

**A STUDY ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN KERALA MEDIA: ADVERTISING AND
GENDER NORMS**

Project Report

Submitted by

Fizamol V N (SM23JMC006)

Under the guidance of

Ms .Nikitha Shaji Thomas

In partial fulfilment of requirements for award of the degree

Of Master of Arts

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam



College With Potential for

Excellence Accredited by NAAC with 'A++'

Grade

Affiliated to

Mahatma Gandhi University

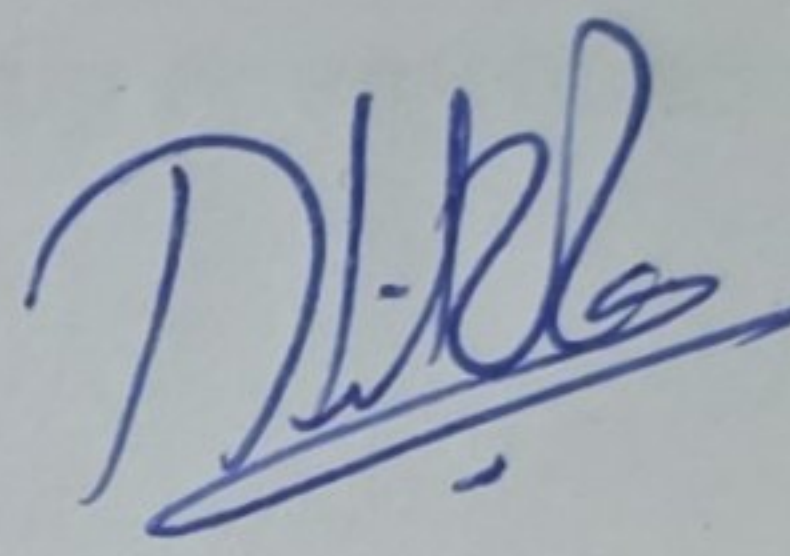
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March 2025

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this project entitled to "A STUDY ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN KERALA MEDIA" BY FIZAMOL V N is a record of bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

Date: 26/03/2025

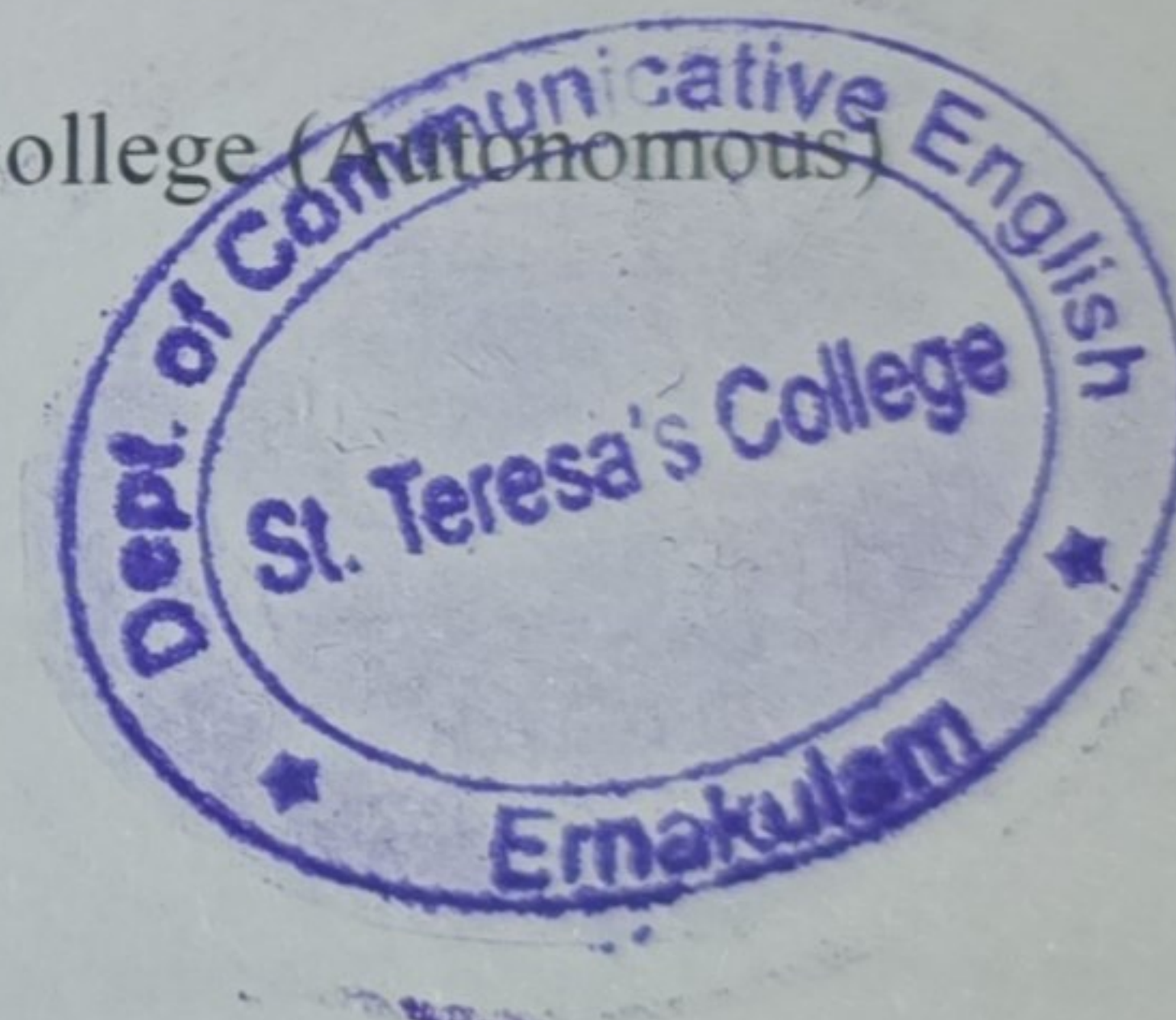


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DECLARATION

I do affirm that the dissertation “**A STUDY ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN KERALA MEDIA**” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the **MASTER OF ARTS IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION** has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar title of recognition.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this project entitled to **“A STUDY ON PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN KERALA MEDIA” BY FIZAMOL V N** is a record of bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

