



## Research article

# Representing Gender Equality through Advertisements from the Electronic Media: A Study in Discourse Analysis

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## Abstract

Television advertisements play a significant role in shaping societal norms and values, particularly regarding gender roles and expectations. In India, where television is a major source of entertainment and information for many people, the portrayal of gender in television advertisements can significantly impact how gender is perceived and performed in society. This study attempts to understand and define the equality of gender roles in advertising, using select discourse analysis tools, including speech acts, deixis, politeness theory, modality, presuppositions, and vocabulary, to study the interplay of the verbal and visual effects. The study explores select advertisements from Indian media and finds that the theme of gender equality is gradually gaining prominence. The paper attempts to highlight that advertisements play a major role in creating and transforming gender stereotypes in society and in constructing a world of acceptability for those women who want to create their own identities. The study reveals that women now stand up for their rights against the societal norms and play a substantial role in influencing society, whereas men also participate in the tasks that are stereotypically assigned to women. The study also highlights that the verbal language in advertisements supports visuals in the text.

**Keywords:** Advertisements, patriarchy, masculinity, representation, manipulate, discourse analysis



Reduced Inequalities, Gender Equality, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

## Introduction

Early instances of advertising were found in the ruins of Pompeii; those were considered as signs stimulating brothel workers (Tungate, 2008, p. 10). Other people claimed the exotic cave engravings of prehistoric times were a form of advertising. However, it is also assumed that advertising existed from that time when there were goods to barter system.

In the contemporary world, many business groups and even governments try to attract consumers and citizens via their commercial marketing techniques. One form of this technique is known as advertising, which we are prone to daily. Now these advertisements are visible to

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us in the form of billboards, TV commercials, text messages, event sponsorships, newspapers, YouTube advertisements, sales letters, publicity, telemarketing etc. Although these are just a few ways through which companies, both private and public, stay connected with their customer base, which helps companies in the form that companies take feedback from the customer and their demands and work on the advertisement to attract more people. The advertising process begins when the party, also called the source, composes an idea, encodes it as a message and forwards it through a medium or channel to a further group who is the receiver of the message. The receiver decodes the message received to get the precise meaning of it (Pahwa, 2023).

Advertisements influence people's ideologies in different ways because of cultural norms and perceptions. Today, all decisions are made by a person on behalf of what he sees through the capitalist media, which includes novels, magazines, newspapers, movies, advertisements, and news. Now, the question that naturally follows is, "How does it happen?" If one wishes to put it in layman's terms, it develops pictures in one's mind that are so strongly reinforced by the constant showing of these advertising that people eventually start believing in the made-up invention of the media as the absolute reality (Raina, 2014).

Advertisements portray genders in different ways. It is important to read, comprehend, and evaluate a variety of advertising in order to identify the portrayals and symbols used to represent various gender roles (Das, 2000). This includes looking beyond just a few explicit ads that may have cliché or even harmful connotations for prejudices. Consumers' persistent and extended openness form general opinions based on how TV commercials are presented. Stereotypical role-playing by both men and women has always been a part of the advertising industry, directly representing society's current thinking and mindsets. For example, one decade ago, the advertisement of 'Washing powder Nirma', where the dialogue- "Jaya, Lata, Hema, aur Sushma, sabki pasand nirma" shows that washing clothes is a role played by women in Indian society, be it with hands or via washing machine, which now has changed where male actors are also playing the lead role in washing powder and detergent advertisements showing that now the Indian society is accepting men washing clothes too.

Nowadays, the roles of men and women have changed notably in our society and depictions of people in publicising have been explored since almost a similar time. Gender can be viewed in terms of how men and women react to advertising and what are the gendered portrayals in such media texts.

### **Literature review:**

Most of the works done so far represent the stereotypical or subordinating portrayal of women. There is hardly any work that talks about increasing Gender equality in Indian electronic advertisements. This can be understood with the help of the following literature.

Particularly when it comes to gender, stereotypes are ideas that women and men vary in particular ways. According to Bughio (2015), advertising presents women in two roles: as housewives and models and men as the breadwinner. According to Goffman (1978), a man may perform the "female task," but never when a woman is watching.

According to Courtney & Lockeretz (1971), who looked at representations of women in magazine advertising, traditionally, women were portrayed in subordinating roles and as secondary to men. They disclosed the following conclusions:

- Less representation of women in professional roles.
- Women were portrayed in inactive and adorning roles.
- Women rarely leave their homes alone or in groups to travel long distances.
- It was demonstrated that women depended on men for protection.
- Men viewed women as objects for sex.

