i.e. 57.76% in the current decade.

**Sumanta Dutta (2013)**<sup>33</sup> in a research paper entitled, “**Portrayal of Women in Indian Advertising: A Perspective**” opines that there has been a significant transformation in the manner in which women are portrayed in Indian advertising. They are no longer portrayed behind kitchen walls but are coming out of the door and inspiring the society to think differently. As advertising affects the daily life of viewers consciously and unconsciously the advertisers utilize the transformation process to launch their product and/or brand. She is still shown in secondary positions as dutiful wife caring for house, husband and children. Their role in advertisements is increasing and women viz., *Sania Mirza* and *Saina Nehwal* are brand ambassadors for products which are not women-oriented. Woman plays multifaceted roles and has power to influence the people around her. However women are presented in independent

roles in advertisements but somewhere the advertisements are still male dominated. The mere presence of a woman enhances the appeal of advertisement.

**Khokan Kumar Bag & Piyal Basu Roy (2012)**<sup>34</sup> in their article, “**Changing Face of Women Exploitation**” opined that women have been the victims of exploitation both physically and mentally for a long time. They are being trafficked for sex, harkled at work places and tortured in the family and society. The paper has attempted to find out the faces of women exploitation in Indian perspectives. In ancient period devdasi, widow burning and polygamy were the marked aspects of women exploitation. According to the author, the reasons for that were unemployment, poverty, economic inequality, gender discrimination and lack of proper education. With the change in time and contributions of social reformers, hindrances like illiteracy, widow burning etc., has been removed from the society. Gender discrimination has been banned by the constitution and women have been recognised at par with men. Yet there is difference between constitutional rights and rights enjoyed by women in reality. Men are still treated higher in status to women. The form of women exploitation has changed and she is being used to earn money today as she is educated.

**Dr. Sumi Khare (2011)**<sup>35</sup> in his article “**Changing Role of Women in Indian Advertising**” with two other authors has viewed that advertisements portray women in a more positive way. According to him Indian advertising has witnessed a significant transformation in the manner shown. Women are no more a commodity or sex symbol but off late they are portrayed as independent, assertive, enjoying life and a career woman. This article deals with fast changing role portrayal in Indian commercials. Women are being exposed to education and are participating in workforce. They are getting monetarily independent and hence their value at home is also increasing. This has reduced her commodity status and her portrayal in advertisements has undergone a key change.

**Jyotsna Jha & Divya Nigam (2007)**<sup>36</sup> in the book, “**Women in Advertising: Changing Perception**” have analysed the women’s presentation in media in present perspective. Women have been exploited by the advertisers for decades. They have frequently been stereotyped in the traditional roles of home makers or have been projected as ‘visual props’ to enhance the appeal

of an advertisement. However, the frequency and the number of such demeaning and exploitative advertisements in the print and the electronic media have reduced since the early 2000s. The advertising industry has felt the need to portray the women in more realistic manner with the growing concept of women's liberation. Today's liberated woman is economically independent and self-involved. The objective of the book is to provide a comparative study of the traditional portrayal of women and men in advertising and to bring out new trends in gender equations as reflected by the advertising industry. The author has also done an attempt to analyze the impact of advertising on society and the role played by media and advertising in social conditions.

**Mee-Eun Kang (1997)**<sup>37</sup> in “**The portrayal of Women's images in Magazine Advertisement: Goffman's Gender Analysis Revisited**”, in order to examine any changes in the way women have been portrayed in magazine advertising since the late 1970s, conducted a study using Goffman's (1979) five coding categories with two new categories – body display (i.e., degree of nudity, body-revealing clothes) and independence/self-assertiveness (i.e., women's overall image in terms of independence and self-assurance. The results of her study of advertisements in Vogue, Mademoiselle, and McCall's from 1979 and 1991 revealed that very few changes have occurred in the stereotypical portrayal of women. The findings indicate that the images of women in 1991 advertisements did not significantly change from the images found in 1979 advertisements. However, the types of stereotyping have changed; advertisements show more stereotypical depictions in the categories of licensed withdrawal and body display and less stereotyping in the categories of relative size and function ranking. The study concluded that even though some advertisers had begun to feature more powerful and independent women, “only superficial cultural alterations were transferred to advertisements, while the underlying ideological foundation remains untouched”. Thus, even though women were not exclusively portrayed in the stereotypical mother and housewife roles anymore. On one hand women might be portrayed more often as professionals and on the second there is also a remarkable increase in sexualized images of women or images that show them as mentally removed from the situation at large.