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ABSTRACT

Traditional and cultural norms combined with passive behaviors dominate the depictions of women in Kerala through various media outlets. Media has started to demonstrate different female stories but its primary storytelling method depends on idealized images of modest behavior and domestic activities and feminine subordination. Through a detailed analysis of media content, the research seeks to understand whether advertisements in Kerala primarily focus on a woman's appearance rather than her skills, capabilities, and individuality. The study also investigates how frequently advertisements reinforce traditional gender roles by portraying women as homemakers and men as breadwinners. The research adopts a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative data. A survey was conducted with 103 respondents to gather primary data on public perceptions of gender portrayals in Kerala's advertisements. The survey responses were analyzed to assess the degree to which audiences notice and internalize the stereotypical depictions of women in media. The findings reveal that a significant portion of advertisements in Kerala tend to focus more on a woman's physical appearance rather than her competencies or achievements. The study highlights how the portrayal of women in advertisements often limits their representation to certain predefined roles, which restricts the potential for more diverse and empowering depiction

Keywords: Gender Representation, Stereotypical Portrayals, Audience Perception, Media Analysis, Gender Stereotypes.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The study is based on the portrayal of women in Kerala Media and advertising has been one of the most effective means of influencing the perception of the society and consumer behavior in the last century especially in Kerala. The culture that is highly involved and rapidly changing; the role of gender is a particularly strong facet of this cultural element. As one of the most vital consumers, women have always been depicted in the media. But women portrayal in Kerala advertising is considered to be full of stereotypical, objectification, and traditional gender roles which draws question on the effects of adverts on culture and gender equity.

The change of Media Regulation from being government owned to advertising liberalization in Kerala economy has a great impact on the portrayal of women. There has been positive representation of women in media and advertising owing to the neoliberal era, however, this has entailed relativized representation in particular culturally constructed stereotype female norms.

The study aims at exploring the advertisements that feature women in Kerala in order to investigate the gender norms and stereotype messages customary in them. It also seeks to examine social cultural and psychological effects of such portrayals on women as well as everyone else watching such movies. The analysis of the advertisements would attempt to reveal specific patterns of objectification, empowered and a resistance to stereotyped portrayals.

Women have historically managed to play the star roles of both the persuaders and the persuades in advertising. But their depiction mostly raises concern among the audiences regarding stereotype portrayal and objectification. Das and Sharma (2021) explore this dynamic in their study,

"Portrayal of Women in Kerala TV Advertisements: Audience Perception Analysis: A working paper: A Study of Audience Perception," where we examine the difference in awareness and perception depending on gender, age, and education. The study shows that men and women of the working population have different perceptions where the younger population and that with low levels of education are more different as per the test results.

The advertisements perform the vital role of reflecting the desirable set standards in society. Madhusmita Das & Sangeeta Sharma (2021) finally state that 'women are often portrayed in decorative or family duties, this is very true in commercial ads especially those that are on body enhancement and products related to home'. On the other hand, there has been a slow but steady progression of women being used in a manner that depicts her able to make her own decision for herself as propelled by changes in society today.

Such portrayals have their effects felt most among the adolescents. Kumari and Joshi (2015) have found out that media content poses patriarchal dominant messages, which affect the young people. There are some particularities when it comes to female adolescents; the problems that they have, stereotypical images that they are offered, this is why these restrictive regulatory frameworks should be maintained in an effort to offer more balanced and empowering coverage.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The representation of women in media is a very well-discussed issue internationally especially in the area of advertising since it serves as a determinant of social norm in many ways. As we all know Kerala is very much culturally sensitive country with its core values still rooted, the portrayals of women in media are still quite a traditional as well as shifts towards the newly emerging progressive culture. The portrayal of women in commercials is not only about

convincing a community to purchase a particular product, but also about molding that community's perception of the role of women within it.

Earlier, Kerala advertisements have portrayed women mainly as domestic help, caregivers or as mere gender symbols. They maintain some stereotypically masculine values and deprive people of a wide understanding of women's opportunities outside the home and as decorations. In fact, this evolution has been made possible by globalization, interferential exposure to world media and the feminism entity. Women today will often be depicted as making their own decisions, working, and even being placed in leadership roles, though this message is relayed irregularly.

Thereby, the advertisement industry in Kerala especially in Ernakulam is an index to the culture and ethos and also a pace-setter of such a culture. While some adverts reinforce stereotypical images of women, some other adverts create new and 'healing' images of women. For instance, the advertising portrayal of woman as leaders or as business women is an indication that there is transformation to acknowledge the facet of women.

1.2 THEORY

The portrayal of women in media has been extensively analyzed through various theoretical lenses, highlighting its impact on societal norms and gender perceptions. The Cultivation Theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976) suggests that repeated exposure to media representations influences audience perceptions of reality. The Kerala advertising sector displays women mainly in conventional roles thus the theory demonstrates how these representations influence cultural gender role expectations. Kerala advertisements continue to maintain a dualistic struggle between traditional and modern representations thus requiring an analytical study that examines gender perception evolution.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Media portrayals of women in Kerala advertisements persist as a controversial issue because these expressions sustain gender stereotypes as well as objectify women while reinforcing traditional societal norms. Media presents itself as an influential framework which sustains cultural standards that restrict female participation within three spheres: caretaking, home maintenance, and visual consumption as desirable assets. A mixture of traditional and contemporary gender representations exists in modern Kerala advertising which generates uncertainty about how these portrayals affect public attitudes toward women and gender equality.

The economic liberalization of Kerala and rapid digital media expansion has led to increased female presence in advertisements yet multiple depictions still maintain their patriarchal and stereotypical characteristics. Audience understanding related to gender roles and expectations undergoes change through advertising representations which specifically affect younger consumer groups. Research findings show continuous exposure leads to social discrimination reinforcement which ultimately impacts female perceptions about themselves along with their professional goals and social ranking.

The research investigates female representation in Kerala advertisements by evaluating their effectiveness toward gender norm maintenance as well as norm subversion. This research pursues analysis of audience reception levels among various population segments alongside comprehensive evaluation of societal and psychological consequences which emerge from promotional portrayals of women in Kerala advertisements. This study examines representation patterns to make useful contributions toward gender equity debates in media while promoting more empowering and balanced female characters during Kerala commercial broadcasts.

