

Stereotypical and Non-Stereotypical Representation of Women in Pakistani TV Advertisements

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ABSTRACT

Gender representation in TV advertisements illustrates the patterns of socio-cultural trends that exist in the society. The portrayal of women in most of Pakistani TV ads defines the traditional representation in terms of performing conventional duties like child caring, domestic maintenance, performing sub-ordinate/supportive roles etc. This study analyzes the frequency distribution of stereotypical and non-stereotypical ways of women representation while advertising different products in TV commercials. This study includes statistical analysis and visual description of five most repeated stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertisements shown during prime time transmission of a Pakistani TV channel having highest viewership ratings. Results reveal that, 73% of the advertisements are those, in which women are presenting while performing stereotypical (conventional) duties like, cooking, washing clothes, serving food to other family member, playing sub-ordinate roles etc., these types of stereotypical ads were repeated three times more as compare to non-stereotypical ads that present women in non-stereotypical image like, performing outdoor activities, looking self-autonomous, out-going and confident. These advertisements also influence individuals' perceptions regarding implementation of their specific duties in daily day routine. The highlighting point in this study is to demolish traditional labels regarding specific assumption of women position in the society and these labels are based on false perceptions that are frequently portraying in Pakistani TV ads. This study provides gape to explore the practice response of viewers in their practice lives upon these advertisements shown during prime time transmission.

Keywords: Gender representation, TV advertisements, stereotypical and non-stereotypical portrayal of women.

INTRODUCTION

Media considers as the forth pillar of state after Judiciary, Legislature and Executive. Now a days, television is the most accessible and popular source of media. Television creates huge impact on the lives of people as the individual or collective perceptions are concern. There are 3 B's of television that, TVBLURS people's view of their world, television BLENDS the people's realities into the cultural mainstream, and TV BENDS that mainstream reality to its own and its sponsor's institutional interests (Gerbner, 1987). Paid commercials/advertisements are the major resource to maintain financial activities of these TV channels. Manufacturing companies make commercials to advertise their products through these TV channels. These advertisements depict the social, cultural, religious, economic, political and environmental attributes of any society to catch-up the attention of viewers through emotional motivation. While making these

advertisements, the concept, dialogues and gender representation are really important as the success rate of any advertisement is concern. The success of any advertisement is heavily depends on the social and cultural attributes, that how any ad interpret the social conceptions of that particular society. According to Dominick and Rauch, in one thousand prime time advertisements of different TV channels, women were mostly portrayed as house wives mothers that are performing conventional duties and have less occupational roles as compare to men (1971). Gender representation in these advertisements portrays the social and structural trends that are acceptable in any society. Gender roles in different tv ads also illustrate the daily day duties of men and women that they perform in their practical lives (Huda & Ali, 2015). As the pattern of gender roles are concern, it has the specific indication that presents the particular trends of any society and these trends are showing with different representations in TV

advertisements. Women mostly appear in restricted roles while advertising any product in electronic media, these ads present the stereotypical based gender roles to sale their products (Parvez & Roshan, 2010). According to (Das, 2000), representation of women in TV advertisements is becoming the attracting topic for the academicians and practitioners. A qualitative study conducted by (Ullah & Khan, 2014) analyze that, roles present in Pakistani advertisements are illustrating the soft image of women, these advertisements show the image of a woman as the misconceive object that epitomizes the social attributes of Pakistani society regarding gender stereotypes leads to allocation of daily day roles and duties. The main objective of this research is to evaluate the stereotypical and non-stereotypical representation of women in TV advertisements of Pakistani TV channel. Our research question is “What is the current depiction of women representation in stereotypical (traditional) and non-stereotypical (non-traditional) ways in advertisements shown during prime time transmission of a Pakistani TV channel having the highest viewership ratings?”. This research is based on mixed methodology that includes quantitative and qualitative both the data analysis of advertisement shown during prime time transmission from 8am till 11am. Our data analysis is consisting of statistical analysis and visual description of five most repeated stereotypical and non-stereotypical ads during prime time transmission.