#### **Ethics in Advertisements:**

**NeerajAneja (2014)**<sup>38</sup> in his research paper entitled, “**Ethics in Advertisement and Impact on Women and Children**” presented that advertising is necessary in today's world for commercial

success as it turns attention of viewers towards the product or brand, influences their attitude and motivates the purchase of the product.

The writer through the paper brings into the focus the positive and negative impacts of advertising on women and children. Where repeated advertisements create awareness among the women, inform them and educate them about the product, influences their purchase decision; on the other hand overwhelming advertisements create confusion as whether to buy a particular product or not. Excessive thinness, ageism, eating disorders and low self-esteem are other negative impacts of advertisements on women. Similarly the target audience of advertisers has been shifted from house wives (in 60s and 70s) to youth and children. Thus highlighting the positive impacts of advertisements on children, the writer says that advertisers consider them as future customers and advertisements increases their knowledge about the product availability and technology innovations. While its negative aspects is that the children and youth get attracted towards costly products and force parents to buy them the toys, dresses, etc. that they saw in the advertisements.

So the writer suggests that the advertisements should not be unethical, false or misleading and it is also the responsibility of advertisers to be self-regulated to gain the confidence of public in the brand.

**Emma Thofson (2011)**<sup>39</sup> in a blog entitled “**Ethics in Advertising: The Unethical Marketing of Beauty**” also explains the various effects of media. The author says, “It is not women but we all are affected by the way mass media has infiltrated our lives.” Our self-esteem is also being damaged by images of far-too-perfect models & celebrities. Disturbed body image is one of the main causes for disordered eating and dieting in adolescent girls and they could be considered anorexic. The author strongly says that Americans are literally killing themselves to try to feel good and look good. People are feeling unhappy with their outward appearance and for this they are injuring and killing themselves. Advertising affects the health and mentality of young Americans. The process of making a sale by the cosmetic and fashion industry has not only destroyed many people at their core but it has consumed the whole country and it is hard to consider it as ethical. The images of people in magazines and advertisement are extremely

unrealistic. They use vast amount of air brushing and photo shopping to make their models perfect. The process is used to sell make ups, clothing perfume or anything, really creates an unethical distorted standard for real people to live up to 3 minutes at a magazine makes 70% of women feel depressed, ashamed and guilty.

**R. Arrington (2004)**<sup>40</sup> in his book “*Advertising and Behavior Control*” argued that there were four issues to be considered while examining ethics in advertising viz., autonomous desire (the desire was present before the exposure to the ad), rational desire, free choice (can the customer resist the desire) and control.

The writer holds advertisements responsible for enhancing materialistic desires of the viewers and forcing them to buy advertised products whether they have the buying capacity or not. This encourages people to take loans and buy products they really cannot afford. Having established the consequences of unethical advertising on the society, the need is to develop mechanisms to prevent the harm that such advertising is causing.

#### **Legal Regulations and Advertising:**

**Feroza Sanjana (2013)**<sup>41</sup> in her study **under the guidance of UNFPA Population First**, “*Drawing the line: Creative freedom vs. Gender sensitivity, An analysis of decisions of ASCI on indecent representation of women in advertising*”, viewed that media and advertising are of utmost importance in influencing public attitudes and beliefs on a large scale, thus a fair and unbiased representation of women in advertisement and media is crucial. The representation of women in advertisement has seen a positive change over the last five years. The portrayal of ‘real’ women is adopting professional codes in advertising to regulate the projection of women, the most multiple roles, entering the workplace and challenging traditional culture. A large number of advertisements continue to depict women as sexual objects and are gender sensitive. According to the author to regulate gender insensitive advertisements there is a framework of code of conduct formulated by ASCI.

During the six week of the study 45 advertisements were analysed from 2007 to 2012. These advertisements include complaints regarding violation of chapters II and III of code which are related to depiction of women in advertisement. In the last five years (2007-12) total 4430

complaints have been received by Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) of ASCI. Out of this 136 complaints were gender specific and out of this 45 complaints have been analysed by the author. Out of 45 the maximum number of complaints, i.e. 17 were such where women were represented as sexual objects in a context irrelevant to the products being advertised. Out of these 17 decisions taken by CCC for 9 complaints have been upheld and the fate of the remaining is still hanging fire.