1.4 AIM

To assess the social construction of women in Kerala advertisements for enhancing its critical analysis on social-cultural effect on changing perceptions about women and gender equity.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the existing stereotypical portrayals of Gender and other factors commonly portrayed in Kerala ads.
- To compare the identified audience perceptions on portrayal of women in advertisements by gender, age, and education level.

1.6 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Media remains essential in forming public attitudes as well as shaping collective beliefs while affecting perceptions about reality. Kerala advertising serves as a major platform which maintains traditional views about gender by showing traditional female images that objectify women. Media representations of women in traditional roles continue to affect public understanding mainly through their influence on younger generations following social development in gender dynamics.

The need for these studies emerges because the community recognizes that female portrayal in Kerala advertising needs examination to evaluate its influence on gender stereotypes and cultural values towards women's empowerment. Modern media accessibility through globalization and digital transformation and social media expansion demand analysis of advertisement gender stereotyping effects on audience mindsets. Daily exposure to media content that typecasts genders produces various mental and sociocultural outcomes which impact women's self-perception and their professional goals together with their expectations of social roles.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The focus of this research with reference to representation of women in Kerala advertising is quite broad, because the research tries to encompass several important dimensions namely gender socialization, stereotype and social effects. The study will be confined to ads placed in television media, printed media and digital media sources, which are viable and popular extensively in Kerala. Therefore, analyzing the representation of women within selected adverts the study will seek to understand how these adverts construct and affirm gender relations of women.

The geographical concern of the study is primarily focused on Ernakulam, Kerala which means it includes both the rural as well as the urban area ads to identify regional differences. Kerala is a multicultural country and thus the artwork depends on the culture of the region to represent the women. The study will also look into advertisement in both national and regional Kerala languages to cover as many areas and cultures as possible. The period of the study will be twenty years so as to capture the following decade after liberalization of Kerala economy and advertising industry pioneered in the 1990s. This period marked as crucial because neoliberal economic dimensions and globalization processes were beginning this time and have left remarkable effects on media images and women's role in the society.

This research will look at all forms of media outlet. Since many households in Kerala and everywhere are influenced by television commercials, they will have a higher priority. Also, newspaper and magazine advertisements will be scrutinized in an effort to determine how women have been portrayed in publications that have consistently shaped the Kerala's traditional media. Online advertisement, social advertisement, YouTube advertisement and so on will also be examined with particular emphasis with the ever increasing influence of digital media among young, tech-savvy audiences.

as previously mentioned, the study will analyse the effects of the portrayals explored on women and the broader society. It will explore how the analysed gender representations are positive by depicting women in the positions of power or as autonomous subjects, or negative by constructing woman as an object that should conform to the gender stereotype.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

The research examines how Kerala advertisements show women in their television broadcasts as well as print-based and digital content. However, it has certain limitations. The study examines only media portrayal in Kerala contexts so its results remain exclusive to this cultural environment. The study relies on an examination of specific advertisements selected from a particular time span that could possibly fail to reflect the entire development of gender depictions in media. The analysis of audience perceptions represents a key restriction due to subjects' personal backgrounds and social factors that influence their interpretations. The research fails to incorporate substantive psychological investigative methods or extended real-life behavioral outcomes among its evaluation goals. The study faces two main limitations that stem from secondary data constraints and inherent biases found in media content evaluation. This research delivers meaningful results about Kerala advertising gender representations even though it has certain research constraints.

1.9 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The media depicts generalized beliefs about male and female characteristics through their portrayals of social expectations which create gender stereotypes. Through objectification feminine beings receive reduced status because their appearance takes precedence over their autonomous decision-making power. Sales and marketing strategies demonstrate how commercials portray women through their real-life activities as well as social and cultural

behavioral interactions. The manner in which audiences perceive advertisements about women depends on characteristics including age and gender in addition to education and cultural origins as well as personal background. When consumers repeatedly see advertising content it leads to changes in how people think about gender roles and the way they behave and what they believe about these roles. Through these definitions the research study specifies its core analytical terms while defining their particular application area.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 ROLE OF WOMEN IN MEDIA

The position of women in media has always been on the lips of social commentators, analysts and the public in general. Regarding the topic therefore, media – especially advertising – has, in the Kerala context, had a crucial function of defining roles related to gender. Concerning the representation of women through media, change over time has been significantly appealing due to certain socio-economic factors and culture and globalization. This paper found out that even though there has been a change in the different media concerning the portrayal of women under different annals, media still serves as an effective conduit through which the construction and reproduction of gender roles still persists.

Analyzing the current and previous trends of advertisement, Singha Roy (2012) pointed out that advertisement has acted as strong social influence tool and the portrayal of women is not an exception; they reflect the culture of the specific society at a certain period. In Kerala while analyzing the media representation of women, especially in the advertisement the women have always been depicted as objects, restricted to their respective roles in the house. All the limitation and bound of women were described only in the way of caregiver, homemaker, only the sexual symbols were emphasized, which made the women's value equal only with domestic roles and sex appeal. All images stated by Dr. Deepanjali Mishra (2012) about these portrayals are stereotyping women doing household work or taking care of men's needs, elaborating traditional gender roles.

Over time as the neoliberal economy and the globalization took root there has been a shift in how women are depicted in media. During the economic liberalization policy in the early 1990s more

opportunities were created for private players to transverse into the media industry, with a flood in advertisements that sought to capture the women as active consumers. This change positively affected, the status and depiction of women because they were portrayed as strong empowered women the decision makers, the career women and the business women among others.

The paper by Archana Kumari and Himani Joshi (2012) makes readers understand the effects of stereotyping roles of gender among adolescents. Youth especially the 17 to 20 years of age are easily influenced and tend to model themselves on the characters that feature in the media. According to this study it was evident that young persons' perception of gender relations in the real life is shaped by the roles portrayed in media. Especially females were found to exert higher agreement levels indicating acceptance of stereotyped images and roles assigned to women in the mass media, either as domestic beings or sex symbols thereby perpetuating patriarchy. This finding reveals the strong influence of media productions in influencing gender perceptions especially targeting the young persons who are hardly endowed with adequate knowledge on gender equality.