OBJECTIVES AND SIGNIFICANCES

- To evaluate the current representation of women in prime time advertisements of Pakistani TV channel having the highest viewership ratings.
- Distinguishing stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertisement on the basis of frequency measures to find out the statistical formation of advertisements shown during prime time transmission.
- The description of most repeated ads will enable people to compare the visual message with the social construction at ground realities on the basis gender roles that portray during prime time transmission.
- This research identifies such labels that are attached with the women in the society by dominant social structure on the basis of traditional conceptions. This research will elaborate the misconception that should be

modified while presenting women in TV advertisements.

- This research will provide a concept to portray a healthy image of women to construct social equilibrium on the basis of abilities instead of conventional and stereotypical parameters.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the current depiction of women representation in stereotypical (traditional) and non-stereotypical (non-traditional) ways in advertisements shown during prime time transmission of a Pakistani TV channel having the highest viewership ratings.

Defining Key Points

- Stereotypical (traditional) representation of women means: A conventional appearance of women while performing such type of actions that were assigned by old customs and traditions on the basis of congested thinking regarding physical and mental abilities of a woman.

Stereotypical Representation of Women in Pakistani TV Ads Refer to the Following Characteristics.

- Traditional appearance of women (clothes, hair style, body language etc.).
- Performing household activities (conventional roles) like cooking, serving food, washing clothes, caring her children etc.
- Seen as doing supporting roles while performing any daily day act.
- Non-Stereotypical (Non-traditional) representation of women means: An outgoing, self-confident, paradigmatic and autonomous appearance of women while performing any daily routine act.

Non-Stereotypical Representationo Women in TV Ads Refers to Following Characteristics.

- Looking autonomous and self-confident while performing any particular act.
- Modern look and expressions.
- Performing extra effort taking activities.
- Independent mobility while performing outdoor activities like shopping, touring etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media as a tool can be used in both constructive and destructive manner. It can play its part to overcome the gap of In-equality in the society. As the representation of gender roles are concern, women's representation in TV advertisements are based on stereotypical assumptions that depict structural position of women in the society. According to (Hussain, Akhter, & Habib, 2014), Stereo types are often used by different social organizations including mass media that influence the mindsets of people to accept and maintain the hegemonic conceptuality regarding gender roles and duties. Like the other social institutes, advertisements are equally responsible to spread gender stereotypes in the society. Stereotypes regarding women are the traditional labels lead to physical appearance, bounded with household activities, dependent upon men and perform supportive role in extra based activities in Pakistani society. The portrayal of women is considers on the basis pf physical appearance instead of their actual abilities, Women are presenting in traditional roles that were defined by hierarchal structure of the society. According to a statistical analysis of two hundred and twenty six Indian national advertisements, 61.2% of times, when women are portraying while doing house hold activities and 32% of the time, when men are portraying in house hold occupations (Kabi, 2015). By using semi logical analysis, researcher interprets the representation of women in TV ads, that defines the traditional way of performing daily duties by women like, advertise a washing powder while washing clothes, advertising a cocking oil while preparing meal, etc. (Azin & Hossien, 2015). The representation of women is presented as the domestic server to fulfill men's routine life goals. A content analysis on 150 Pakistani channels shows that, the representation of women in TV ads are mostly based on domestic tasks like cocking, kitchen work, child caring, domestic maintain ace, etc (Ali & Shahwar, 2011), and these tasks are depicting the conceptualization of women responsibility in Pakistani society. Gender stereotypes are socially acceptable and its frequent use in TV ads strengthens the false perceptions of viewers towards existing roles of women in the society (Shrikhande, 2003). Women are presenting as house wives in tv commercials for last many decodes, women were most of times portrayed as the dependent figure in TV ads (Craig, 1992). According to Bardwick and Schumann, the role of women in TV advertisements is shown as a bounded object that can only play its part in