**Meenakshi Verma (2012)**<sup>42</sup> with the help of an article, “**Stricter Provisions Against Indecent Portrayal of Women on the Anvil**” published in *The Hindu* has brought into the light that in order to check the unwanted indecent advertisements in which women are portrayed as commodities, a decision had been taken by the Cabinet in Oct. 2012 to amend and widen the scope of “Indecent Representation (Prohibition) Act 1986”.

According to it indecent representation of women on internet, emails, multimedia messaging could now land a person in jail. Technological revolution has resulted in the development of newer forms of communication, so it has become imperative to widen the scope of law to cover new forms of media.

The amendments seek to impose stricter penalties. Imprisonment for the first conviction has been increased to a maximum of three years, while for second conviction it can be extended to seven years. Fines for the first will be between Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh while for second conviction it can be between Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 5 lakh. Ex-secretary General of ASCI, Allan Collaco said, “We already have an extensive code of conduct for our members to keep check on such advertisements”.

**Surendra Sisodia (2009)**<sup>43</sup> in his paper “**Self-Regulation in Advertising: A key of Social Governance**”, on social and ethical issues said that women are being used in men’s products. The presentation and portray of women in advertising is a question of debate. Author interrogates that whether vulgarity in advertising shapes society’s values or it simply mirrors them. Author opines that advertising lacks tastes and uses appeals that people do not like such as fear and anxiety. Watching advertisements of products like jeans, innerwear, feminine hygiene aids etc., with children and family is awful. Many legislation and regulatory bodies have been

established all over the world to take care of social and ethical issues related to advertising. Government alone cannot do much but what is important is to regulate and to have proper checks on the right usage of media in promoting the filtered and authentic information so as the right objective of advertising and media is making people aware. He has also concluded that advertisers seem to compromise their responsibility towards society but mere formulation of code of conduct is not enough; the self-regulation is the demand of present time. Representatives of public should participate in formulation, appreciation and periodic updating of ethical codes.

**Justice G.N. Ray, (2008)**<sup>44</sup> addressing the Press council of India at the inauguration session of National Press Day on Nov. 16, at VigyanBhavan, New Delhi said that the most important movement will be the movement for the emancipation of women. In all the fields there should be respect for the women section; they should be given equal pay for equal work, there should be no gender gap between man and woman. According to him the most significant medium through which the problems can be focused is the media. Both the print and electronic media should focus the gender inequalities and violence against women. The media should not give importance on focusing women as sex objects or commodities.

**JawahariSudarsanam (2005)**<sup>45</sup> in the article “**Representation of Women in Media: The Legal Debate**” in Kiran Prasad (ed.) ‘*Women and media-Challenging feminist discourse*’ discusses about the important points raised at the Beijing Conference (1995) regarding the role of mass media to curb the evil of depicting women in a derogatory manner. According to him women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology. This ensures to curb the negative portrayal of women internationally and to challenge instances of abuse of power in an increasingly important industry, the mass media.

The Beijing Platform of Action further suggests that the self-regulatory mechanisms for the media need to be created and strengthen and approaches developed to eliminate gender-biased programming. There is a need to develop professional guidelines and codes of conduct and other forms of self-regulation to promote the presentation of non-stereotyped images of women, by the media and advertising organisations. Therefore, there is a need to establish, consistent with freedom of expression, professional guidelines and codes of conduct that address violent, degrading or pornographic materials concerning women in the media, including advertising. The national governments and the international organisations have to play a role here. They should



encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and present them as creative human beings.

### **Impact of Portrayal of Women in Advertisement on Society:**

**Dr. SnigdaSukumar (2014)**<sup>46</sup> in her research paper, “**People Perception Towards The Portrayal of Women in Advertisements: A Study with Special Reference to the Bangalore City**” tried to identify the role of advertisement in marketing, perception of people towards the portrayal of women in advertisement and towards the erotic images of females in advertisements particularly in Bangalore City. For the purpose 500 respondents were analysed. Respondents view that erotic images of females in advertisements attract the immediate attention of the consumers. Sometimes people remember only the erotic image presented in the advertisement and not the product advertised. Public views that this can bring only short term profits. For long term returns the advertisers should be more sensitive while designing messages as people should remember the product advertised.