Female adverts in rural or regional context will depict women as caretakers or housewives, while female adverts depicted in urban or metropolitan scenes will show more emancipated women since there is a marked cultural difference between the urban and the rural areas of Kerala. This double representation means that the media industry in Kerala is yet to find the right rhythm between the traditional values and the processes of change.

2.2 STEREOTYPES IN KERALA ADVERTISEMENTS

It is worth turning to point out that stereotype remains an intrinsic feature of Kerala advertisements, which has been the target of critical discourses and reviews for quite some time. The advertisements of Kerala have always played an important role in social construction of gender,

identity and culture and the representation of women in advertisements falls squarely in conformity with patriarchal prejudice. This is a conformation that even as there has been slight improvement in the women's position in advertising.

One of the major problems in such representations is the restricted number of opportunities and female roles described in the society. Dr. Deepanjali Mishra (2012) observed that products' messages are conveyed through 'the perfect woman' figure and such imagery is always tied to mother, wife, beautiful and submissive roles. Nowadays, even some progress in the representation of women in advertising has been made: women are portrayed as businesswomen or leaders; yet, these roles are not the rule rather than exception.

Madxy Kumari & Joshi, 2012 stated that through depicting gender stereotype in advertisements not only is the view of women in society constructed but also aids in constructing women's view of society. For instance, the portrayal of women as only caring, nurturing or as the type that needs a man, is likely to produce self-feeding stereotypical beliefs about the appropriateness of women's roles in family or society, or their main purpose being to satisfy male needs. This is especially the case because it encompasses the kind of roles that women picture themselves undertaking and restricts women from taking on something different within those parameters. Classifying Women's images in Advertisements negatively plays a role in reinforcing stereotypically gender roles restricting women's movement between public and private domains.

2.3 AUDIENCE PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIORAL IMPACT

The analysis of the Kerala advertisements in the context of the present research indicates that the issue of gender stereotyping is beginning to evolve despite various conspicuous challenges still present. Sexual objectification of woman in advertisement still influence the image of gender roles

in the society for both male and female. While there is today a tendency where other images are being portrayed instead of traditional sex objects of women, these new images are limited in portrayal and in most cases dominated by the traditional images. In the words of Dr. Mishra (2015), the particular industry should expand and try to escape from these stereotypical roles in advertisement to transform the position of women in media.

The analysis of the present ads in Kerala reveals that women as portrayed in the ads influence the perception of gender roles among the members of the audience and their behaviours. Advertisements are not just communication tools used by companies to promote a saleable product but are constraint and pro-social messages which depict the culture and beliefs of a society. As the current study shows, the study of female stereotypes in advertisements addresses how societal audiences perceive gender, focusing on aspects of behavioral versus a moral imperative.

Media literacy is also highlighted for audience shaping and preventing adverse impact of stereotyping in the current research. In the same tone Kumari and Joshi (2015) posit that there is a possibility for consumers to actually become more critical of the media they consume due to increased awareness of how advertisements are used to promote gender stereotypes. Such awareness may change the audiences' behavior pattern and stop accepting stereotype depictions of women in the media and start lobbying for better portrayals. As consumers, opinion-shapers and women become more aware of such portrayals, advertisers and marketers, in return may modify representations of women to be less objectifying and in the process help toward changing the social perceptions of women as lesser beings.

It is noteworthy, however, that even today many advertisements are overshadowed by clichés because they appeal to the bulk of potential consumers – especially in countries' districts that are

more conservative or agrarian. The study argue that such stereotypes remain a factor in shaping audience behavior because they are backed by unbending cultural norms that dominate societal culture and promote traditional gender roles rather than embracing modern values.

The present study examines how women are represented in adverts and the overall effects it has on attitudes towards them among the viewers. Stereotyped image of women perpetuate traditional roles or male/female dominance or subordination and they way women/female are treated or viewed the self.

2.4 EMERGING TRENDS IN GENDER REPRESENTATION

The Kerala advertisements have really changed their portrayal of gender in the last couple of years. Despite the obvious continuation of gender stereotypes in advertisements and specific roles attributed to women at present there are visible signs of evolution in roles attributed to women in media. The transformation of these images is therefore occasioned by different social, culture and day to day economics such as globalization, feminism and the awareness of women rights. According to the research papers this shift that is evident in the advertisement is informed by a progressive move towards the social, political and cultural reform where women are depicted in presumed and new unconventional roles as highlighted above.

According to Singha Roy (2012), therefore, we cannot dismiss advertisement as mere reflections of societal practices, but active contributors to the practices. For instance, then today these commercials progress towards representing women more as business people, owners of their careers, powerful leaders in different careers and no more a simply caretaker, or as just a mere pedestrian, jester, or a background figure. This change has been as a result of trend to globalization

whereby the Kerala audience is exposed to more diverse media content that portrays woman diversely and in powerful positions.

| Independent Variables | Dependent Variables |
|---|---|
| Nature of Advertisement Content (Beauty, household, corporate, lifestyle) | Audience Perception of Women (How viewers interpret portrayals) |
| Gender Stereotypes (Traditional roles, objectification, empowerment) | Reinforcement or Challenge of Gender Stereotypes (Traditional vs. modern roles) |

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study follows a descriptive research design to analyze how women are portrayed in advertisements in Ernakulam, Kerala. Descriptive research helps in understanding different patterns of gender representation across various media platforms. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a complete understanding of the topic.

The main goal of this research is to systematically document the representation of women in advertisements and evaluate gender roles, objectification, stereotypes, and empowerment. The study uses content analysis to examine media messages related to gender representation. By analyzing advertisements, researchers can identify common gender stereotypes and their frequency in Kerala's media.

The study also uses surveys to collect audience opinions on how gender is portrayed in advertisements. Combining content analysis and surveys helps provide a deeper understanding of media representation. The study also compares traditional media (TV, newspapers) with digital media (social media, online ads) to observe changes over time. This research aims to suggest policies and media strategies to promote fair gender representation in advertising.

Ernakulam, as a major commercial hub in Kerala, plays a crucial role in shaping regional advertising trends. The district is home to various businesses and media agencies that create and promote advertisements. Studying gender representation in advertisements from this region helps in understanding how traditional and modern values influence media portrayals. The urban-rural

divide in Ernakulam provides a unique perspective on how different audiences perceive gender roles in advertisements.