According to a study based on how women are shown in magazine commercials, women are usually used as ornamental elements in cigarette advertisements and are traditionally portrayed in home appliance advertisements. However, airline commercials frequently portrayed women as sex objects (Sexton & Haberman, 1974).

According to Cortese (2015), when women are portrayed in commercials as passive and subordinate, as sex objects, or as being preoccupied with household tasks, they are ignored and devalued. He went on to claim that advertisements are constantly telling women that they are imperfect by nature. They lead women to feel that men will not adore them if they are not physically ideal or beautiful.

Even in scenarios where they would not be the principal customers of a good or service, more men were employed in television advertising, according to McArthur and Resko (1975). The writers of the 1970s sex depiction essays concluded that women are primarily sex-typed and not depicted as autonomous, independent human beings.

## **Methodology**

The methodology used for this research would be discourse analysis. The term discourse was coined first in Zellig Harris's work (Harris, 1952). Discourse analysis is a crucial tool in linguistics used to understand a sentence's meaning beyond its sentential or apparent meaning.

There are various purposes of the term discourse, yet we widely characterise it as language in its setting of use. The rationale for a contextualised and supra-sentential idea of language is because of the conviction that understanding a language is different from syntax and vocabulary: it moreover consolidates how to participate in a conversation or structure a created text. (Flowerdew, 2013)

According to Marianne and Phillips (2002), discourse analysis is not only a methodology. It is an amalgamation of interdisciplinary approaches to observe and analyse the huge network of social areas in numerous social researches.

Advertising is and always has been a source of knowledge related to different products launched and has brought interest in viewers' minds to buy products. People always favour advertisements, including their interests in the products of their preferences and ideologies, as they rely on this source to learn about newly released products in the market and to learn about their advantages and disadvantages in order to stay informed about these products and to decide whether or not to purchase them.

Several researches are done on the portrayal of different genders in advertisements, like females are portrayed as weak, dependent, homemakers, and fragile and viewed as a notion of attracting sex objects in advertisements (Cortese, 2015). The themes of housekeeping, home cleaning and babysitting are depicted on screens primarily for women; however, the more

actual and real engagements of females, like working, independence etc., are rarely portrayed on screen. So, this research focuses on portraying the male and female gender equally and the gender construction in the advertisements. Following are my research questions and objectives that I want to research and know through discourse analysis:

1. How is gender and gender equality depicted in advertisements nowadays?
2. How do visual and verbal elements in advertisements affect people's minds?
3. Are gender stereotypes still visible in advertisements, or is the trend changing?

## **Advertisement I**

### **Background**

Pink is for girls, and blue is for boys, dolls are for girls, and cars are for boys are a few gender-based stereotypes that the new Flipkart digital campaign aims to break. In the two-minute-long digital film, a montage of images features young boys and girls acting against gender-based stereotypes – a girl is shown participating in a boxing match, flying a toy aeroplane, playing with cars while a boy is seen helping his mother in the kitchen, playing with dolls. The campaign's underlying message is that a generation treated equally today will treat each other equally tomorrow.

### **Analysis**

In the first spoken dialogue, the narrator performs an illocutionary act of asserting ideas by stating some facts and indirectly mocking at society's thinking. The male narrator states that boys are not allowed to play with dolls because it is considered as a girly activity, girls are not allowed to play with cars because cars are made to be driven mostly by boys, and boys cannot cry because they are always supposed to remain very strong no matter how painful the situation is. For a long time, it has been assumed that boys should behave/perform only masculine characteristics and girls only feminine ones. These lines presuppose that our society already has a mindset that if a boy plays with dolls, he will not be called a boy because he is not performing the gender and acting like a boy. If a boy takes a doll in his hand, it can harm his gender portrayal because it is more like a feminine act to play with dolls, and the same presupposition goes for girls that if a girl is playing with a car, it is assumed that she wants to be free and independent as a boy if she is allowed to drive cars and fulfil her dreams like to become a pilot or anything. The socially prevalent ideologies are like each gender will only perform the particular roles set up by society like dolls should only be played by girls, crying is never an accepted activity for boys etc. Epistemic modality is present in these lines showing the possibility of actions and pointing to a degree of knowledge based on facts according to society. The line 'OMG, it is a girl!' shows that parents are equally excited in today's generation regarding newly born kids, whether a girl or a boy. The locution is OMG! (Used when someone is surprised). This line can have a presupposition that the parents were already expecting to give birth to a baby girl. 'Girl', 'boy', and 'ladkiyon' are the personal deixis used in these lines by mentioning them indirectly, and it shows that the focus is on the differences between the gender roles played by the girl and the boy. The ideology is that be it a girl or a boy, both emotions and choices regarding toys are no more gender specific. In the next lines spoken by the girl makes use of positive impoliteness as, according to these lines, girls are not accepted