With regard to the portrayal of women in advertisements the researcher noticed that there is a positive change in the perception of people towards portrayal of women in advertisements, as the role of women in advertisements is no longer limited to four walls. The advertisements portrayed women as an independent woman. However in some messages they are portrayed as glamorous and fashionable sex idols.

**SilvianaSecara (2013)**<sup>47</sup> in her paper, “**Women in Advertisements Visual Representation of the Female Body**” stresses that advertising goes beyond selling a product; it sells ideas. This happens through the advertiser’s skill at positioning the product, creating an image.

Through the paper the writer demonstrates that advertising has a great impact on our lives, as it sets high standards for women to achieve. Advertisements containing images that portray women influence the way in which women are perceived by others and also the way in which they see themselves.

Advertising and especially advertisements, the core of ADCult, (we live in an age of advertising; and this new culture is ‘adcult’) have a great impact both on men and women. Men are influenced in the sense that often certain advertisements make them behave in a certain way.

However, women are more likely to be influenced by advertisements. Women as consumers treat themselves according to the models in the advertisements. They feel that buying the product will make them look like the model. On the other hand, they are sometimes pressurised by society to look like the models in the advertisements. Photography plays a very important role in women's perceptions because they look up to models whose images have been retouched and therefore impossible to attain. But because of these images, women start to undergo plastic surgeries or extreme dieting.

**Dr. SasiRekha and Dr. K Maran (2012)**<sup>48</sup> in their paper, “**Advertisement Pressure and its Impact on Body Dissatisfaction and Body Image Perception of Women in India**” investigated the relationship between pressure created by the advertisements and its effects on body image of women and as a result dissatisfaction among them. For the purpose 915 females of above 12 years were chosen from Chennai. It was found that 30 % of women are pressurized by advertisements. Women are also overestimating their present body size and want an ideal thinner body. According to researcher both men and women are anorexic in the desire of ideal and attractive figure. Only 5% of women wish to have a larger body figure than their present figure whereas 76% of women desire to have a smaller body size than their existing figure. At last they conclude that the culture of thinness in advertisements may lead to body dissatisfaction and finally to eating disorders.

**Kouser Noor Fatima (2011)**<sup>49</sup> in a paper entitled “**Positive Portrayal of women in TV ads**” has highlighted the **positive aspects** of women portrayal particularly in TV advertisements but she also has not denied the fact that women are being vulgarly depicted in the advertisements of deodorant. She blames women for the same. She says that all advertisements except that of few deodorants have presented women in a positive manner.

According to her, things have improved over the years. The woman now-a-days is not projected as sex objects but she is represented as very energetic, dynamic, strong and enthusiastic in the advertisements of health drinks, medicines, cosmetics, detergent cakes and powders.

The qualities of women are exercised by advertisers to communicate the merits of their products and brands. They are presented as neatly dressed, family bound and homemakers. Their mere presence in the advertisements influences the liking of a particular product. The writer tries to convince that depiction of women in advertisements that has changed and is becoming healthier over time. She is more confident, extrovert, dominant and has letting go attitude rather than her stereotypical image.

**Dr. SnigdhaSukumar and Dr. S. Venkatesh (2011)**<sup>50</sup> in their article, “**Images of Women in Advertising and Its Impact on the Society**” stated that representation of women in advertisements as house wife has been shifted to as career women. According to their study maximum advertisements are women and family oriented. Women as consumer are more demanding, thus for marketers it is a challenge to fulfill their ever changing needs.

There has also been an improvement in the role of women advertisements. In 1970s in the advertisements like Surf &Tajmahal she was depicted in house hold activities. In 1980s her image from a house wife has changed to a professional as presented in the advertisements of Liril and Sunfilm. In 1990s in the Ariel Advertisement she is portrayed as a confident, independent and career oriented. But from now onwards she has also been misused by a section. Some marketers believe that if a woman wants to explore her talent she has to display physical characteristics. She has been projected as sex objects in the advertisements of cosmetics, jewelry, fabrics and etc. From 2001 she is portrayed as beauty icon in the Lux soap advertisement.