3.1 VARIABLES USED IN THE STUDY

Multiple variables organize into independent and dependent categories for analysing female representations in Kerala advertisements. The research examines three independent variables which are media platforms, advertisement content nature and stereotypes of gender alongside cultural and social influences and economic liberalization alongside globalization. The collection of variables creates a research framework which enables assessment of women's portrayal across time spans and multiple advertisement platforms.

This research explores audience views of women alongside gender stereotypes strengthening or weakening and psychological effects on women together with social customs and cultural tradition and consumer decisions and purchasing intent with media education knowledge and gender equality status. Survey data collection methods provide the measurements for every dependent variable described in this study. This collection of variables allows researchers to detect the effects of represented content on audience perception and their social conduct across society. The research uses multiple dependent variables because this method provides an all-encompassing picture of advertising effects on gender portrayal.

The research evaluates how different demographic groups perceiving variations in gender representation through the analysis of variables including age, gender, education level, occupation and geographical location. This method allows the research to study how media affects specific demographic groups. The research examines how youth demographics evaluate gender stereotypes compared to senior citizens and investigates how education affects their media literacy skills.

3.2 SAMPLE SELECTION

A stratified random sampling method exists in the study to deliver representative samples from numerous demographic classes. The dataset contains people from both urban centres and rural locations who vary in educational attainment and occupational position and age segments. Five hundred participants fill the survey through stratified proportion distribution among different demographic characteristics.

Audience perceptions receive comprehensive evaluation through multiple demographic groups made from sample data based on age, gender and education levels and occupational sectors. About 30% of people participate in the study through the 18-25 age category while 40% belong to the 26-40 age group followed by 30% from older than 41 years of age. Exactly half of the sample members belong to each gender category to achieve balanced gender parity. The research group features 20% of participants with high school education or less while undergraduates make up 50% of the sample and postgraduates represent the remaining 30%.

The stratified sampling technique produces samples that reflect the entire population so study results retain general applicability. Participants from all major Kerala states underwent evaluation in this research to capture diverse cultural attitudes toward gender representation in Kerala. The research gathers participants from various backgrounds within the audience so it produces more extensive findings about how media depiction of genders impacts diverse groups.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION TOOL

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3.4 INSTRUMENTS USED FOR THE STUDY

The research uses several different instruments for data collection to create comprehensive and proper data acquisition. A structured questionnaire represents the primary data collection instrument because it serves to measure audience responses about how gender gets depicted in advertisements. A mixed approach of closed-ended and Likert-scale questions in the questionnaire explores themes about gender stereotype recognition together with initial perceptions of female roles in ads as well as suggestions about how advertising should approach traditional gender norms.

An additional instrument of media content analysis is implemented to strengthen the outcome of this research. The assessment of female representations in television print and digital advertisements uses systematic methods to determine specific patterns of visual presentations. The coding system uses predetermined standards to classify various gender portrayal elements which involve analysing the assigned character roles together with female empowerment levels and the measure of objectification depicted in advertising content. The studied evidence demonstrates how gender stereotypes remain active while showing how contemporary advertisements approach traditional gender norms.

The study uses the Excel statistical analysis tool to process and interpret all survey data it collects. Excel delivers three levels of analysis for variables: correlation methods and regression systems and chi-square tools for determining important statistical patterns. The research implements these analysis tools to validate data accuracy and achieve reliable findings that explore gender representation in Kerala advertisements.

The study uses qualitative textual analysis on advertisements to enhance quantitative research findings. The examination of language together with visual content and hidden advertising messages uses this method to discover how the media represents gender in advertisements. The study enhances methodological strength by combining various research instruments which produces comprehensive knowledge about the research domain.

3.5 DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLES

A strategy exists for sample distribution to include all major demographic groups. Through stratified random sampling participants from multiple backgrounds including urban and rural communities and different age groups as well as education levels and occupational groups were

included. The research method properly shows how distinct social groups view gender depiction in advertising content.

The research probes 100 survey participants who belong to various sectors including gender, age group and educational achievement. The research includes participants from various geographical locations across Kerala to analyze the way different regions view gender portrayal in advertisements. The survey distributes through various online and offline platforms so everyone from different economic strata can take part.

Project managers make dedicated attempts to achieve gender parity among their survey participants. Half of all respondents in the research are males whereas the other half are females to achieve balanced gender-based findings. The sample is split into three age groups where 30% belong to the 18-25 age range while 40% fall under 26-40 years and the remaining 30% are above 41 years old. The research groups participants according to their education levels since one-fifth hold high school diplomas or lower degrees whereas 50% graduated from undergraduate programs while the remaining 30% earned postgraduate qualifications.

The research incorporates participants who watch advertisements on various platforms which include television along with print material and digital social media. The method guarantees complete comprehension of how media contact affects gender role awareness. The distribution method delivers precision that extends study validity as it represents information that is relevant to the entire population.

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE SCALES

The study depends on a careful approach for validating and making research instruments reliable. Research findings maintain reliability through consistent results whereas validity refers to accurate and proper measurement tools.

Media studies experts and gender research specialists evaluate the questionnaire to guarantee its content validity through their examination of question clarity and relevance and question appropriateness. The investigators use expert feedback to enhance the survey instrument until the sample research begins. A factor analysis is conducted to verify that the survey questions correctly correspond with the fundamental theoretical concepts about gender portrayal in media.

The study utilizes triangulation to boost its validity by integrating data collection methods through questionnaires as well as studying content and analysing texts. Cross-perspective verification through this research methodology decreases the probability of bias while improving the validity of research findings.

3.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the existing stereotypical portrayals of gender and other factors commonly depicted in advertisements in Kerala?
2. How do audience perceptions of the portrayal of women in advertisements vary based on gender, age, and education level?

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The information collected from surveys combined with content analysis will be systematically analysed both statistically and qualitatively to extract significant findings. The statistical analysis includes descriptive elements which present viewers' perspective data through frequency

distributions and mean scores tables. Statistical methods that include the content analysis serve to evaluate associations between population variables with gender-related advertisement perceptions.