house hold activities (1969).Most of the researches show one-third ratio of women representation in house hold activities, but some of the researches depict 60% of women representation in domestic based activities, that shows the limited opportunities for women in their social setup.(FURNHAM & PALTZER, 2009). A study conducted by (Moorthi, Roy, & Pansari, 2014) explains that, the participation of women is increasing in many fields like, software industries, teaching, advertisements etc. but, the conventional elements are still exist regarding allocation of gender roles In Indian TV advertisements. Television commercials are not just using to sale different products, it is also using to sale our own selves with the courtesy of traditional conceptions based on wrong interpretations. Those stereotypical images regarding women representation fantasize people towards social based agendas and our social structure is the answer of 'why stereotypes exist?' (N.Shartiely, 2005).

Methodology

This research is based on mixed methodology that includes quantitative and qualitative both the data analysis of women representation in stereotypical and non-stereotypical ways in TV advertisements shown during prime time transmission (from 8pm to 11pm) of a Pakistani tv channel having the highest viewership ratings in the month of April 2016. We select our sample on the basses of prime time transmission that includes three hours of time period. The public service messages are not included in our sample.

Our data analysis includes the statistical presentation of stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertisements of these ads that were on aired during prime time transmission. Our second part of analysis is based on the visual description of five most repeated stereotypical and five non-stereotypical ads, that how women representation is displaying in these types of advertisements on Pakistan TV channel.

Data Analysis

Statistical Analysis

Frequency Distribution of Stereotypical and Non-Stereotypical Ads during Prime Time Transmission,

Box no.1

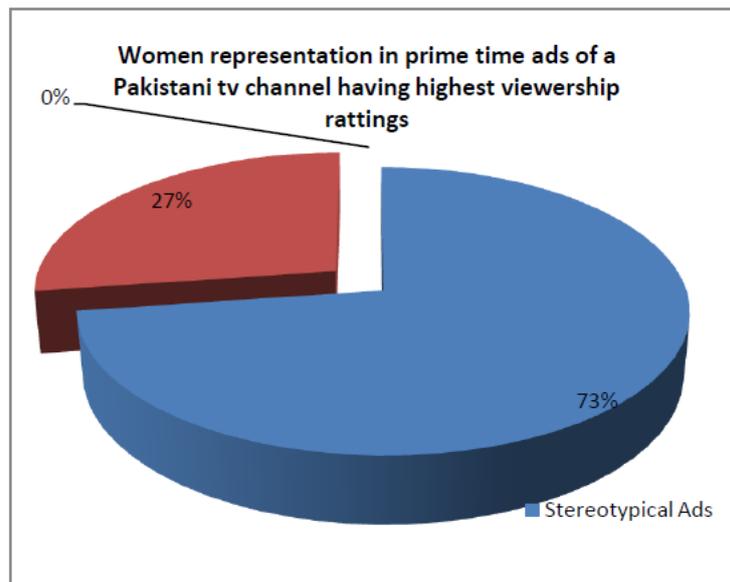
| Stereotypical Ads | Non-Stereotypical Ads |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 16 | 6 |
| 73% | 27% |

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As we see in box no.1, the total number of ads that depicts the stereotypical/traditional representation of women during prime time transmission are sixteen (73%), and those ads that represent women in non-stereotypical/modern ways are only six in

numbers (27 percent). The big statistical difference between stereotypical and non-stereotypical ads refers the traditional representation of women in prime time advertisements of TV channel having the highest viewership rating in Pakistan.

Pie chart

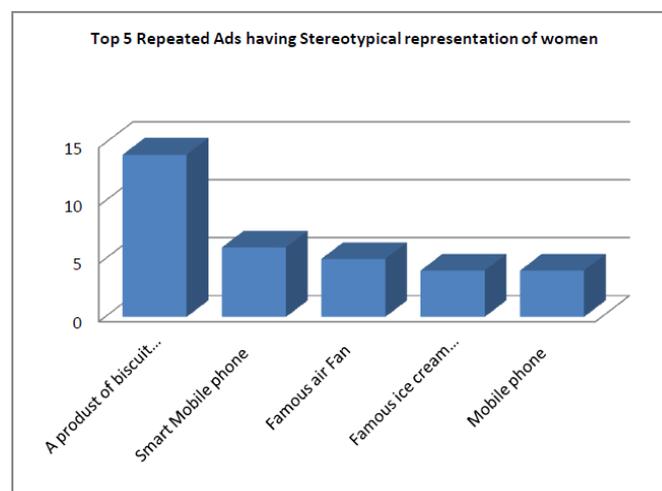


Top Five Repeated Ads Having Stereotypical Representation of Women.

Box no.2

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| A product of biscuit manufacturing company ad | Repeated 14 times |
| Smart Mobile phone ad | Repeated 6 times |
| Famous air fan ad | Repeated 5 times |
| Famous ice cream product ad | Repeated 4 times |
| Mobile phone ad | Repeated 4 times |

Column graph



Box no.2 is showing the frequency of top five repeated ads during three hours of prime time transmission. The results explain that, the highest repeated ad was of a biscuit manufacturing company that was repeated fourteen times in that period of three hours,

present woman in traditional way to advertise the product. Second most repeated ad that portray women in supportive role is the advertisement of smart mobile phone, this commercials was repeated six times during the prime time transmission. The third most

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repeated ad is of an famous air fan, it presents the participation of women as traditional house wife performing her domestic duties. Next two advertisements was repeated four times each

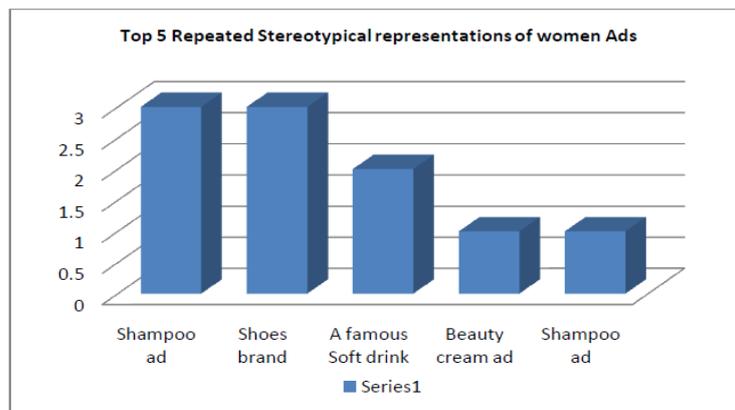
during prime time transmission of TV channel also portray women as domestic server who are playing their acts in such ads, while performing conventional duties.

Top Five Repeated Stereotypical Representations of Women Ads,

Box no.3

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Shampoo ad | Repeated 3 times |
| Shoes brand ad | Repeated 3 times |
| A famous Soft drink ad | Repeated 2 times |
| Beauty cream ad | only once (not repeated) |
| Shampoo ad | only once (not repeated) |

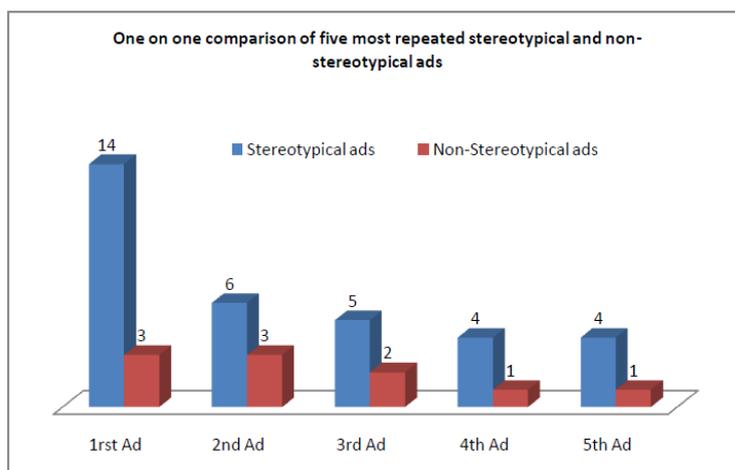
Column graph



Box no.3 is showing the frequency of top five non-stereotypical ads, in which women are portraying in non-traditional characters on Pakistani TV channel having highest viewership ratings. The most repeated non-stereotypical advertisement during prime time transmission was of a famous shampoo brand that presents women in modern outlook; this ad was repeated three times during three hours of time period. Second most repeated advertisement was of a shoes brand that, portray a woman as self-

autonomous and confident human being, this ad was repeated three times on our selected TV channel. Third most repeated non-stereotypical ad was of a famous soft drink that presents an out-going and self-confident women, this ad was repeated twice a time. The last two non-stereotypical ads was of a beauty cream and shampoo product, these two ads were on aired only once during three hours of prime time transmission of a Pakistani TV channel having highest viewership ratings.

One on One Statistical Comparison of Five Most Repeated Stereotypical and Non-Stereotypical Ads,



Above column graph shows one on one comparison of five most repeated stereotypical

and non-stereotypical advertisements during prime time transmission. The results interpret

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that, the stereotypical ads were repeated more as compare to non-stereotypical ads. The number of five most repeated stereotypical ads during the three hours of transition was 14-6-5-4-4

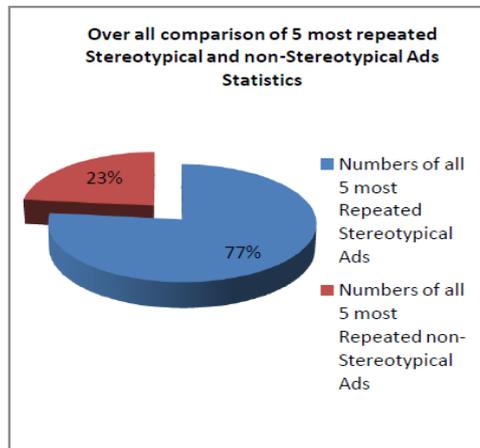
respectively, and on the other hand the five most non-stereotypical was repeated with the frequency of 3-3-2-1-1 respectively.

Over All Comparison of 5 Most Repeated Stereotypical and Non-Stereotypical Ads Statistics

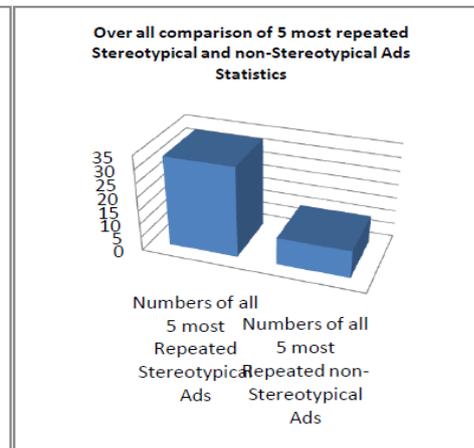
Box no.4

| Total numbers of all five most repeated stereotypical ads | Total numbers of all five most repeated non-stereotypical ads |
|---|---|
| 33 | 10 |
| 77% | 23% |

Pie chart



Column graph



Total number of five most repeated ads during prime time transition of Pakistani TV channel shows the heavy tilt towards the stereotypical (traditional) ways to represent women in TV advertisement. Total sum of top five repeated stereotypical ways of advertisement are (33 in numbers/77%) greater (with heavy margin) than the total sum of five most repeated non-stereotypical ways of advertisement (10 in numbers/23 percent).

DISCUSSION

All the above results clearly depict the large quantity of stereotypical ways to represent women in advertisement of Pakistan TV channel. The big difference between the repeated frequency of stereotypical and non-stereotypical ads clarify the representation of Pakistani women according to the conventional mind sets regarding the role allocation for women in Pakistani society. These advertisements are presenting the social stratification on the basis traditional values and norms as the women roles are concern. The numbers of more stereotypical ads that present women in limited roles delineate the traditional setup of our society because these ads show the image and functions of Pakistani society. 73 percent (n=16) of the ads shown during prime time hours are presenting the traditional

appearance of women while performing household activities (conventional roles) like cooking, washing clothes, caring her children etc., or Seen as doing supporting roles while performing any daily day act. Whereas only 23 percent (n=6) ads were those, that present women as modern, autonomous and self-confident human being while advertising any product in Pakistani TV commercials. These non-stereotypical ads depict women performing extra effort taking activities or having Independent mobility while performing outdoor activities like shopping, touring etc. The repeated frequency of stereotypical ads were 77% (n=33) that is 3 times more than the repeated frequency of non-stereotypical ads during prime time transmission. These results narrate heavy tilt towards the traditional ways of women representation in TV ads during prime time transmission of Pakistani TV channel having highest viewership ratings.

Visual Description of Five Most Repeated Stereotypical and Five Most Non-Stereotypical Advertisements

Visual Description of Five Most Repeated Stereotypical Ways of Advertisements

A Product of Biscuit Manufacturing Company (Repeated Fourteen Times)

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At the start of this ad, a woman who wears traditional dress, brings a tray full of tea cups and biscuits from the kitchen and serves these biscuits to other people that are present at the occasion of a particular gathering. In this advertisement a woman is portrayed as performing house hold duties like, preparing food, serving the food, maintain the domestic activities etc. This ad shows the specific role of women in our society.

Smart Mobile Phone Ad (Repeated Six Times)

In this ad a woman is playing a supportive role while advertising a smart phone. In this smart phone ad, a man is describing the features of mobile phone to his fellows and presenting the main role, while a woman standing along that man and performing a supporting act. That portrayal of woman describes the subordinate position of women in advertisement of smart mobile phone.

Famous Air Fan Ad (Repeated Five Times)

This is a advertisement of famous air fan that presents the role of women in domestic activities. Ad starts when male(husband) come back to home from the office, his wife welcome him in delightful manner by considering a traditional role of wife in our society. Representation of women in this ad explains the conventional status of women population to just engage in house hold activities by doing care of her child and husband.

Famous Ice Cream Product Ad (Repeated Four Times)

Woman is portrayed as a house wife preparing meal for her family members, while preparing food she see her daughter who is trying to make small bread, her mother get excited and proudly explains this achievement of her daughter to other family members and then all the family celebrates that event with ice cream. This ad depicts the social responsibility of women in society is intensively attached with the house hold activities. The ability of doing these traditional roles is celebrated and considered respectable.

Mobile Phone Ad (Repeated Four Times)

This ad portrays women participation as supportive object in daily day activities. A group of eight friends doing discussion about mobile phone, in this scene woman is sitting in the corner and just listening the discussion lead by a man while advertising a mobile phone, that shows the participation of women just as corner

part of group while discussing a technology. This advertisement shows the non-participatory role of women in technological field.

Visual description of these stereotypical ways of representing women in TV advertisements during prime time transmission depicts the existing roles of house wives, domestic maintainers like cooking, washing clothes, caring her children etc., or seen as doing supporting roles while performing any daily day act, these visual messages elaborate the image of women that subsists in Pakistani society and display in TV commercials. Character assassination of women in most repeated advertisements strengthen the false conceptions of specific role allocation for females. As we seen, most of the repeated stereotypical advertisements portray almost same representation of women while performing specific acts. The exposition of stereotypical representation of women in Pakistani TV commercials also supports the patriarchal structure to consider women as subordinate object.

Visual Description of Five Most Repeated Non-Stereotypical Ways of Advertisements

Famous Shampoo Ad (Repeated Three Times)

In this advertisement of a famous shampoo, a woman is representing while challenging the stereotypical thinking about the working and gathering of women at the night. She is explaining that, if women are working and going anywhere at day time, is acceptable, than why women do not perform these things at the night. She also quote the conventional words that “what people say”, if a woman go outside at the night. The main concept of this ad is supporting the idea of modern representation of women that a woman can also go outside at the night.

Shoes Brand (Repeated Three Times)

In this advertisement, woman portrays as self-confident human being that can go outside alone and has the autonomy to make decisions for its own self. The concept is backing the modern way of representing women in TV advertisements.

A Famous Soft Drink (Repeated Two Times)

In an advertisement of a famous soft drink, women are presenting as outgoing, self-confident and independent members of society. The main theme of this advertisement is to promote the availability of equal chances of

entertainment for both men and women. The role of women depict the modern way of gender representation that is challenging the concept of restriction for women to go outside and having the new experience of enjoyment.

Beauty Cream Ad (On Aired Only Once)

In this ad a woman is describing the inner expertise of women that can be highly beneficial for them, she explains that we just need to explore and utilize our expertise in useful manner to consider our self as proud women. This motivational ad is to address women regarding their hidden potential to explore these capabilities and utilize them in progressive way.

Shampoo Ad (On Aired Only Once)

This shampoo ad depicts the involvement of a woman as mother to highlight stereotypical notions challenge them by positive manner. In this commercial, a girl ask permission from her mother for joining summer camp, her mother thinks a while and give her permission to join summer camp. This theme promotes the concept of nourishing the children by ignoring the stereotypes of society that became tough hurdles towards better socialization of children (especially for females).

The portrayal of women in these repeated non-stereotypical ads are supporting the modern concept of women participation in daily day routine. The one liner of these five most repeated ads is that, women should have equal rights and opportunities to spend a autonomous and confidents life by having complete power on their choices. The emotional factor is highlight in one of the advertisement that, women should explore their hidden expertise and become self-confident members of the society, who can do everything that a man can do. The repeated ratio of non-stereotypical ads are less as compare to the stereotypical ads that was shown during prime time transmission of TV channel having highest viewership ratings, but these ads has a glimpse of modern implementation of gender mainstreaming.

CONCLUSION

Representation of gender roles in television advertisements depicts the social surroundings of any society on the basis of routine life activities. TV commercials are based on socially acceptable phenomenon that portrays social, cultural, economic, political, structural and environmental setup of the society. These ads interpret our socio-cultural believes and

practices through visual representation of different characters in television commercials. The representation of men and women in TV ads of any society depict their rights, duties, status and personal attributes that any individual holds in that particular society. Women's portrayal in tv advertisements are mostly based on traditional trends that are followed by subordinate roles and specific task allocation. Women present as an misconceive object in most of the advertisements that shows the marginalize condition of women population in our societies. Stereotypical representation of women in advertisements of Pakistani TV channel illustrates the conventional believes of people towards the participation of women in their daily day activities.

Visual advertisements have vast impact on its viewers, these ads cause huge influence on the practical application of individuals, it is a good point that should be explore in future researches, that what kind of reactions committed by public after perceiving such type of stereotypical representation of gender (especially women). The stereotypes are such labels that are psychologically attached with the mind sets of people, and these stereotypical ways to present women in different adson the basis of these lebls is the prior factor to strengthen the sub-ordinate and expressive position of women in the society. To dilute stereotypical conceptualization of women in TV advertisements, we have to demolish those traditional labeling that are the emotional and psychological barriers towards the autonomy and self-recognition of women in Pakistani society. The existence patriarchal structure is also one of the major support towards the false conceptualization of women characterization, the male dominant society never wants the equal status of women towards different aspects of life, so we should have to modify the features and patterns of our structure to create an equal and healthy environment for the both male and female of express their actual potential and abilities to present their selves in genuine context.

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