The way woman is dressed in advertisements does not represent Indian Culture. As a **negative effect** women in society are going for dieting and eating disorders. Portrayal or women as sex objects leads to negative psychological effects as depression, hopelessness and eating disorders among youth and adults. At the last the authors said that advertisement or media cannot be blamed for all the negative effects. We as the educated belongings of society can decide what to accept or reject. We can protest against the derogatory image of woman in advertising and media.

**BrearnnaRedwin Coleman (2010)**<sup>51</sup> in her article, “**Media Portrayal of Women**” stated that, “female stereotypes in media tend to undervalue women as a whole and diminish them to sexual objects and passive human beings.” Female stereotypes in media have a powerful influence over how society views women and how women view themselves. The article also reflects the influence of **negative and positive** female stereotype. She narrates that *Children Now* – a children’s movement of California have analyzed that in video games 38% of female characters, wears revealing clothes & 23 % female characters shows their cleavage. The cartoon movies like Disney movies – Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin etc. show slender, unrealistically curvaceous & vulnerable young women having no sense of empowerment of their own and are dependent on male figures for the strength and survival.

According to the writer, despite of many negative female stereotypes images found in movies, television and advertisements, women are also presented as intelligent and empowered. There are also some positive female characters in children’s television. According to National Institute on Media and the Family, the media focus on body image and submissive female stereotypes affect the children’s thinking.

As per the views of *Susan Fiske, a Psychology Professor at Princeton University doing research on stereotypes*, stereotypes in media affects our culture, especially the young. Thus to combat the influence of negative female stereotype, it is important to expose our children to positive role models & to let the girls know how amazing they are.

**Kasey L. Serdar (2005)**<sup>42</sup> explaining the impact of female images in advertisement in his article, “**Female Body Image and the Mass Media: Perspectives on How Women Internalize the Ideal Beauty Standard**” has brought forward one more impact of females images in advertising that Indian as well as western women are negatively affected by constant exposure to models. The mass media's depiction of women portrays a standard of beauty that is unrealistic and unattainable for a majority of women. Models shown in all forms of popular media are often under what is considered as healthy body weight, which sends a powerful message that women must sacrifice their health to be considered attractive by societal standards. The negative effects of ultra-thin media images of women have been well documented by the researcher; research has

shown that females who are repeatedly exposed to and internalize the thin ideal are at greater risk to develop body image disturbance and eating pathology. Although it is clear that the media influences the way women view themselves yet it is unclear how this process takes place. Estimates of the prevalence of such disorders vary, but most state that 3% to 10% of females aged between 15 and 29 could be considered anorexic or bulimic. The social comparison theory, cultivation theory, and self-schema theory can be used to examine how media images of women come to affect the way women feel about their body and physical appearance. Females have been found to experience dissatisfaction with physical appearance at a much higher rate than males (Striegel-Moore & Franko 2002), and women of all ages and sizes display body image disturbance. Researchers have found that body dissatisfaction is correlated with other forms of psychological impairment.

**Ruth J. Mapgaonkar (2005)**<sup>53</sup> in his thesis entitled “**Television Advertisings Portrayal of Women**” opines that media creates ideals of thinness among female population, which as a result causes dissatisfaction among them. The researcher has done an investigation between two groups of women between 18 to 24 years to discover the difference in self-esteem, eating disorder levels and the level of media that influence women.

The writer concludes that no significant difference is found between the experimental group and control group of female (between 18 to 24 ages) regarding self-esteem and eating disorders. But as far as the level of media in concern, the group that view thin image advertising have a reduced sense of self-esteem, a high level of preoccupation for weight and a stronger anorexic – bulimic attitude.

**Lavineet al. (1999)**<sup>54</sup> in the article, “**Depicting Women as Sex Objects in Television Advertising: Effects on Body Dissatisfaction**” examined whether exposure to TV advertisements that portray women as sex objects caused increased body dissatisfaction among women and men.

Participants were exposed to 15 sexist and 5 non-sexist advertisements, 20 non-sexist advertisements, or a no advertisement control condition.

Results revealed that women exposed to sexist advertisements judged their current body size as larger and revealed a larger discrepancy between their actual and ideal body sizes (preferring a thinner body) than women exposed to the nonsexist or no advertisement condition. Men exposed to the sexist advertisements judged their current body size as thinner, revealed a larger discrepancy between their actual and ideal body size (preferring a larger body) and revealed a larger discrepancy between their own ideal body size and their perceptions of other's male body size preferences (believing that others preferred a larger ideal) than men exposed to the nonsexist or no advertisement condition. Discussion focused on the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral consequences of exposure to gender stereotypic television advertising.

**John B. Ford et al. (1997)**<sup>55</sup> (Ford, John B.; La Tour, Michael S. and Honeycutt, Earl D.) in the article, “**An Examination of the Cross-Cultural Female Response to Offensive Sex Role Portrayals in Advertising**”, conducted a study to examine the cross-cultural female responses to offensive sex role portrayals in advertising. It was a contention of this study that the extent of feminine consciousness had a positive impact on critical perceptions of female role portrayals in advertising, which had a positive effect on perceived negativity with regard to the image of a company using potentially offensive advertisements. It was also debated whether these negative company images had a negative effect on the purchase intention of the consumers.

Data was collected with the help of a questionnaire (450 across 4 countries: USA, New Zealand, Japan and Thailand) via drop-off, pick-up methodology. Sample respondents were adult women. Technique used for data analysis was factor analysis.

Findings suggested various degrees of criticism where sex role portrayals, company image and purchase intentions were concerned. It was found that the women from New Zealand were the most critical followed by the U.S., Japanese and Thai samples. It was concluded that companies must exercise care in utilizing female models in advertisements across different types of viewers because what may be acceptable in one country, may not be acceptable in the other. As a result, a certain amount of localization in role portrayal depictions was recommended in any global advertising campaign.

**Michael Fay and Christopher Price (1994)**<sup>56</sup> through their article, “**Female Body-Shape in Print Advertisements and the Increase in Anorexia Nervosa**” conducted a research to study the potential linkage between the use of thin models in advertising and the rise in the incidence of anorexia nervosa.

The study utilized the Listener and the New Zealand Woman’s Weekly Index of the Advertising archive at the University of Otago (these two magazines had consistently high readerships for more than 50 years). Data were gathered for every fifth year from 1958-1988 and the total sample size was 669.

The study found that there was much advertising, which was concerned with dieting, slimming and body control. The study also found that it was normal for adolescent girls and young women to compare their bodies with media images. The study concluded that to a greater extent than non-sufferers, anorexics said that they were influenced and their self-image diminished, by advertising images.

### **Conclusion:**

Most of the workers in advertising, the media, retail and fashion are women. Holding key position in marketing and advertising, women shape the basic promotional appeal of almost every consumer product. They are also being portrayed as sex objects in most of the advertisements. In the advertisements like that of perfumes and bikes the products are compared with that of a woman’s body. For example the AXE effect (perfumes/deodorant’s) advertisement, wherein after the usage of the perfume all young girls try to jump on the man, who has applied it. Moreover, the girls/women used for the different kinds of advertisements are shown to be fair and exceptionally thin. These advertisements leave an impression on a common man’s mind that a woman is just an object, which can be exploited easily because she is weak by nature and always needs a man for her protection. Well, not only men but even women who come in contact with such advertisements start feeling inferior of themselves as they are not as pretty or thin as compared to the actors or models shown in advertisements.

Though there are certain guidelines provided to the ad agencies by ASCI (Advertising Standards Council of India) with regards to the making of advertisements, these guidelines are not kept in mind most of the times while framing an advertisement.

Although there are statutory regulations to regulate the advertisements but as educated social belongings of the society there are our certain responsibilities to take decisions to accept or reject the things. In 2014 in an advertisement by a famous company 'FASTRACK', a female model is wrapped in a yellow tape bearing 'SALE' all over her body. She is wearing nothing but yellow tape. These types of advertisement are advertising the product or the woman? One cannot call it as enhancement. The general public raised the voice against it and presented their opposition in front of FASTRACK showroom. Such steps are required to be taken for the betterment of conditions of portrayal of women in advertisements in India.

### **Research Gap:**

After going through the works that have already been done on the subject it is found that there is much to be studied on the subject. The works that have already been done, stress only upon the advertisements portraying women indecently and their somewhat impact on the society and children. The role of women in society has undergone through several changes over the period of time and same is with the thinking of society. The stereotype image of women has also undergone a change. Today's woman has been struggling hard to achieve economic and political independence. There have been radical changes in portrayal of women in the subsequent advertisements which have become need not only for the advertisers but for the researchers also.



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