Through regression analysis investigators determine core elements which affect audience reactions toward gender-based roles in advertising materials. The analysis helps determine which factors represented by age groups and gender combinations and levels of education drive public perceptions about how women are depicted in the media. The data processing together with statistical modelling relies on Excel software to achieve precise and accurate interpretation of survey outcomes.

The research team performs thematic data analysis specifically on advertising texts. The researchers apply coding and thematic categorization to recurring gender-related content which produces enhanced comprehension about the impact of advertising on social perceptions of women. The research performs a comparison to understand how gender portrayal differs between traditional and digital media platforms.

The research design utilizes multiple data analysis approaches which enables a complete examination of female depiction in Kerala advertisement content. Research output promotes academic discussion regarding media impact and gender equality alongside female image transformations in contemporary society while applying multiple research methods for complete data acquisition. The research utilizes a structured questionnaire as its main research method while collecting data through online and offline channels. Digital surveys are distributed through Google Forms because this guarantees convenient data collection and improved efficiency. The research extends its demographic reach by delivering survey copies to offices and community centres along with universities when reaching people at public locations.

CHAPTER 4

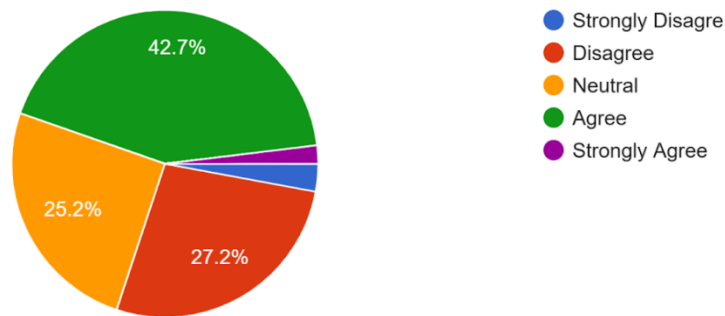
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 FINDINGS

1.

Do you think Kerala advertisements primarily focus on women's appearance rather than their skills and capabilities?

103 responses



The data reveals a combined agreement that Kerala advertisements mainly showcase women through their looks instead of showcasing their professional talents. A considerable number of participants within the 103 respondents (44 individuals equivalent to 42.7%) indicated their agreement with the statement which reveals widespread belief that Kerala advertisements detrimentally favor women's physical characteristics over their vocational skills or professional qualifications. Such displays of women in promotional materials are believed to value visual appeal over meaningful content by 1.9 percent of respondents according to the research findings. A proportion of 28 respondents (27.2%) declared Kerala advertisements lack excessive focus on female appearance that ignores their competences. Three respondents made up the minority who

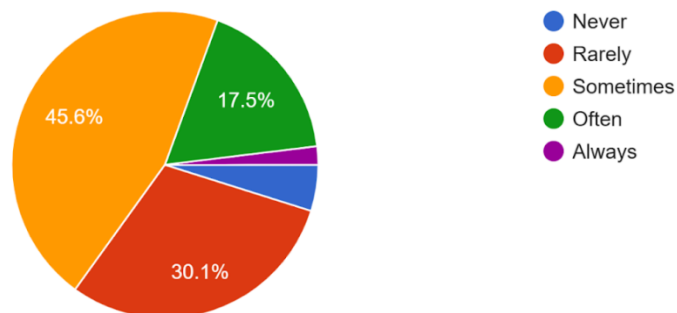
firmly disagreed with the idea that Kerala advertisements show women in ways that transcend their physical attractiveness.

Twenty-six respondents (25.2%) maintained a neutral stance by illustrating their view of balanced representation throughout Kerala advertisements or showing lack of certainty about the extent of the matter. The respondents' neutral stance possibly results from observing advertisements that feature women as professionals alongside promotions that focus on attractiveness standards.

2.

How often do you notice advertisements reinforcing traditional gender roles (e.g., women shown as homemakers, men as breadwinners)?

103 responses



An assortment of perceptions regarding traditional gender role portrayals in advertisements exists among research participants according to their responses about these types of representations. Among the participants, about half or 47 (45.6%) noticed traditional gender roles in Kerala advertisements occasionally while the rest of the representations showed less prevalence of these norms.

Among all respondents eighteen (17.5%) observed these portrayals frequently while two people (1.9%) noticed them constantly. The results show advertisements which promote conventional

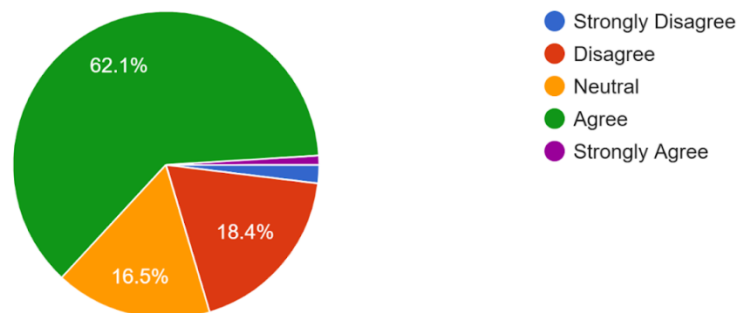
gender stereotypes appear the same way to approximately twenty percent of participants thus demonstrating their continued presence even though media narratives show progress.

Among the respondents 30.1% observed gender stereotypes in advertisements only at occasional times while 4.9% reported not observing such portrayals at all. The information indicates a substantial number of people in the audience recognize that contemporary advertising is shifting from maintaining strict gender stereotypes by presenting balanced masculine and feminine depictions.

3.

In your opinion, does the portrayal of women in advertisements influence younger generations' perception of gender roles?

103 responses



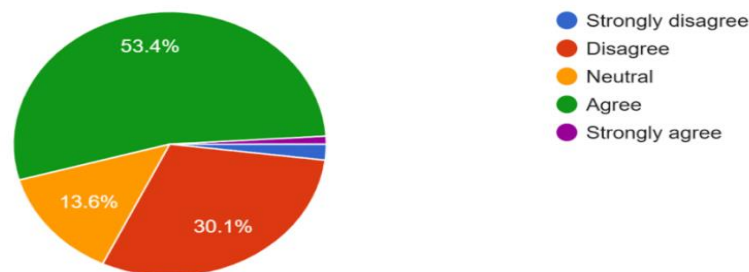
The data demonstrates that most survey participants agree media significantly shapes how younger people view gender roles in society through its portrayal of women in advertising. Most survey participants totaling 64 people (62.1%) declared their agreement to this statement with 1 person (1%) expressing maximum agreement. Research shows that Advertisement content affects how younger audiences handle gender role understanding because a majority of 62.1% respondents shared this view.