as girls in society because cars and sports can be loved by them too. Wearing pink is not acceptable for boys as society believes that pink colour has a feminine notion as pink colour is thought to be a calming colour associated with love, kindness, and femininity. Many people immediately associate the colour with all things feminine and girly. These lines presuppose that household work can only be learnt and performed by females, and crying and wearing pink is allowed only for girls. 'Mai bhi seekh sakta hu', 'ro sakta hu' are the lines that show the possibility of actions that can be performed not just by girls but by boys too. The body language is shown in a positive manner, like the boy is wearing pink cloth with a smiling face without getting ashamed and showing the intent of the advertisement makers how they want to show it to their audience that pink is just a colour and is not gender specific. The analytical use of vocabulary in the advertisement proves the importance of vocabulary in making of an advertisement. For example, instead of saying, 'haa mai ladka hu, mai bhi roo sakta hu' if the sentence was reframed as 'mai ladka hu, mai bhi rouna, ' the whole meaning and intent of the scene would have been diluted with the perception that boys should cry or only boys can cry. However, the usage of the phrases 'mai bhi roo sakta hoon' made the whole sentence and the scene acceptable in the sense that irrespective of gender, anyone can be emotional, or anybody can cry if they are supposed to. The lines show a presupposition that household chores are meant to be done by females only, as females are mostly accepted if they stay dependent on males. The ideology of the lines mentioned above revolves around the stereotyping of gender-specific roles given by society to both genders. In the line 'Hum ek dusre se haar sakte hai' the boy states that whether one wins or loses, both should be accepted in life. The personal deixis used is 'hum', showing inclusion. Epistemic modality is here as it shows the possibility of both winning or losing in life. The line presupposes that losing in life should be acceptable for both the genders. The language or the dialogues used with respect to sports show the category of strength which till now was the differentiating factor between girls and boys is diminishing gradually. Phrases such as 'having the same dreams', learning household work, and equality of rules for both genders are a message to society asking for equality between genders. In the next dialogue spoken by the girl, personal deixis 'maa, paa, and we indicate that men and women are giving the message to their near and dear ones. The presupposition is that our previous generation still believes in stereotypes and power differences between the genders, and this has to change in favour of gender equality. Spatial deixis 'here' is present in the line, which indicates living in society. Bald on record politeness is used as the speaker is directly stating a fact. In the next scene, the boy speaks and personal deixis 'you' & 'hum' are present and are used to refer to members of society, including family. 'Please' is the mitigating device used, and the utterance shows performing bald on record politeness as the statement is direct and clear, but the word, 'please' makes it an appeal. The structural presupposition is present here in the form of an adverbial clause (clause of time) 'when'. The presupposition is that rules were never made equal for both the genders, but they should be. The main vocabularies focused on this advertisement is 'kar sakta/sakti hu', which shows the ideology of gender equality as both the genders in the society are capable and confident to perform various activities by breaking the stereotypical thinking of the society that if the person is xyz gender, he/she is accepted with performing the specific gender role only.

## Advertisement II

### Background

Ariel, a top-notch cleanser brand in India, brought the issue of gender disparity into public cognisance with a provoking question 'Is washing clothes just a female's work?' The Ariel advertisement shows what we teach our sons versus what we show our daughters. The point is that a family is happier where the people equally share the load of household work. Similarly, Sons sharing the load uncover how the load of housework on ladies is passed down ages, taking society further into the core of the issue of gender disparity to solve the issue. Sons #ShareTheLoad – a social development to motivate and engage male members, the figurehead of Indian man-centric society, to impart the burden of clothing to their mothers, sisters, and wives and eliminate the social mess of gender inequality at home. While society is evolving quickly, there is not sufficient consideration for bringing up children in an unexpected way. Making laundry the face of development, Ariel, India's most recent mission/advertisement needs mothers to raise another generation of children who know how to #ShareTheLoad. So, when the children of today become the spouses of tomorrow, they will be imbued with the information and attitude to 'Share the Load' with other genders.

### Analysis

In the first scene, the lines spoken by the mother show the use of personal deixis 'mai' and 'bhai' as the mother was cooking and the brother was served the food. The presupposition is that she makes her family happy by cooking their favourite meals, such as PuranPoli. The word 'making' shows a change in activity, and the word 'brother' shows that the mother is cooking for her son. The presupposition of the second line spoken by the mother can be that the boy is very messy. He does not take care of his things and puts them in place. The speaker's statement can be face-threatening for the hearer's positive face (not the sister) but the brother who has made the mess as she is complaining about some act. Bald on record impoliteness is seen in this utterance as the mother is indirectly scolding her son. The speech act is complaint (an illocutionary act) which interprets the meaning that the mother is talking to her daughter, questioning her why she wants to leave the job after complaining about her son. The personal deixis employed is 'tere', showing that the conversation is happening between mother and daughter. 'Riu' denotes an existential presupposition which means that there is someone named Riu who is the hearer (the sister). All the other lines in the utterance show an interrogative structure as it is a set of questions. Personal deixis used in the statements are 'hum', 'tu', and 'tumhari', which shows the main focus is on Riu (the daughter) here as she discusses leaving her job with the mother. Here these statements are surprising for the speaker. Temporal deixis present are 'hai', 'gai', 'hui thi', 'hum bhi', 'ab', which shows that the situation the mother was discussing about with the daughter had already happened in the past like she did not go to the office, she had her promotion, the family members were feeling proud etc. The presuppositions are that Riu never calls her mother in the morning time and her mother never wants Riu to quit her job. The language and the ideology related to these utterances have two aspects. Firstly, it shows that the parents were worried more about the daughter's promotion than the daughter per se, which indicates problems of modern society where guardians worry more about their children from a financial perspective and not from other aspects like emotional, and mental well-being. Secondly, the line also shows that the mother wanted her daughter to continue the work, which showed a sense of gender equality



among her children as her instant reaction was that of a shock. Moving to the next scene, the illocution of questioning 'kya hua' shows concern on the son's part for his mother. In the next set of lines spoken by the mother shows, the personal deixis used is 'didi', which indicates the topic of conversation. The presuppositions related to this utterance are that Riu is not able to handle her job any more, she is not happy with her job etc. Personal deixis present in the utterance are 'beta', 'tu', 'Akash', 'tumhare', 'tumhari', and they indicate that the focus is on Riu and her husband. The phrase 'kar sakta hai' is used in the sentence, which shows the possibility of an action. By the illocutionary act of questioning, the mother tries to convince her daughter not to leave the job and to balance her personal and professional life. The underlying meaning behind her next line of utterances is to make her son-in-law responsible enough to participate in household work. Therefore, many questions are asked simultaneously, representing a questioning speech act. This advertisement of the washing detergent Ariel uses language which involves elements of surprise, guilt, regret etc. The mother comes to know that her daughter is leaving the job only because her daughter's husband is unable to perform basic household tasks, which a female performs daily is surprising, and she is shocked. Connecting it with the theme of the advertisement, the detergent company is also shocked to see how a simple stain is not removable by other detergents. The lines spoken by the speaker can be face-threatening for the addressee's positive face because complaints and criticism are passed on to her son-in-law. When the daughter tells the mother that her husband is unable to perform even the basic functions of the household, the mother instantly reacts with 'aise kaise nahi kar sakta', but simultaneously she also observes her son who is not even interested in settling his own room leave alone do household work, which makes the mother realise that although she has taught her daughter to compete with men in the mainstream life by getting a job, but she failed to teach her son even the basic household functions only because she never realised that her son, a male, was even supposed to do that work also. In the next scene, the mother handing over a basket full of dirty clothes to her son, he says, 'kya hua maa' shows an interrogative speech act. The personal deixis used is 'maa' as the son seems concerned about his mother. In the very next line, the mother, instead of allowing her son to go outside with friends, hands over a basket of untidy clothes to him and when he asks what she is doing, she replies, 'galti sudhar rahi hu'. At this instant, the advertisements makers are able to show that when it comes to her daughter, she realises that she had been following a prejudiced practice of making the female gender work as a homemaker and the male gender not knowing the basic things. By breaking this stereotyping, she is able to bring about gender equality between her two children in a positive manner. Moreover, finally, when the son is shown putting the ariel detergent into the washing machine and learning the task of washing clothes, the advertisement makers simply show the viewers that the firm or the company is above gender stereotyping and is always working towards gender equality. The body colour of the bottle of Ariel detergent is white, which signifies a combination of seven unique tones as it represents a small amount of the nature of each. It addresses virtue, tidiness, peace, harmony, knowledge and wisdom. In the background, green plants can be seen, which represent happiness, peace, and harmony. The tagline 'share the load' gives a message to society that all the household chores like cooking, cleaning and washing clothes etc. should be shared equally between all the family members to decrease the workload. The tagline connects with gender equality as sharing the load of household work between mom and son or husband and wife will decrease the workload on the wives, and they will not need to leave their job to manage things at home. The ideology shown in the advertisement is that we as a society are responsible for teaching our children all the basic functions which are necessary to survive and

live, irrespective of the gender they belong to. The mother awakes out of regret that what she has been teaching her daughter has been unable to do the same with the son, making her move to improve and undo her mistakes of not equally treating her own children. Moreover, the element of improvisation where the mother asks her son to wash his own clothes, making him responsible for himself regarding the daily household works and using the Ariel detergent perfectly, is shown by the advertisement makers that Ariel detergent is not only a stain removal but also a product which makes you realise that you can improve your thoughts and norms regarding gender stereotyping and the roles given to them.

### **Advertisement III**

#### **Background**

Havells Fans advertisement- 'Hawa Badlegi-Registrar's office that discusses another change occurring in the society. A couple at the registrar's office, with the spouse taking the wife's last name and causing the authority to do a twofold take. The company Havells is known for its premium and a list of electronic items as well as for their correspondence, which is significant in spreading the correct social message for gender equality. Havells Fan has expanded its mission through 'Hawa Badlegi' advertisements. The advertisement features the scope of Havells Fans and affirms how the brand is lined up with another reformist perspective with regard to the changing society.

#### **Analysis**

In the first scene, the couples are shown entering the registry office, and the officer saying 'baithiye' is the word used to convey respect and politeness in a talk. Personal deixis employed in the dialogue are 'Vikas', 'Shanti', 'aapka', 'aap', which shows the conversation between an officer and a couple where Vikas and his wife are the main characters. Usage of the terms like 'Mrs.' and 'Ms.' show sexism because these markers define a woman's marital status, which defines her as a wife first and foremost, in relation to someone else entirely. The marker of Mrs. seems to be no longer her own person. The word 'ji' is used as an honorific to show respect for the addressee. The dependent clause 'Shadi ke baad aap Mrs.' shows obligation for action and also represents temporal deixis, talking of something that is about to happen in the future. The lexical presupposition used here presupposes that till now, they are not married. The illocution of the speech act is that officer is asserting some fact that is about to happen after they get married. The cooperative principle of the maxim of relation has been followed by the speaker here as she has only spoken about the fact of getting a husband's surname that is relevant to the context.

The first dialogue of the advertisement shows a scene where the couple is at a registrar's office to register themselves as married, and the language used in this dialogue shows a sense of prejudiced nature of the female registrar, where she has a preconceived notion that after marriage the wife would change her surname. It presupposes that the wife would make all the compromises after the marriage, be it changing surname, leaving a job or leaving the family, which shows that although she is a well-educated and well-mannered officer, she assumes that that a woman/wife would change her surname post marriage. In the following line, the speaker (husband) uses bald on record politeness by directly giving an opinion. This utterance is face threatening for the listeners' positive face as disagreement can be seen here between



the two speakers because the husband does not agree to the lady officer's words and implies his ideology of not changing his wife's surname. The words 'baad' and 'banunga' represent temporal deixis as they relate to a marriage time frame. Personal deixis used here are 'Shanti' and 'Vikas' as they are the focus of the conversation. The illocution or the speech act is asserting that the speaker does not want his wife to change her surname after their marriage; instead, he wants to take his wife's surname for a change. The presuppositions are that he is still unmarried and wants to break the stereotype. The modal verb 'will' is an epistemic modal verb as it shows certainty for the action. In the second dialogue, the advertisement makers try to show the usage of language that denotes modernism, change, and women's empowerment. When the husband says that I will be changing my surname to Vikas Pandit, he outrightly stands against the societal norm where a woman has to compromise every time. The advertisement makers also try to connect the changing attitude of one gender towards another with the Havells fan by adding a tagline as 'hawa badlegi', which kind of reflects that their fans and other products bring in more of modernism and empowerment to today's women, where not necessarily a woman has to go through all the paperwork of changing the surname, it could also be the other way round. The tagline is a metaphor for bringing about social change and change in prevalent ideologies. In the overall advertisement, the main focus is on changing the norms of society that are to be followed after marriage, like the bride has to leave her own house and stay with the groom. These norms are related to the age-old practices and feudal mindset. The language of this advertisement has connected positivity and modernist thinking with the Havells fan air mentioning 'hawa badlegi'.

## **Advertisement IV**

### **Background**

The mission of TATA Tea worked with NGOs and other non-profit associations to bring social issues to light for explicit causes and to increase the awareness of Indians. The current 'Jaago re' mission has focussed on women empowerment. The mission intends to support women - who are 49% of the electorate - to cast a ballot as a square in the 2014 Indian General Election, expanding their capacity to request political decision contenders to make changes in their political manifestos, statements towards more security for women and government assistance focused measures. Force of 49, a 'Jaago Re' drive for ladies, was dispatched to awaken women, who structure 49% of India's citizen base, allowing them to process an educated and autonomous vote and exercise the power they need to represent themselves and other women in administration and in the impending political race. The mission was conceptualised from the understanding that women establish 49% of the vote base in India. However, they frequently do not get their due as they are not seen as a deciding factor in elections. Tata Tea Gold's most recent mission intends to instruct ladies and the remaining citizens of the country about this number and show them the effect it could have in politics. It is a call to women to come and join hands to show the country the power of 49%. So, the job needed to be done by Tata Tea this time around was to awaken the awakened and the unawakened – both men and women regarding women's power.

## Analysis

The first scene starts with the wife talking to her husband. The personal deixis used in the utterance is 'Mantri ji', which shows that the wife uses a respectable term to address her husband. 'Ji' is the Hindi vocabulary used to show respect to someone. The utterance presupposes that the elections were held before, too, in that area, and the couple is familiar with this information. In the following lines, the wife uses personal deixis like 'tum' and 'mujhpe', which show that the conversation is going between a couple and the illocution of the utterances are stating and requesting as she was asking for a little attention, stating that her husband will forget her because of his workload. In the first scene, the minister is shown preparing his documents and targeting voters for the upcoming elections when his wife is speaking something to him and her husband (the minister), without paying much attention, replies with a 'hmmm'. The scene is the depiction of a typical Indian couple where a husband is shown doing his work at home, and the wife is shown as trying to catch his attention or trying to get involved in a little conversation with her husband and even after getting ignored, she continues to do so with a smile.

In the next scene, which is inside the kitchen, the wife uses personal deixis like 'tum', 'mujhe', 'tumhare', 'hume', 'auratein', and 'sarkar', which shows the conversation is about the discussion of women and their voting rights. The illocution or the speech act is asserting or stating the fact that men in society should not ignore women as they consist of a total of 49% in number who are eligible to vote. Being in such a large proportion, their (women's) voting number can make the same person win again or lose the seat. The presuppositions can be that women and their rights/power were ignored before by male politicians, women did make politicians lose earlier, but now their awareness and power have changed. In the second part, when the wife observes that her husband is ignoring her and her thoughts, she tries to remind him about the importance of women in society, both as a human and as a voter, by asking him to make tea for both of them. Now while asking him to make the tea, she asks her husband to put tea leaves of Tata brand into the pan to boil and asks whether the leaves got dulled in the water with a follow-up question, 'Dimag khula?' which shows impoliteness as the listener (the husband) is questioned based on his intelligence. It is face-threatening for the husband as the wife seems to be insulting him but actually, she is trying to help him. This question was indirectly asked to the husband to make him realise the importance of women in their constituency and even in the country, where a fact is also put up with 49 percent of women voters involved in the election process is a vital number for a political party's win. With this fact, the minister realises his mistake of ignoring women voters and that his wife was only trying to help him win the election and not interfering per se. Also, the ethical context of this section is the realisation by the husband of getting to know a political fact and about the self-esteem of his wife who, instead of crying over getting attention from her husband tries to prove her value to him by establishing some facts and making him value her opinions too. Instead of being shown as whining and weeping, the female character is shown to be strong, level-headed and wise, stressing on gender equality, not just in her marriage but in society too. The wife says 'ek cup chai tumhare hathon se' to her husband, and the husband in the advertisement scene is seen making the tea in the kitchen, which shows gender equality as the couple believes that making tea or any food in the kitchen is not a role which should be done only by women. The phrase 'khuli hongji dekho', and 'dimag khula' show the certainty of the actions that the tea leaves may have left the flavour and colour in the boiling water from which the fragrance is coming out and after smelling this nice fragrance, has the mind of the husband

opened or not? 'Election jeetna hai na', this phrase shows the probability of winning or losing the election by ignoring women's power. The use of these phrases is related to mind-awakening ideas and thoughts. Also, the husband was seen nodding his head, agreeing with his wife on this line which shows men, too, are aware of the power women possess now, leaving their patriarchal thinking behind. The phrase 'hume ignore mat karna' said by the wife shows the responsibility of every man to give attention and respect to their wives equally, which they give to their work, making their identity in society. The speech act is requesting and stating. It also tells us that women and their capability of voting and bringing down some candidates' seats should not be doubted. Phrases like 'toh chalega' show possibility and 'mat karna' shows an obligation for action. Another phrase, like 'bana bhi sakti hai gira bhi sakti hai,' shows the probability of an action that women together can turn around the election results. The colour of the pattiyan (tea leaves) and tata tea packet are shown green, which signifies the colour of nature, environment, resumption, energy, growth, money, ambition, etc, which can be connected with the ideology of the advertisement in the sense that women are prospering and people in the society are renewing their thinking related to the power, rights of a woman, etc. Through this evolving modernist thinking, women are getting equal importance as men. The advertisement makers connected the product and tagline with the idea of gender equality in the context of the election-voting scenario. The question asked by the wife 'dimag khula?' shows the viewers and buyers that if they consume this product, their minds will open from narrow, obsolete, and redundant beliefs of not valuing women's opinions and their presence in life. Also, the tagline 'jaago re!' influence people to wake up and treat women on par with men, not only in elections but also in society or family. Here in this advertisement, both the role of male and female gender is shown balanced as the husband is seen working in the kitchen and the wife talks about equal rights and power of women in the election. So, the couple has proved that performing any role is not gender-specific in society or inside the house.

## **Conclusion**

Many authors define advertising as a form of paid and non-personal presentation of thoughts, concepts, ideas, goods, etc., by engaging people to take an interest and buy their products. *Advertising* is a correspondence methodology intended to persuade customers to purchase items from different companies. Advertisements are very persuasive, comparing products with each other and trying to convince people to desire change. This is primarily done through language. Other powerful, persuasive tools incorporate music, colours, support, etc. Advertisements, thus, are a blend of verbal and non-verbal elements.

The portrayal of gender and their roles in advertisements has changed significantly through the years. Earlier, there were specific roles for each gender. In the advertisements like Nirma, Sunlight, or anything related to cleaning and washing clothes, only women were portrayed, which could have negatively influenced society that the work was gender-specific for women. However, in advertisements nowadays, like Vanish detergent, men are also shown in the role of cleaning and washing. Other examples include sports or boxing advertisements where only men were portrayed earlier, but now, women are also portrayed in such advertisements, which show that physical activities and sports are not only specific to the male gender.

Similarly, earlier, only women were portrayed in advertisements related to kitchen utensils or masala (spices). However, both genders are now shown, so people have started believing that

the role of making food is not specific to the female gender. But, apart from whatever advertisement makers try to do to show gender equality, there are still glimpses of gender stereotypes in some of these advertisement texts, like when it comes to household chores being gender-neutral, it is always the woman or the mother who realises that she failed to teach her son a lesson, but never a father (Ariel advertisement). Also, when it comes to advertisements like that of some deodorants where a girl is getting sexually attracted just because a man wears a particular scent is a typical example of sexualising a woman's character and objectifying her. Moreover, in advertisements like Vanish detergent, where a man is portrayed as an agent of the product trying to show the quality of the product by washing clothes, the character opposite him doing household work is a female. This shows that even if a company hires a male actor to perform some acts, the opposite character doing the housework is always a woman.

This research is an effort to highlight gender equality in the current century. This research is not exhaustive, and further research can be done to show equality, politeness and impoliteness in relation to gender in advertisements, or a comparative study of gender roles in advertisements.

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## APPENDIX

**Advertisement I** Link- Let's raise a generation of equals! #GenerationEqual #GenE Dialogues

<https://youtu.be/IVPIEiWNUxU>

### Dialogues

Narrator (male voice): Boys don't play with dolls, girls don't like cars, kya ladkiyon jaisa ro raha hai? OMG! It's a girl.

Girl: Yes! I'm a girl aur kabhi kabhi app sabke liye yeh maanna kafi difficult ho jata hai ki cars mujhe bhi acchi lag sakti hai (the girl is shown playing with a car)

Boy: And yes I am a boy aur mujhe bhi rona aa sakta hai. Ghar ka kaam mai bhi seekh sakta hu... (both the children are shown doing household tasks like cooking and cleaning)

Girl: and you know we both can love sports chahe jitni bhi baar gire. (Both the children are shown playing basketball and karate)

Boy: Aur pink hum dono ka favourite colour ho sakta hai. chill! maa it's just a colour. (Both the children shown wearing pink)

Girl: Sirf mai nahi. Kabhi yeh bhi maanna bohot difficult hota hai ki hum dono same dream dekh sakte hain- hawa me unche uddne ka dream (both the children shown dreaming of flying aeroplanes and rocket in the sky)

Boy: Ya zameen pe thumakne ka dream (the girl shown grooving and the boy dancing on the floor)

Girl: Superhero banne ka dream (both the children wearing the dress of superman and trying to fly)

Boy: Style se jeene ka dream (both the children are shown happily living)

Girl: Dream toh dream hota hai na? Hum ek dusre se jeet sakte hai. (Both the children are shown running on the beach)

Boy: Hum ek dusre se haar sakte hai. (The boy stops running)

Girl: But maa- paa we are not here to win or lose. We are here to live as an equal generation.

Boy: So, when you are making the rules, please same-same rules banana hum dono ke liye. (Both the children are shown given the same punishment)

Girl: And raise us not the way you were raised but the way we were born equal. (Both the children are shown jumping on equal heights on the sea waves)



Image 1

### 1. Advertisement II

Link- #ShareTheLoad asks "Are we teaching our sons what we have been teaching our daughters?" Ariel.

<https://youtu.be/8QDlv8kfwIM>

#### Dialogues

**Mother talking her daughter on the phone:** Mai? Mai Puran Poli bana rahi hu. Tere bhai ki favourite. (The mother is shown entering into the room with a plate of Puran Poli for her son.)

Tere room ki isne jo halat bana rakhi hai na, bas puch mat.

Haa toh tu bata Riu subah subah kaise phone kiya? Office nahi gai?

Kya? Job chor diya matlab? Are aise kaise? Kitni tarakki hui thi tumhari. Hum bhi kitna proud feel kar rahe the.

Achanak yeh job chorna? Riu... kaise?

**Son:** Kya hua? (He saw his mother looking tensed)

**Mother telling her son sitting in the same room:** Didi job chor rahi hai.

**Mother talking to her daughter on the phone:** Par beta shadi ke baad ghar ke kaam badh jate hai lekin tu akele thode hi hai, Akash bhi toh hai tumhare sath. Wo ghar ke kaamo me tumhari help kar sakta hai. Hai na?

**Mother:** Nahi aata hoga (she saw her son taking out a shirt from the almirah and 2-3 others fell down and he walked away without picking them up)



Galti hamari hi hai. Betiyoon ko pairo pe khade hona sikhate hai par beto ko hath batana nahi sikhate hai.

Tu aur ek baar soch le, mai raat ko phone karti hu.

**Son:** Kya hua maa? (The son look confused with her words)

**Mother:** Galti ho gae. Ab use sudhar rahi hu.

(Mother handing over a basket full of dirty clothes to her son and guiding how to put clothes into the washing machine.)



**Image-II**

### 1. Advertisement III

**Link-** HAVELLS Fans Ad 2013- Hawa Badlegi- Registrar's Office

[https://youtu.be/r4Ix2\\_-\\_-sg](https://youtu.be/r4Ix2_-_-sg)

#### **Dialogues**

**Officer madam to the couple:** Haan toh baithiye. Aap ka naam hai Vikas Verma aur aap Ms. Shanti Pandit ji.

Shadi ke baad aap Mrs. Shanti Verma. (The officer noting down the name of the couple in the register).

**Husband:** No! ma'am. Shadi ke baad yeh Shanti Pandit hi rahengi, mai banunga Vikas Pandit. I will take her name. (The officer kept on looking surprisingly into the couple's face)

Background music playing- Hawa chali... Havells hawa badlegi.



#### 1. Advertisement IV

Link- TATA TEA Jaago Re #PowerOf49 - Politician TVC

<https://youtu.be/zv6A4PYTPvA>

#### Dialogues

(The scene starts at the lawn around a tea table)

**Wife:** Elections aa rahe hai mantri ji (while looking at the newspaper)

**Husband:** Hmmm (being busy doing work)

**Wife:** Ab toh tum bahut busy rahoge

**Husband:** Hmmm

**Wife:** Mujhpe dhayan bhi nahi doge

**Husband:** Hmmm

Are nahi....

**Wife:** Isse pahle ki tum mujhe puri tarah ignore karo ek cup chai tumhare hathon se. (Both smiled and kept the Tata tea packet on the table)

**Wife:** Khusboo aai? Pattiyen khuli hongii dekho. (making tea in the kitchen)

**Husband:** Haan yaar.

**Wife:** Dimag khula? Mujhe ignore karoge toh chalega, par hame ignore mat karna. Unchais percent vote aunnaton ke hai. Sarkar bana bhi sakti hai gira bhi sakti hai. (Husband nodding his head listening this line)

Election jeetna hai na mantri ji? (Sipping tea from the cup)  
(Jaago re jaago re jaagooooo re... background music playing)  
Lambi pattiyan khule khusboo khile. Tata tea.