Results showed that 18.4% of participants disagreed with this statement while 1.9% strongly disagreed but these numbers indicated the study participants did not believe media significantly influences younger generations regarding their gender roles views. This demographic rejects the idea that media influences play a leading role in gender perception development because they recognize other influences take precedence.

The respondents who remained neutral numbered 17 individuals (16.5%) because they understood how both advertisements and social influences contribute to the gender perception development of young people.

4.

Should advertising agencies take active steps to ensure more balanced gender portrayals?
103 responses



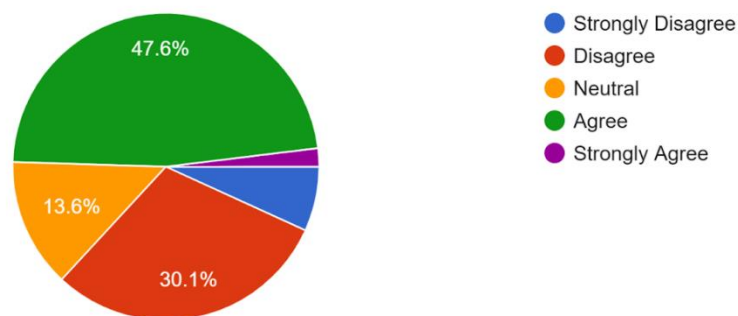
Nearly half of the audience believes advertising agencies should actively undertake measures to achieve gender balance in media representation. Fifty-five respondents representing 53.4% of the sample noted their agreement that advertising agencies need to actively produce ads that present equal imagery of men and women. The stance that responsible advertising helps define cultural attitudes toward gender roles received support from 1% of the respondents according to survey data.

Thirty-one respondents shaped 30.1% of the sample by not agreeing with advertising agency responsibility for social progress although many felt existing advertisements were fair towards both genders. The 2 respondents who strongly disagreed about non-intervention in gender representations in advertisements accounted for 1.9% of the total sample.

5.

Do you believe that brands featuring women in leadership roles gain more credibility?

103 responses

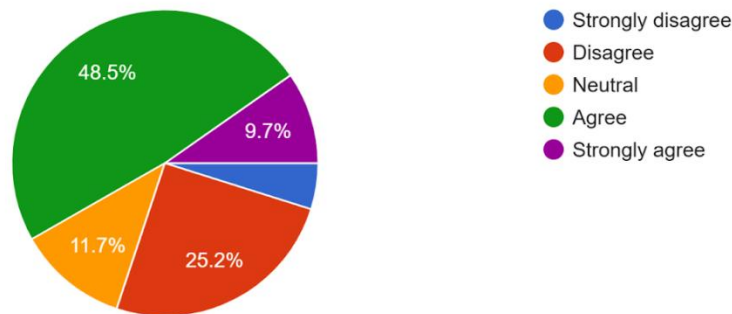


Participants hold mixed perspectives regarding how brands supported by women in leadership positions develop their trustworthiness. Close to half of the 103 participants at 47.6% (49 respondents) accepted that brands looking legitimate through women in leadership roles generate more credibility according to survey results.

A large number of 30.1 percent (31 respondents) expressed doubts about whether showing female leaders affects brand credibility. A notable number of 6.8% of respondents disagreed among them strongly about female portrayals having no effect on consumer trust or brand reputation.

This small group of respondents maintained a neutral stance about the correlation between female leadership visibility and brand credibility assessment amounting to 13.6% (14 participants)

I believe that advertisements showing women in traditional roles reflect the reality of Kerala society.
103 responses



The survey results about showing women in traditional household roles through advertising collected varied responses from participants. The survey results found that 52 participants (50.4%) supported continued traditional female portrayal in advertisements alongside the 8 respondents (7.8%) who strongly endorsed this approach. Therefore, half of the survey respondents maintained their support for traditional woman advertising representation in commercials. People who share cultural values or personal beliefs also think traditional female roles remain socially relevant today.

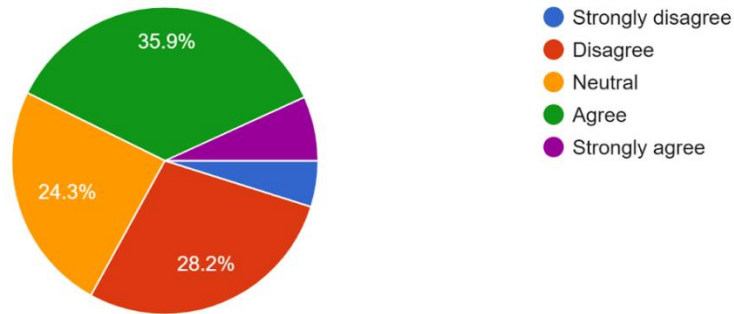
The sample revealed that a minority group totaling 21 respondents (20.4%) along with 2 respondents (1.9%) dissented from the idea of using traditional female character types in advertising while 52 respondents (50.4%) supported keeping traditional female representations.

The 20 respondents who stayed neutral comprised 19.4% of the total, possibly due to conflicting ideas about supporting traditional roles along with modern and progressive perspectives.

6.

Advertisements have a responsibility to challenge gender stereotypes rather than reinforce them.

103 responses



Most survey participants show unease when they see women leaders or working independently in advertisements. Fifty-one of the participants or 49.5% expressed agreement with the statement and 6 respondents or 5.8% demonstrated strong agreement about feeling uncomfortable while watching women in positions of authority or independence in advertisements. The traditional gender norms which attached leadership positions to men during historical times demonstrated their strong influence in the data findings.

A considerable minority of participants consisting of 24 individuals (23.3%) along with 3 respondents (2.9%) strongly expressed their support for showing women in leadership positions and independent roles in advertisements.

Neutral reactions about female portrayals in leadership positions appeared in nineteen respondents (18.4%) in the study. This study makes it evident which demonstrates that gender stereotypes continue to dictate how women appear in advertising.

4.2 DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that many participants believe woman in Kerala advertising tend to present women in their roles as caretakers and housekeepers. The majority of survey participants (58.3%) confirmed these traditional female representations are frequently portrayed throughout Kerala advertisements yet this persisted to be consistent with how society represents women in Kerala (48.5% agreed). Research data indicates that although modern portrayals have received some acknowledgment from respondents many of them maintain their support for traditional advertising depictions (50.4% agreement). Society's established cultural rules influence present-day media portrayals to confirm women's conventional depiction in advertisements.

People realize that advertising affects how society views the roles women should play yet traditional portrayals remain common. The survey data revealed that more than 60% of participants admitted media helps construct gender norms and 90.3% admitted advertisements altered their ideas about women's societal functions at some point. Almost half of the respondents (62.1%) indicated that advertising representations of women create significant changes in how younger generations understand gender relationships. Media demonstrates considerable influence over stereotype conservation or elimination which exposes advertisers to full responsibility for molding societal views.

The study reveals conflicting viewpoints regarding how advertisers should address the issue of gender stereotypes. The survey data revealed opposing views about media responsibility for advancing gender equality since 42.7% users upheld this responsibility yet 28.2% users rejected it. A large number of 49.5% participants endorsed viewing women in medical and engineering careers but the representation of women as business executives (8.7%) and political figures

(16.5%) met with less support. While consumers accept diverse representations their preference for women leading in advertisements remains low or encounters resistance.

Some survey participants demonstrated negative emotions regarding feminine leadership and independent portrayals in advertising roles. The survey results showed that 55% of participants felt distaste regarding the use of women in leadership positions in advertising which reflects society's continuing bias toward inherited cultural habits. The opinion that brands obtain credibility by featuring women leaders was supported by 47.6% of respondents but 30.1% disagreed with this assertion. Society continues to display doubt about granting respect to women when they fill leadership roles across both media platforms and wider public domains.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Kerala media shows a complicated development in the way it portrays women through their advertising channels. The research evaluated how women are shown through traditional stereotyping and modern representations of empowered and independent personalities. Although women appear better today in advertising than before some essential gender norms from traditional times still prevail. Traditional advertising fields women mainly as domestic caretakers who serve both childcare roles and serve as beautiful objects instead of showing their expertise as executives or entrepreneurs. This enduring representation marks fundamental social principles and cultural beliefs that advertisements simultaneously develop and maintain within society.

The rise of awareness about media's effect on social gender perceptions opposes traditional depictions which remain dominant. This research shows advertising entities serve as vital tools which define social standards especially for youth communities. The repetition of gender stereotypes in advertising campaigns creates barriers to womens' future goals because it upholds traditional gender norms. Research demonstrates that viewing modern portrayals of women in the media leads to public attitude change which drives modifications in how people view gender roles. Advertisers have a duty to choose between keeping current norms or advancing inclusive portrayals which offer diversity in advertising.

A portion of public opinion opposes while another supports advertisements working to challenge gender norms during this era. A substantial number of people believe advertisers should push toward gender equality in their industry but others maintain that ads should match genuine social conditions instead of forcing changes. Public opinion reveals a split regarding the question of gender representation in advertising since awareness about equality has increased but opposition

to modification remains resistant to change. Numerous people still support traditional gender roles which demonstrates media changes occur at a sluggish rate in entertaining content.

Some participants in the research study displayed unease about the way advertisements show women in leadership positions or practicing independence from men. Society upholds traditional attitudes through these profound prejudice-related responses. The respondents recognize diverse media portrayals yet resist full acceptance of women leaders which indicates cultural evolution keeps progressing ahead. Some brands achieve credibility through female leadership yet other brands encounter doubts which demonstrates many consumers have not fully accepted women's authority in advertisements.

Traditional and modern elements merge in the image of women throughout Kerala advertisements. The media continues to profile women differently although traditional gender expectations modify how females are depicted. Advertisers should take responsibility to address stereotypes through empowering advertisements while making consumers more aware of these responsibilities. The inclusion of women in diverse professional positions and leadership roles and independent status through advertising enables the industry to help develop a fairer society. Future research needs to examine how advertising portrayals impact deep-rooted societal developments alongside analyzing how better media competence allows audiences to dissect gender representations in commercials.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Age

- 18-25
- 26-40
- Above 40

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Others

Level of Education*

- Graduate
- Postgraduate Degree
- Others

Occupation*

- Student
- Employed
- Self-employed
- Others

Do you think Kerala advertisements primarily focus on women's appearance rather than their skills and capabilities?*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

How often do you notice advertisements reinforcing traditional gender roles (e.g., women shown as homemakers, men as breadwinners)?*

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

Do you believe the portrayal of women in Kerala advertisements has evolved positively over the years?*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

How much do advertisements influence your perception of gender roles in society?*

- Not at all
- Slightly
- Moderately
- Significantly
- Extremely

Have you ever changed your perception about a woman's role in society after watching an advertisement?*

- Yes
- No

In your opinion, does the portrayal of women in advertisements influence younger generations' perception of gender roles?*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Should advertising agencies take active steps to ensure more balanced gender portrayals?*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

What kind of roles would you prefer to see women in advertisements? (Multiple answers possible)*

- Business leaders
- Professionals (Doctors, Engineers, Scientists, etc.)
- Caregivers
- Homemakers
- Athletes
- Politicians
- Entrepreneurs
- Others

Do you believe that brands featuring women in leadership roles gain more credibility?*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Advertisements in Kerala media often portray women in traditional roles such as homemakers and caregivers.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I believe that advertisements influence societal expectations of women's roles.*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I actively notice and question gender stereotypes in advertisements.*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Advertisements should continue to show women in traditional roles (e.g., homemakers, caregivers).*

- Strongly Disagree

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Seeing women in leadership or independent roles in advertisements makes me uncomfortable.*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

I believe that advertisements showing women in traditional roles reflect the reality of Kerala society.*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Strongly disagree

Advertisements have a responsibility to challenge gender stereotypes rather than reinforce them.*

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree