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Himika Akram

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GENDER REPRESENTATION IN INDIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS
FROM 2011 TO 2020

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts

Himika Akram

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

December, 2023

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN INDIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS
FROM 2011 TO 2020

Himika Akram

APPROVED:

Thesis Advisor Dr. Alicia Mason, Department of Communication
Committee Member Dr. Ken Ward, Department of Communication
Committee Member Dr. Megan Westhoff, Department of Communication
Committee Member Dr. Catherine Hooey, Department of Geography

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GENDER REPRESENTATION IN INDIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS FROM 2011 TO 2020

An Abstract of the Thesis by
Himika Akram

This thesis delves into the ways in which gender is portrayed in Indian television advertisements, with a focus on key areas such as male and female ratio as primary characters, in voiceovers, at home, outdoor, and workplace settings, and finally, in product categories. The thesis draws on a content analysis of 120 strategically selected Indian television advertisements from 120 brands from 2011 to 2020. Findings reveal that men were portrayed as the primary characters in 54.6% of these advertisements, and females were portrayed as the primary characters in 45.4% of advertisements. For voiceovers, the male ratio was 70.1%, and the female ratio was 29.9%. In terms of setting, women and men ratio in home settings were 66.7% and 33.3% respectively. No significant differences were found between males and females in outdoor settings. For the workplace setting, the male and female ratio was 100% and 0%, respectively. For product categories, women were primarily associated with home and household products, followed by healthcare products. The rest of the categories, such as banking and technology, development, and transportation, depicted more males than females. This study contributes to bridging a gap that exists in the context of developing countries with very diverse cultures like India. The possible impacts of such stereotypical depictions are analyzed from the viewpoints of Social Learning Theory and Media Framing Theory.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Significance of Study.....	3
Specific Aims.....	6
Theoretical Framework.....	7
Definition of Key Terms.....	10
Summary.....	12
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
Historical Background.....	14
Studies in Asia.....	16
Media Framing	16
Social Learning Consequences.....	17
Summary.....	21
III. METHOD.....	23
Method.....	23
Sampling Strategy.....	24
Video Characteristics.....	26
Coding and Analysis.....	27
Primary Character.....	27
Voice-overs.....	27
Character settings.....	28
Product Categories.....	28
Exclusion Criteria.....	28
Quantitative Methodological Analysis of Data.....	29
IV. RESULTS.....	31
V. DISCUSSION.....	40

REFERENCES.....	49
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APPENDIX I- Coding Form.....	64
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LIST OF TABLES

TABLE.....	PAGE
1. Variables and Coding Framework.....	30
2. Descriptive Statistics for Male and Female as Primary Characters.....	33
3. Crosstabulation for Male/Female Voiceovers.....	33
4. Crosstabulations for Home/ Setting.....	34
5. Crosstabulations for Workplace Setting.....	35
6. Crosstabulations for Outdoor Setting.....	36
7. Crosstabulations for Home/Household Products.....	37
8. Crosstabulations for Banking and Technology Products.....	38
9. Crosstabulations for Development Products.....	38
10. Crosstabulations for Transportation Products.....	39
11. Crosstabulations for Health Products.....	39

Chapter I

Introduction

When it comes to mass media, television commercials or TVCs are considered potent tools. TVCs influence buying behaviors, produce messages, entertain people, convey information, and market and publicize a product. Over the years, one of the biggest concerns among communication scholars is how advertisements represent genders (Furnham & Mak, 1999; Silverstein & Silverstein, 1974; Kim & Lowry, 2005) and thus play a vital role in reinforcing gender stereotypes, perpetuating traditional roles, and presenting unrealistic and cliché images of femininity and masculinity, which are even harmful in many aspects.

India is the largest populated country in the world, with a population of more than 1.4 billion (Nationsonline.org, 2022). India is a hub of cultural richness and diversity, which also contains 22 officially recognized languages and 398 dialects. The impact of television and its content on the audience has a vast impact on Indian society. From 2011 to 2020, India witnessed a substantial change in the substance and message quality of advertisements. Over the past ten years, the material quality in many commercials has improved significantly, and this trend is ongoing (Gupta & Siri, 2021). At the same time, this is the creative and emotional strength of the advertisement field in India. Nevertheless, how much of that change is reflected in gender portrayals? This study

explores how the television advertisement industry in India has depicted differences in gender representations from 2011 to 2020.

The root of the differences in gender portrayals in Indian television advertisements is planted in societal norms and expectations. For instance, by applying content analysis, Matthes et al. (2016) found that a country's culture significantly impacts how gender roles are portrayed in media. Due to cultural and historical factors, India's patriarchal society certainly plays a role in portraying gender in the media. Television advertisements, which are also known as television commercials or TVCs, are a powerful medium of communication. They reflect and strengthen these societal norms, forming the audience's understanding of gender roles. For example, after the qualitative content analysis of 210 Indian TV commercials, Prasad (1994) found that most advertisements showed women as housewives, mothers, or sisters instead of as individuals. On the other hand, men are shown in more vital positions, such as decision-makers in Indian TV commercials (Sarkar, 2015). Promoting gender differences is a barrier to overcoming gender stereotypes in the media.

By analyzing television advertisements from 2011 to 2020, this study explores how gender representations between males and females are differentiated in television commercial advertisements. Since this study was conducted in 2023, and by this time, most of the advertisements from the sample are not currently circulated on TV channels anymore, TV commercials were collected via YouTube. Combining this analysis with the application of previously known variables from the past, this study tries to minimize the gap in the less-researched topic of gender representations in developing and underdeveloped nations. This global viewpoint is crucial because it offers a more

comprehensive picture of the field, which is still dominated mainly by research from the Western and more developed nations (Prieler & Centeno, 2013). This research does not claim to measure the effects of how TVCs influence the spread of gender stereotypes. However, given the quantitative content analysis method this study utilizes, these findings can serve as a helpful starting point for research into one of the many social effects that media can have.

Significance of Study

Delivering messages in a colorful, glamorized way in a short time, TVCs tend to have a broad reach to the mass audience. Advertisements portray the current reality and a gilded version of the world, which may not always be hospitable and favorable (Zawisza, 2019). It is this kind of mass communication, which frequently acts as a measure or application of gender discourse, that asserts the presence of biases based on gender injustice (Putri & Undiana, 2022). The propensity to use the television advertising industry as an example of the female subordinate domain is not unusual in media. Advertisements display social norms as a fragmented social reality that contains stereotypes, associations, cultural reality, and gender patterns that exist in society (Genc, 2017). Furnham and Mak (1999) indicated that exposure to gender stereotypes in television advertisements can impact viewers' beliefs about gender roles and their self-perceptions. Another study by Santoniccolo et al. (2023) showed how media's gender representation can promote traditional gender roles and expectations and present limited opportunities for women. When individuals are constantly subjected to stereotypical depictions related to gender, they feel pressured to behave in ways that conform to those stereotypes (Akestam et al., 2017; Zayer, 2019).

Studying this issue is very relevant for a country like India, where traditional gender roles and expectations exist considerably. India is a country where, even though there are many long-term policies and organizations to promote gender equality, gender discrimination is still one of the vital issues. Indian women face discrimination in day-to-day aspects of their lives, such as education, employment, and social status. In The Gender Inequality Index-2021 of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), India ranks 132 out of 191 countries on issues such as lower wages for women and limited working opportunities, gender-based discrimination in terms of salaries, leave, opportunities, promotion, work-life balance, and sexual harassment at the workplace. These factors exert a significant negative influence on women's personal lives in India (Dutta, 2017). Even though the literacy rate has improved, there is still a considerable gap in terms of access to education between boys and girls. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (2020), girls in India have higher drop-out rates than boys due to issues like early marriage and prioritization of boys' education. Evans et al. (2022) showed that gender discrimination is so deeply rooted in India that only 23% of the 30,000 survey participants in their research agreed that gender discrimination exists in Indian society. However, they agreed that discrimination is based on caste, creed, and religious identity instead of gender. This finding indicates that the issue of gender discrimination has become too internalized for the population to consider it as a concern requiring attention. Meanwhile, the existing bulk of data, statistics, and work in this field in India show the complete opposite. Evans et al. (2022) also found that most of the participants in their research, irrespective of gender, agreed that if there are limited job opportunities available, men should get them. According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2022), out

of 146 countries, India ranked 143 in Economic Participation and Opportunity and 107 in Educational Attainment in the Global Gender Gap Index-2022. On Hofstede's Masculinity Index (2013), India's score is 56, a high masculinity score. India is a very masculine country, so Indian audiences may naturally be inclined to masculine shows.

TVCs were selected as units of analysis for this study because the Indian TVC industry is massive. In 2017, TV advertisements occupied 44.7% of total ad spending in India, followed by print advertisements (29.8%) and digital advertisements (15.5%) (Sama, 2019). A recent study shows India is expected to be the fifth-largest TV advertising market globally by 2026 (Ambwani, 2022). Additionally, India is among the top 10 countries that trust advertising the most, preceded by China and the Philippines, among the 56 countries studied to measure global trust in advertising and brand messages (Nielsen, 2012). The persuasive effects of commercials may also be influenced by one's level of trust in advertising.

Hence, in such a context, the TVC industry plays a vital role in normalizing regressive thoughts in the general public's mind. Milner and Higgs (2004) argue that how the advertisements portray gender speaks about a country's attitude towards gender. The way television advertisements show women's roles is far from reality and only cocooned by the display of traditional roles (Milner & Higgs, 2004). According to Courtney and Whipple (1983), television advertisements strongly influence people's views about gender-appropriate societal roles. Grau and Zotos (2016) found that the aspect of women objectification in advertisements is a common phenomenon because of the sexism that exists as a component in the advertisements. However, as Benokraitis and Feagin (1986) maintain, subtle sexism goes unnoticed because it gets internalized in our minds and is

even seen as “acceptable” or “normal.” When sexism is regularly presented as harmless in media, even though it impacts our lives, it becomes a complicated issue. One of the roles of advertisements is to elevate the capitalist nature of patriarchy and increase corporate profits. To do that, the TVCs portray what an ideal world should look like, a part of which are traditional gender roles, so that the marketers can reach their target audience (Dussán, 2016). Benokraitis and Feagin (1986) also show that by depicting women in traditional roles only, advertisements try to make those women feel guilty about themselves who do not conform to those standards. Additionally, advertisements make women think they must care for child-rearing and all other household responsibilities (Benokraitis & Feagin, 1986). This, in turn, influences how people perceive themselves and others in society, at home, workplace, and in other settings, thereby controlling their behavior.

By minimizing stereotypes and promoting gender equality, the TVC industry can contribute profoundly to promoting equality, inclusivity, and diversity. Commercial advertisements can tap into a new consumer base in the market. In doing so, TVCs can create a positive image for the brand and enhance the sales of the products/services.

Specific Aims

The purpose of this study is to (1) analyze content and gather data to understand the nature and extent of gender representations in the television commercial advertising field in India from the years 2011 to 2020 and (2) identify differences between male and female depictions and associations across specific product classes and categories.

By choosing India as the context, this study adds to the existing literature about gender portrayals in television advertisements from a non-Western perspective. In such a

densely populated country, the number of quantitative studies of the advertisements and gender aspects is surprisingly few. Given its rapid digital transformation and strong potential to be the next superpower (Ng, 2022), with one of the world's most extensive and ever-growing film industries - Bollywood, India offers immense potential for media-related studies. The findings from this study can be compared to the context of Western, developed countries to identify the similarities and dissimilarities, despite acknowledging the differences between cultures, and provide new avenues for cross-cultural comparative studies.

Theoretical Framework

This study applies Media Framing Theory and Social Learning Theory to understand the gender representation of males and females in Indian TVCs. The term *Framing* was posited by Erving Goffman (1975) in his book titled *Frame Analysis*. He argued that people interpret all the events around them via their primary framework. The idea of framing posits that the manner in which information is presented to an audience, commonly referred to as "the frame," significantly impacts individuals' processing of said information (Arowolo, 2017). In the context of advertisements, marketers apply the framing technique in such a way so that the negative sides of a product or service can be presented before the audience in a positive light, or the positive sides of a competitor's product might be shown with the adverse effects (Hanks, 2019). Regarding gender, advertisements mostly show women and men in specific frames, such as women in domestic, caregiving, or nurturing roles or objectified ways and men as independent authority figures and decision-makers. This is how media utilizes specific gender frames to convey messages to the audience and shape their perceptions about gender roles.

Grover and Hundal (2014) maintain that advertisers want to cultivate a positive reception of their advertisements among the audience, comforting them by associating with the prevailing cultural values. This is how TV commercials can make the most out of gender-specific myths, narratives, and anxieties to capitalize. Consistent projection of such advertisements makes such stereotypes readily available to the audience and influences their perceptions and beliefs. Also, advertisements frame stereotypes by combining them with humor, even if subtly. In a quantitative content analysis of German television advertisements, Eisend et al. (2014) showed that humorous advertisements contain male stereotypes, and non-humorous advertisements contain female stereotypes. In brief, the Media Framing Theory offers an excellent conceptual framework for examining the promotion or contestation of gender stereotypes within commercials. Advertisers can influence public perceptions and attitudes toward gender through the deliberate selection of particular frames and messages.

Social Learning Theory (SLT) was posited by Albert Bandura (1977). Three essential aspects of this theory are observation, behavioral modeling, and reinforcement. Applying this theory to the context of gender representation in Indian TVCs can shed light on these advertisements' portrayal and perpetuation of specific gender roles. For example, if the concept of *Observation* is considered, which says people learn by observing and imitating others, in that sense, when people are projected to gender stereotypical narratives among the advertisers, they start mimicking those behaviors in their real lives. Marketers rely on and reproduce the stereotypes that exist in society via advertisements to reach their target audience (Iember, 2019). Consumers are exposed to different kinds of advertisements in other media, and specific thinking patterns emerge

among them (Iember, 2019). Eisend (2010) showed that even though advertisements portray societal reality, how they represent gender can still have the power to reinforce gender stereotypes in society. Thus, constant exposure to TVCs over time can result in the internalization of such stereotypical gender roles and societal expectations.

Shrikhande (2003) opined that the way popular culture, including advertisements on television, propagates the happy housewife stereotype, women may take it as a cultural indication to suppress their potential and ambition and might want to replace them with the ideals supported by these contents. When audiences are constantly shown a particular image of women as dependents, sexual objects, or in domestic roles, their beliefs and value systems are built upon those depictions, and the masses accept them as normal (Iember, 2019). The ideal image of each gender promotes stereotypes and sexism in society because those representations lead to certain expectations that are reflected on the TV screen in the form of advertisements.

Secondly, SLT theory's *Behavioral Modeling* concept states that people imitate behaviors if those who model behaviors in media are credible or prominent figures. This is highly relatable to this study because it is common for TVCs to hire reputed people or celebrities to promote the products. When lay audiences see socially attractive, established, or prominent people depicting gender stereotypical behaviors, they will adopt those behaviors, considering them as expected and even desirable. Consumers watch, listen, observe, and want to consume what celebrities endorse because of their attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise (Sertoglu et al., 2013). Since it positively impacts and transforms social appeal to the product or service, attractiveness is frequently

employed in advertising. Attraction is not always physical; it can also be social, such as similarity to or popularity of the endorser.

Thirdly, *Reinforcement* happens when these kinds of TVCs gain popularity, sales increase, or creators receive positive feedback. Then, the gender differences that the advertisements promote remain unnoticed and unchallenged and blend with naturally ingrained stereotypes; thus, the circle continues, a process shown by the study conducted by Signorielli and Bacue (1999). According to Rudy et al. (2010), media producers are part of a mediated society and, like other audience members, have been impacted by media material. However, they have the unique capacity to reflect their and society's ideas to shape future consequences.

Definition of Key Terms

- *Gender Stereotypes:* A gender stereotype is a generalized opinion or preconception about the traits or qualities that men and women should or should not have or the roles that men and women should or should not play. Both good and harmful gender stereotypes exist, such as "women are nurturing" or "women are weak" (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2022).
- *Television Commercials (TVCs):* Bogdanovic (2013) defined television advertisements or commercials (TVA/TVC) as “any paid form of non-personal communication of ideas or products on the electronic media to end user” (pg. 3). In this case, TVCs are audio-visual productions used to promote products or services.
- *Reinforcement:* The phrase "reinforcement" refers to enhancing a subject's intended behavior or action, according to Skinner (1958). A psychologist

or parent can raise the likelihood that a client or kid will respond in the desired way using reinforcement settings. Reward or praise is the stimulus used in reinforcement to motivate the patient or youngster to keep doing the desired behavior. Doing so increases the likelihood that a person will continue to act in the same way until it gets ingrained in his or her system each time that behavior is rewarded (Brice-Montas, 2016). One illustration of reinforcement is when a father always brings his son with him when he goes camping, fishing, or hiking, but never his daughter. The boy discovers that outdoor activities are meant for males in this situation (Brice-Montas, 2016). For the girl, this situation teaches her that outdoor activities are designed for men and not women.

- *Gender equality:* Having equal rights, opportunities, and treatment for people of all genders is known as gender equality. Nomoto (2017) defines gender equality as the idea that women and men are equal partners in the family, community, and society. Equality does not imply that men and women will become equal but that each gender's rights, obligations, and opportunities will be independent of the gender they were given at birth.
- *Regressive:* "Regressive" often refers to a return or reinforcement of traditional or outdated standards, attitudes, or behaviors, frequently connected with inequality or discrimination in the context of gender stereotypes or societal advancement. A regressive portrayal or attitude could, for instance, support conventional gender norms, stereotypes, or expectations that limit possibilities, restrict autonomy, or uphold unequal power dynamics between genders. Regression in adults can manifest at any time of the lifespan, involving a

reversion to a previous developmental phase, which may pertain to emotional, social, or behavioral aspects. The experience of insecurity, anxiety, and rage can potentially induce a state of regression in an adult. Essentially, individuals tend to return to a stage in their personal growth during which they experience a greater sense of safety and the absence of stress. This regression may also involve a desire for the presence of a very influential parental figure or another adult who would have provided assistance and protection (Lokko & Stern, 2015).

- *Social attractiveness:* In media, good looks are considered especially important. As Kamins (1990) shows, physical attractiveness increases the advisor's credibility. However, the literature shows that every substantial finding indicates that attractiveness influences attitudes about a brand or product. Meanwhile, another study fails to demonstrate the effect (Brumbaugh, 1993). Brumbaugh (1993) suggests people make assumptions about a person's personality while they watch an advertisement and the person shown in it. According to social psychology literature, some conclusions come to us naturally when we watch other people's behaviors, which tell us if that person is funny, sociable, poised, talkative, warm, etc. These personality inferences directly affect an advertisement's effectiveness and mediate the impact of physical attractiveness on its efficacy. These inferences cause social attraction toward a person.

Summary

A fundamental problem that upholds established gender norms and societal expectations is reinforcing gender stereotypes in commercial television advertising. Gender stereotypes are presumptions and ideas about the traits, functions, and behaviors

connected to men and women. Television commercials, usually called TV ads or TVCs, are audiovisual messages broadcast on television networks to market goods, services, or concepts. Erving Goffman's Framing Theory (1975) shows how media chooses some aspects of an issue or event to get priority over others and diverts the audience's attention from the importance of a problem in a structured, organized way. Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) emphasizes the role of imitation and observational learning in forming behavior and beliefs. People internalize gender norms and expectations by observing others, including media representations. The results of this investigation do not yield empirical support for a direct causal link between the depiction of gender stereotypes in commercials and the consequences of social learning or framing. This study only proposes that these preconceptions may significantly impact the audience's perception or belief system and the formation of social learning processes. Although the research does not provide evidence of a statistically significant effect on perception or social learning, it presents a backdrop, proposing that gender stereotypes in advertisements may influence individuals' perception and social learning experiences. However, additional empirical research is necessary to establish definitive causal relationships or effects between or on media consumers and self-concepts.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

This section will provide a review of the historical background of the issue of study, summarize the theoretical frames used to guide the research approach, and introduce the research questions and the hypotheses posed.

Historical Background

The ideological idea of separate and unequal cultural spheres or "places" for men and women was the subject of a wealth of media imagery (Welter, 1966), according to studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s. The resurgence of the women's movement in the 1960s raised a voice on the portrayal of women in the mass media (Rakow, 1986). This was when the feminists successfully called attention to the differences between social and biological differences between men and women. Social studies showed new interest in gender instead of sex (Rakow, 1986). Advertisements, in particular, came under the scrutiny of the feminists because of the stereotypical and unrealistic depiction of women as sex objects, happy homemakers, dependent on their husbands, incompetent, and in ornamental roles (Courtney & Whipple, 1983; Ferguson et al., 1990). Women were seen to be restricted to duties related to their "place" in the home, such as wife, mother, sex object, and housekeeper, whereas men were discovered to be free to go everywhere else (Welter, 1966). Males perceived women as generic non-men who

behaved stereotypically because the point of view that guided the creation of the images was so automatically male-dominant. However, it was not until the 1970s that numerous studies were conducted systematically to show the link between portraying males and females in media and promoting gender stereotypes (Ahlstrand, 2007). One of the pioneering studies of gender representation in television advertisements was conducted by McArthur and Resko (1975). The scholars analyzed 199 randomly selected American television advertisements quantitatively. They developed a coding scheme to analyze seven variables: sex, product user, product authority, role, setting, product category, and scientific/non-scientific roles. This coding scheme was the most used worldwide in similar studies applying the same or a revised coding scheme, mainly when the researchers wanted to see the comparisons within and between different countries and the prominent advertising trends (Ahlstrand, 2007). Subsequent studies in the backdrop of relatively modern times also showed similar findings. As Grau and Zotos (2016) showed in their meta-analysis of scholarships related to gender stereotypes, women are often portrayed as weak and second-class citizens in advertisements. Women are represented in the media as submissive, inferior, intellectually and physically dependent on men as wives, or in the roles of mothers, and as objects of male sexual fulfillment (Chant & Mcilwaine, 1995); they are many times seen at home together with their children (Wiles et al., 1995); and motionless, aesthetic models whose roles are many a times ornamental (Piano et al., 2014). Alternatively, men are shown as being dominant and making decisions, experts in the workplace, and the narrators of decisions about the home, economy, and family (Sarkar, 2015); men are less concerned about their looks than women (Van Hellemont & Van den Bulck, 2012). They are mostly portrayed as

authoritative, independent, and more persuasive than women, and they are found in occupational settings more than women (Furnham & Voli, 1989).

Studies in Asia

Following these initial studies, several English-language studies on gender representation in television advertisements were conducted in several East and Southeast Asian nations, which included Japan (Arima, 2003; Bresnahan et al., 2001), Taiwan, Malaysia (Bresnahan et al., 2001), South Korea (Kim & Lowry, 2005; Paek et al., 2010), Hong Kong, Indonesia (Furnham et al., 2000), Singapore (Lee, 2004), Thailand (Paek et al., 2010), and Philippines (Prieler & Centeno, 2013). All research to date has concluded that stereotypical gender representations in television advertisements are evident, and thereby, they are perpetuating the gender stereotypes in television advertisements, a practice that is even more common in Asia and developing nations (Furnham & Farragher, 2000; Furnham & Mak, 1999; Grau & Zotos, 2016).

Media Framing

When the use of logically identical signals causes a change in choice, a framing effect is seen (Druckman, 2001). In order to elevate the significance of particular facts about an issue, frames act to emphasize selectively those facts only (Entman, 1993). In simple terms, the method by which media outlets, including television ads, convey facts selectively or create narratives to sway public opinion and affect how events or issues are perceived is known as media framing. In television commercial advertising, framing may occur by representing specific social identities in a certain way, such as gender, class, caste, religion, and ethnicity. Television commercials not only reflect society's standards

but also have the power to reproduce social, cultural, and even economic changes (Rubio, 2018).

India is a multicultural nation with many races, languages, religions, and social strata. These several identities are frequently used in Indian television advertising to appeal to various target markets (Sarkar, 2015). Advertisements commonly feature idealized portrayals of people and groups, highlighting preferred societal roles, lifestyles, and goals (Sarkar, 2015; Sharma & Bumb, 2021). Such representations are created using common stereotypes, cultural norms, and expectations, reflecting the nation's considerable sociocultural background (Roy, 1996) and thus shaping the audience's perception and attitude toward gender.

Social Learning Consequences

Social learning consequences may result from framing identities in Indian television commercial advertising. People may emulate or adopt attitudes, values, and consumption patterns by watching and modeling the activities portrayed in commercials (Sama, 2019). Television advertisements significantly impact consumers' interest, awareness, and conviction (Sama, 2019). Furthermore, exposure to particular identity conceptions in TV commercials might affect how viewers regard themselves and identify with other social groupings (Lorenzen et al., 2004; Neale et al., 2015). Social learning is a complicated and comprehensive process influenced by several variables, including personal traits, behavior, environment, and the degree of affiliation with the depicted identities (Williamson, 2017). Albert Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory strongly

emphasizes the value of seeing, modeling, and copying other people's behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses.

Keeping Social Learning Theory in mind, observing is the first and foremost element in people's learning. Quantification is an essential part of observation. Numbers take on a social usher function by determining, showing, and confirming a social order (Mau, 2019). Numbers establish numerical differences and systems of worth that rank people or organizations according to better or worse/more or less (Mau, 2019). As stated earlier, in Hofstede's Masculinity Index (2013), India's score is 56, the fourth most masculine Asian country, preceded by Japan, China, and the Philippines. Milner and Collins (2000) showed a correlation between the masculinity aspect of Hofstede's Cultural Dimension (2001) and the numerical predominance of male characters over female characters in television commercials (TVCs). Media consumers observe this numerical superiority of males over females daily through the TVCs. In that case, chances are high that the advertisers, who are also a part of the same population, will emphasize portraying the male predominance on screen more than the females as the primary characters. Research has found that male characters comprise most of the primary characters in TVCs regarding multiple variables (Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Paltzer, 2010). The primary character's gender, the voiceover character's gender, the primary character's age, and the place with which the primary character is linked are the most examined characteristics (Matthes et al., 2016). Based on these findings, the first hypothesis is:

H1: More males than females will appear in Indian television advertisements as primary characters.

One of the most used variables in studying gender representation in advertisements is voice-overs (Matthes et al., 2016). A robust finding in the research is the prevalence of male voiceovers, which are frequently regarded as the "voice of authority" (Silverstein & Silverstein, 1974). Studies often find the predominance of male voiceovers over female voiceovers in TVCs (Furnham & Paltzar, 2010; Furnham & Voli, 1989; Matthes et al., 2016; Prieler & Ceteno, 2013; Roy, 1996). Furnham and Mak (1999) found this aspect more evident in Asia than elsewhere. Regarding the connection between auditory dominance and Hofstede's Masculinity Index (2001), Paek et al. (2010) showed that with a higher masculinity score, the odds of masculine voice-over increase in television advertisements. Hence, the second hypothesis is:

H2: There are more male voiceovers than females in Indian Television commercial advertisements.

Including the precise form and type of the portrayals may disclose society's respect for a particular social group or lack thereof because numerical representation alone does not indicate the quality of the representations (Signorielli & Bacue, 1999). In India, it is expected that even if a woman has a career outside the home, she is still expected to carry out her "womanly" responsibilities (Roy, 1996). Although more women are working than ever before, the patriarchal family structure and societal values remain essentially unchanged in India (Roy, 1996). Eisend (2010) showed in his meta-analysis of television and radio advertisements that the chances of women being depicted at home are 3.5 times higher than men being shown at home. Men are most depicted in the public realm of employment, while women are restricted to a life of domesticity and family, a home

setting (Das, 2010; Knoll et al., 2011; Prieler & Centeno, 2013; Roy, 1996). Regarding the occupation of the primary characters, several studies have revealed highly stereotypical findings showing women as homemakers and men as working characters (Arima, 2003). Sarkar (2015) showed that the Indian TVCs for a wide range of products, from bathing soap to cuisine spices, portray women as homemakers who show their skills in household chores. Mager and Helgeson (2011) also found that women are most stereotypically portrayed as mothers or homemakers in television commercials.

According to Desai and Patel (1985), in Indian TVCs, women are either depicted seductively or as typical housewives whose place is in the home. Desai and Patel (1985) also found that women are portrayed in the "kitchen, cooking food that her mother-in-law approved of, washing a bucketful of laundry and still being very charming, bandaging wounds and feeding her husband and children" (p. 78). Similarly, Krishnan (1984) found that Indian women were frequently represented as housewives or in domestic roles in Indian commercials. They were portrayed as overly concerned with household management and trying to make her family happy. Also, the Hindu religion, the ancient code of *Manu*, and the ancient ideology of "*Pativrata*" (i.e., a woman who is sincerely obedient to her husband) in the Hindu religion have invoked women to be dependent from the cradle to the grave. They have very clearly defined sex roles and expect women to sacrifice their talents and interests for the sake of their families (Roy, 1996), which puts women in an inferior position in comparison to their male counterparts in Indian society and, therefore, the reflection is visible in media; for this specific study- Indian television commercial advertisements. Hence, the following are hypothesized:

H3a: More females than males will be depicted in home settings in Indian television commercial advertisements.

H3b: More males than females will be depicted in outdoor and workplace settings in Indian television commercial advertisements.

There are few consistent findings and gender portrayals, which could be because different research frequently uses different product categories (Prieler & Centeno, 2013). Most studies showed a strong connection between women and home and household products such as toiletries, cosmetics, household, and cleaning products (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Arima, 2003), and rice, oil, or cuisine spices (Sarkar, 2015). On the other hand, men are portrayed in television advertisements for telecommunication, electronics, computers, technology, cars (Das, 2010; Furnham et al., 2000; Ganahl et al., 2003; Matthes et al., 2016), agricultural, industrial goods, bikes (Sarkar, 2015), medical, and financial services (Rubio, 2018; Sarkar, 2015). Thus, the following hypotheses are offered:

H4a: More females than males will be depicted in Indian television advertisements for home and household products.

H4b: More males than females will be associated with the advertisements of banking and technology, development, healthcare, and transportation in Indian television advertisements.

Summary

It is questionable whether the patterns and trends found in many of the early studies from the 1980s and 1990s will be repeated in contemporary television commercials because they are more than 25 years old. It is unknown if technological

advancements, programming changes, generational changes, or demographic shifts have altered the dominant products in commercial markets and, therefore, affected the degree of representations of particular product classes, despite hypotheses being advanced in this literature review based on prior findings. Communication researchers or media practitioners in the future will gain a better understanding by testing these hypotheses in connection to how much of the recent cultural development is reflected through the representation of gender in contemporary commercial advertising.

Chapter III

Method

The current study aims to identify the gender representations employed in television commercial advertisements in India from 2011 to 2020 and applies the content analysis method as a research approach. The lead author used a purposive sampling strategy based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria during the Fall of 2023. A total of 120 TVCs were analyzed based on their prominence in the commercial sector. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling method when selecting elements for the sample at the researcher's discretion (Black, 2010). Many researchers believe they may achieve a representative sample by exercising competent judgment, potentially saving time and cost (Black, 2010). This study chooses a sample size of 120, keeping different aspects in mind, such as the exclusion criteria, which will lead to filtering a significant number of TVCs; secondly, time is an essential factor to consider. Collecting the advertisements, coding, and analyzing them is a time-consuming process. A significantly large sample size requires additional resources, personnel, and budget, which is not feasible for this study. Finally, the sample size is enough to have statistical power to identify the trends in a decade. It makes it manageable to analyze each advertisement thoroughly, keeping the time limit in mind. It offers a good balance between the research objective, available resources, and the level of precision required for this study.

There was no fixed number of advertisements for any category. Coding instruments were developed to gather data in order to answer the hypotheses posed. After that, the lead author beta-tested a sample frame to ensure that the coding sheet met the criteria of the variables that were being analyzed. These details are provided in the *Coding & Analysis* section of the Method chapter.

The use of content analyses can be either qualitative or quantitative (Harwood & Garry, 2003; White & Marsh, 2006) for message analysis, and its pervasive application in the analysis of both advertisements and commercials as marketing communication elements is widely accepted (Shrikhande, 2003). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), content analysis systematically evaluates content to identify trends and is frequently used to analyze communication forms. The main goal of the current study is to quantitatively determine the gender portrayals in television commercial advertisements in India. Therefore, content analysis is a suitable strategy for achieving this goal (Shrikhande, 2003).

Sampling Strategy

Since the time frame for this study is 2011-2020, and this study is being conducted in 2023, these TV commercials are not being circulated on Indian television channels anymore. For the subject of analysis and categorical evaluations, there is no secondary or third party. As a result, no inter-coder evaluation and reliability measures are reported.

Multiple contextual factors contributed to the decision to choose this time frame of 10 years instead of limiting it to 2011-2015 or 2016-2020. It is understood that changes in societal conventions, technical improvements, and consumer tastes can all

substantially impact how television advertisements change in ten years. However, this prolonged time frame makes it easier to identify long-term trends, patterns, and subtle changes that might not be as apparent in shorter periods, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the industry's direction for further studies in the future. Analyzing a decade helps to avoid an overly fragmented analysis that shorter time-frames might yield. For example, Indian television advertisements from 2011 to 2015 focused on showcasing creative storytelling, delivering socially responsible messages, content diversity, etc. Television is still the primary and the most popular platform for providing entertainment, information, and advertisements (Bhavsar, 2018). Meanwhile, the latter half of the timeframe of this study, 2016-2020, witnessed characteristics such as digital transformation, digital analytics, user-generated content, etc. (Bhavsar, 2018) in Indian television advertisements. The journey of *Digital India* began on 1 July 2015 (Singh, 2019). Government of India (GOI) launched *Digital India* as a campaign to ensure that Indian citizens can avail of government services electronically by improved online infrastructure, increasing Internet connectivity, or making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology (Singh, 2019). Hence, it is easily assumable, more than the time frame 2011-2015, marketers and consumers will have increased access to and use of digital platforms such as YouTube, Dailymotion, or social networking sites in the timeframe of 2016-2020, with the usage are increasing with each passing year. Selecting a decade will result in a more diverse sample. The lead author collected the Indian TV commercial advertisements from YouTube. To ensure accuracy and ease of access to commercial advertisements via digital platforms such as YouTube, the coding sheet included the YouTube link for each advertisement.

Video Characteristics

Apart from the variables such as primary character, voice-overs, setting, and product category as the units of analysis of this study, additional sample characteristics were coded, such as *serial number of videos*, *brand name*, *product category*, *channel/uploader's name*, *channel/uploader type* (product's official YouTube channel, or ad-making agency who made that particular advertisement, or a person), *number of channel subscribers*, *year of release*, *number of views*, and *number of likes*. TVCs were uploaded from both organizational and individual YouTube account holders. To ensure the accuracy of the TVC release year, each channel was studied individually to check if they have uploaded advertisements consistently since their YouTube channel was opened. If it was found that uploads were consistent and the channel was up-to-date, the upload year was taken as the advertisement's actual release year. India is the second-largest market for YouTube (Vardhman, 2021), and in 2020, India was ranked globally as the number one market for YouTube (Degenhard, 2020), followed by the USA. Also, 90% of the internet users in India watch YouTube (Vardhman, 2021). Considering these facts, it is most likely that the products' official YouTube channels would keep their respective channels updated with the latest content, such as advertisements, announcements, users' reactions to campaigns, promotional offers, and unboxing or installation tutorials. Advertising agencies tend to upload advertisements with primary information such as product name, release year, length of the advertisement, etc., either at the very beginning or in the description box. For the individual persons as the uploaders, usually, if the uploader is somebody directly involved with that TV commercial advertisement as a model or composer/singer of the jingle, they mention the timeline the

same way the advertising agencies do, as described above. If not, the timing of their upload was cross-matched with the product's official launch date, and that information was mentioned in the "comment" column with the available link. If any advertisement's release time was not possible to verify in either of these manners, the TVC was excluded from the sample.

Coding & Analysis

The gathered data was quantitatively analyzed using descriptive and inferential tests such as chi-square. Data collection took place over a four-week period during July 2023. The coding sheet was developed based on the previous studies conducted by Nassif and Gunter (2008) and Prieler and Centeno (2013). The units of analysis in this study are primary character, voice-over, setting of the primary character, and product categories.

Primary Character

A primary character is characterized as someone who is or is at least 18 years old and appears on camera for at least three seconds while speaking or being prominently featured (Prieler & Centeno, 2013). When multiple characters receive the same importance, the primary character is, according to the method offered by Nassif and Gunter (2008), determined by who (1) was central to the story, (2) appeared in close-ups for the longest time, (3) appeared for the longest time, (4) provided substantial information about the advertised good or service, (5) used or held the good, and (6) had the more extensive speaking part.

Voice-overs

Voice-overs add value to the TVCs by supporting storytelling, narratives, etc.

Voice-overs include the voices of people who are not seen (Prieler & Centeno, 2013).

Voice-overs exclude jingles, children's voices, and primary characters' dialogues.

Character Settings

Character settings of the primary characters were coded as *workplace*, *home*, *other indoors* (restaurant, gym, car, bus, super shop, etc.), *outdoors* (parks, streets, open market, stadium, beach, mountain, etc.), and *others* (artificial set) (Prieler & Centeno, 2013).

Product Categories

Six categories of products were analyzed including *Home/household products* (e.g., toiletries and cosmetics, cleaning products, and cooking products); *Banking and technology products* (e.g., banks, financial institutions, insurance companies, technology products such as gadgets, electronics products, etc.); *Development* (e.g., industrial products, construction materials, and real estate); *Healthcare* (e.g., healthcare products, hospitals, health technologies); *Transportation* (e.g., vehicle, airline, travel/tourism); and finally, *Others* which categorizes products that did not fall under any of the above categories.

Exclusion Criteria

TVCs featuring political campaigns, public services, announcements, commercial advertisements featuring children or cartoon figures as the primary characters, and advertisements lacking a human presence were excluded from this study. More than one TVC from the same brand is also excluded. This study also excluded non-Hindi TVCs because Hindi is the largest official language in India, which is spoken by 528 million

people (Kanwal, 2020), The lead author's expertise is in Hindi language. Table 1 on page 27 summarizes the variables, names, codes, and definitions of the terms.

Quantitative Methodological Analysis of Data

To answer the hypotheses presented about the differences in the prominence of a specific gender across different variables such as primary characters, voice-overs, settings, and product categories, quantitative statistics were used. The findings of this study used chi-square tests of the advertisements collected because most variables are categorically and nominally structured.

Based on the sample and sampling strategy described and the hypotheses posed, the following section of the thesis documents the results, presented as the *Results*, followed by the *Discussion* and *Limitations* section.

Table 1. Variables and Coding Framework

Variable	Code	Definition
<i>Primary Character</i>	Primary character 0 = No primary character 1 = Male primary character 2 = Female primary character	A primary character is at least 18 years old and appears on camera for at least three seconds while speaking or being prominently featured (Prieler & Centeno, 2013). When multiple characters received the same importance, we identified the primary characters as one who (1) was central to the story, (2) appeared in close-ups for the longest time, (3) appeared for the longest time, (4) provided substantial information about the advertised good or service, (5) used or held the good, and (6) had the more extensive speaking part (Nassif & Gunter, 2008)
<i>Voice-over</i>	0 = None 1 = Male 2 = Female 3 = Both	The voices of those who could not be seen were heard through voiceovers. There were no children's voices or voices that could only be heard singing in voice-overs (Prieler & Centeno, 2013).
<i>Character Setting</i>	1= Home 2= Workplace 3= Other indoor 4= Outdoor 5= Other (artificial)	The location where the main character first appears in the advertisement serves as the setting (Mastro & Stern, 2003). The dominant setting was coded if multiple settings were present. The main character's perspective was used to code the environment. For instance, the context would be "workplace" for a waiter serving food in a restaurant, but "other indoors" for the customer taking the service. (Prieler & Centeno, 2013) If the customer is the primary character, the setting would be coded as "Other indoors." If there was no primary character and the TVC was a concoction of multiple stories in different settings, each introducing the product in their respective setting. The majority of the characters' settings were counted. Ads where the primary character was seen in multiple sets, then the setting where the product was introduced was coded.
<i>Product Categories</i>	1=Home/household products, 2=Banking and technology 3=Healthcare 4=Development 5=Transportation 6=Others	Home/household products--toiletries, cosmetics, cleaning, and cooking products. Banking, technology, finance, gadgets, electronics, and insurance companies. Healthcare-- healthcare products, health technologies, hospitals. Development-- industrial products, construction materials, real estate. Transportation--vehicle, airline, travel, tourism Others-- general products that do not fall under the above categories.

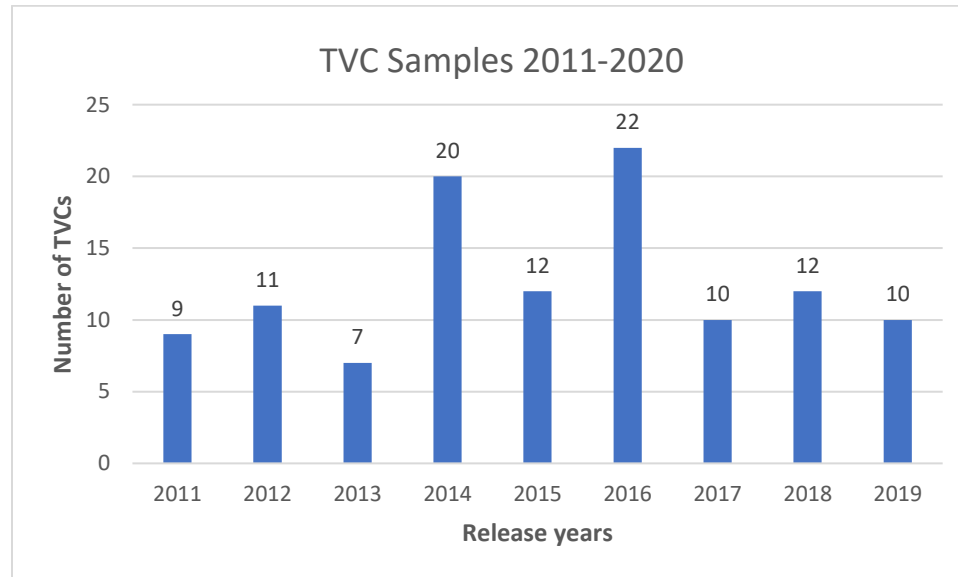
Chapter IV

Results

The results of this study were based on chi-square analysis and descriptive statistics that were performed on a total of 120 unduplicated Indian television advertisements as samples. Samples were collected from the video-sharing platform YouTube. Collected samples consist of 40% home/household ($n=48$), 24% banking and technology ($n=29$), 13% finance ($n=16$), 10% development ($n=12$), 6% healthcare ($n=8$), and 0.05% other ($n=7$) category of products. Approximately 33% of these commercials were uploaded by the advertisement agencies who were directly involved in the production of those advertisements ($n=40$), 59% were uploaded by the products' official YouTube channels ($n=71$), 8% were uploaded by the individuals who were either costume designer or model of the TVC, or autonomous uploaders, who mentioned the advertisement circulation date in the headline, or in the description, or their upload date is matched with the product's official launch date ($n=8$). The TVCs in this study averaged $M=1,483,425$ views $M=3,165.1$ likes, with the YouTube Channels averaging $M=175,094$ subscribers.

The samples contain 7 TVCs from 2011 (5.8%), 9 TVCs from 2012 (7.5%), 11 TVCs from 2013 (9.1%), 7 TVCs from 2014 (5.8%), 20 TVCs from 2015 (16%), 12 TVCs from 2016 (10%), 22 TVCs from 2017 (19%), 10 TVCs from 2018 (8.3%), 12

TVCs from 2019 (10%), and 10 TVCs from 2020 (8.3%). The chart below presents an at-a-glance picture of the number of TVCs collected for this study that were released from 2011 to 2020.



H1 hypothesized that more males than females will appear in Indian television advertisements as primary characters. To test this hypothesis, descriptive statistics were computed. In the total sample of $n=120$, advertisements with a primary character were $n=108$, and 12 samples did not have any primary character. Males were depicted higher ($N=59$, 54.6%) than females ($N=49$, 45.4%) as primary characters in Indian television advertisements. The findings from this test support H1.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Male and Female as Primary Characters

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
<i>Male</i>	59	54.6%	54.6%
<i>Female</i>	49	45.4%	100%
<i>Total</i>	108	100%	

To test H2, which hypothesized there will be more male voiceovers than female voiceovers in Indian television advertisements, a chi-square analysis was conducted. The result found significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N=89) = 32.20, p < .001$ (See Table IV-2 for crosstabulation) between male and female voiceovers. Male voiceovers were significantly higher (69.7%) than female voiceovers (30.3%). This finding supports H2.

Table 3: Crosstabulation for Primary Characters' Gender and Male/Female Voiceovers

<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentages</i>	<i>VoiceOver</i>		
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	49	4	53
	<i>Expected Count</i>	36.9	16.1	53
	<i>% Within Gender</i>	92.50%	7.50%	100.00%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	13	23	36
	<i>Expected Count</i>	25.1	10.9	36
	<i>% Within Gender</i>	36.10%	63.90%	100.00%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	62 α	27 α	89
	<i>Expected Count</i>	62	27	89
	<i>% Within Gender</i>	69.70%	30.30%	100.00%

Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of male and female voiceovers, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).

H3a hypothesized that more females than males are depicted in home settings in Indian television advertisements. So, a chi-square analysis was performed. The result found significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N=108) = 12.57, p < .001$ (See Table IV-3 for crosstabulation) between male and female portrayal in home settings. Females were shown to be significantly higher (66.7%) in home settings than males (33.3%). Thus, H3a is supported.

Table 4: Crosstabulations for Primary Characters' Gender and Home Settings

<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentages</i>	<i>Other settings</i>	<i>Home setting</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	45	14 α	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	36.1	22.9	59
	<i>% Within Home Setting</i>	68.20%	33.30%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	21	28 α	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	29.9	19.1	49
	<i>% Within the Home setting</i>	31.80%	66.70%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	66	42	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	66	42	108
	<i>% Within the Home setting</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<i>Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of males and females in the home setting, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).</i>				

To test H3b, which stated that more females than males will be depicted in outdoor and workplace settings in Indian television advertisements, a chi-square analysis was performed. The result found significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N=108) = 13.36, p < .001$ (See Table IV-5 for crosstabulation) between male and female portrayal in workplace

settings. Males were shown to be significantly higher (100%) in workplace settings than females (0%). This finding supports H3b. However, the second half of the hypothesis was not supported. No significant differences $\chi^2(1, N=14) = 28a, p > .05$ were found between males and females in outdoor settings. The male-female ratio was 60% and 40%, respectively, in outdoor settings.

Table 5: Crosstabulations for Primary Characters' Gender and Workplace Settings

<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentages</i>	<i>Other settings</i>	<i>Workplace setting</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	45	14 α	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	51.4	7.6	59
	<i>% Within Workplace</i>	47.90%	100.00%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	49	0 α	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	42.6	6.4	49
	<i>% Within Workplace</i>	52.10%	0.00%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	94	14	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	94	14	108
	<i>% Within Workplace</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of males and females in the workplace settings, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).

Table 6: Crosstabulations for Primary Characters' Gender and Outdoor Settings				
<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentages</i>	<i>Other settings</i>	<i>Outdoor Setting</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	47	12	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	48.1	10.9	59
	<i>% Within Outdoor</i>	53.40%	60.00%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	41	8	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	39.9	9.1	49
	<i>% Within Outdoor</i>	46.60%	40.00%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	88	20	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	88	20	108
	<i>% Within Outdoor</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<i>No significant difference was found.</i>				

To test H4a, which stated that more females than males will be depicted in Indian television advertisements for home and household products, a chi-square analysis was performed. The result found significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N = 108) = 37.32, p < .001$ (See Table IV-6 for crosstabulation) between male and female portrayal in workplace settings. Females were shown in advertisements for home and household products more frequently (80%) than males (20%). This finding supports H4a.

Table 7: Crosstabulations for Home/Household Products and Primary Characters' Gender				
<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentage</i>	<i>Other products</i>	<i>Home/Household products</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	50	9 α	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	34.4	24.6	59
	<i>% Within Home/Household</i>	79.40%	20.00%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	13	36 α	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	28.6	20.4	49
	<i>% Within Home/Household</i>	20.60%	80.00%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	63	45	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	63	45	108
	<i>% Within Home/Household</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
	<i>% of Total</i>	58.30%	41.70%	100.00%
<i>Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of males and females in Home/Household product category, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).</i>				

To test H4b that more males than females will be associated with the advertisements of banking and technology, development, healthcare, and transportation in Indian television advertisements, a chi-square analysis was performed for each category. The result found significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N = 108) = 19.84, p < .001$ (See Table IV-6 for crosstabulation) in banking and technology category; $\chi^2 (1, N = 108) = 10.17, p < .001$ in development category; and $\chi^2 (1, N = 108) = 10.52, p < .001$ in transportation category between male and female portrayal. In banking and technology, development, and transportation categories, males (95.70%, 100%, and 93.30%, respectively) were depicted as significantly higher than females (4.30%, 0%, and 6.70%, respectively). However, the hypothesis was not supported in the health category. No significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N = 108) = 3.06, p > .001$ were found between males and females in the health category of advertisement, which partially supports H4b.

Table 8: Crosstabulations for Banking and Technology Products and Primary Characters' Gender

<i>Primary Characters' gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentage</i>	<i>Other products</i>	<i>Banking and Technology Products</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	37	22 α	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	46.4	12.6	59
	<i>% Within Banking and Technology</i>	43.50%	95.70%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	48	1 α	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	38.6	10.4	49
	<i>% Within Banking and Technology</i>	56.50%	4.30%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	85	23	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	85	23	108
	<i>% Within Banking and Technology</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
	<i>% of Total</i>	78.70%	21.30%	100.00%

Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of males and females in Banking and Technology category, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).

Table 9: Crosstabulations for Development Product and Primary Characters' Gender

<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentage</i>	<i>Other Products</i>	<i>Development products</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	48	11 α	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	53	6	59
	<i>% Within Development</i>	49.50%	100.00%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	49	0 α	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	44	5	49
	<i>% Within Development</i>	50.50%	0.00%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	97	11	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	97	11	108
	<i>% of Total</i>	89.80%	10.20%	100.00%

Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of males and females in Development category, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).

Table 10: Crosstabulations for Transportation Products and Primary Characters' Gender				
<i>Primary characters' gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentage</i>	<i>The rest of the products</i>	<i>Transportation</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	45	14 α	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	50.8	8.2	59
	<i>% Within Transportation</i>	48.40%	93.30%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	48	1 α	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	42.2	6.8	49
	<i>% Within Transportation</i>	51.60%	6.70%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	93	15	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	93	15	108
	<i>% Within Transportation</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
	<i>% of Total</i>	86.10%	13.90%	100.00%
<p><i>Note: There is a noticeable gap between the expected counts and the actual counts of males and females in Transportation category, as displayed by the above table. Significance α is established at $p < .001$ (Highlighted cells).</i></p>				

Table 11: Crosstabulations for Health Products and Primary Characters' Gender				
<i>Primary Characters' Gender</i>	<i>Counts and Percentage</i>	<i>Other Products</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	57	2	59
	<i>Expected Count</i>	54.6	4.4	59
	<i>% Within Health</i>	57.00%	25.00%	54.60%
<i>Female</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	43	6	49
	<i>Expected Count</i>	45.4	3.6	49
	<i>% Within Health</i>	43.00%	75.00%	45.40%
<i>Total</i>	<i>Actual Count</i>	100	8	108
	<i>Expected Count</i>	100	8	108
	<i>% Within Health</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
	<i>% of Total</i>	92.60%	7.40%	100.00%
<p><i>No significant difference was found.</i></p>				

Chapter V

Discussion

Gender portrayals in advertisements and other forms of infotainment have been an area of interest among social sciences researchers for quite a long time. Empirical evidence and studies suggest that the stereotypical portrayals of gender are widespread in television advertisements (Matthes et al., 2016; Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Mak, 1999). Gender stereotyping is ubiquitous in Indian television advertisements as well, and a byproduct of such stereotyping is the increasing cultural pressure on women to represent themselves and behave in a certain way in real life (Sarkar, 2015). Advertisements perpetuate patriarchal ideologies through verbal and non-verbal cues and symbols to sustain a consensual ideology that is accepted by the majority members of that society (Roy, 1996). In the context of India, similar studies of this kind are astonishingly few, considering the diversity, size, and population of India. Most of the studies that are conducted in the field of Indian television advertisements have focused on how women have been portrayed, what are the impacts of women objectification in Indian society, or whether they are qualitative. Given this, this study is novel because it gives a glimpse of how the TVC field is portraying gender in a disproportionate way, which, in the long run, could be one of the contributing factors to the perpetuation of gender inequality in society. This section will discuss the findings and implications of these results.

Numerical Representation and Product Categories

Numerical representation and product categories will be discussed together because the former leads to the latter. As this study discussed before in Chapter I, number represents rank, order, and importance (Mau, 2019). There is a connection between Hofstede's Masculinity Score and the numerical representation of male character's predominance over female characters (Milner & Collins, 2000). These findings support prior studies. There was a significant difference between male and female representation in Indian television commercials and each gender's association with certain product categories. Traditional gender norms and assumptions that portray males as the main breadwinners and decision-makers and women in caregiving roles (Roy, 1996) have long shaped Indian society. Due to these prejudices, male protagonists who exude prosperity, authority, or leadership are frequently preferred in TVCs.

Additionally, family values and relationships are highly valued in Indian culture (Das, 2010). Male characters are frequently shown in advertisements as the head of the family or the main decision-makers at home. As per Hofstede's Cultural Dimension (2001), India is a high-power distance country with a score of 72. Such power distance is reflected in frequencies of gender representations in the TVCs. Advertisers frequently create their content with a particular audience in mind. For instance, since men are more likely to be involved in car buying decisions than women, advertisers who are marketing cars may choose to include a male character in their advertisement.

Another aspect is that specific products or brands may be perceived as more appealing to a predominantly male audience, leading to the casting of male actors more than females in primary characters. Similar studies that took place in India (Das, 2010),

Hong Kong, and Indonesia (Furnham et al., 2000) also showed male predominance over females in terms of primary characters.

Interestingly, studies from other Asian countries such as Japan (Arima, 2003), Philippines (Prieler & Centeno, 2013), Malaysia and Taiwan (Bresnahan et al., 2001), Singapore (Lee, 2004), and South Korea (Kim & Lowrey, 2005) found a predominance of female characters over male characters. The predominance of male characters in Indian television commercials leads to the next part of the discussion, which is product categories. This study reveals significant differences in the portrayal of gender across product categories. A closer analysis of the result showed that women are heavily featured in the advertisements of home/household product categories such as toiletries, cleaning, cooking products, etc. The rest of the categories, such as banking, technology, transportation, and development, were heavily dominated by men, and women were notably underrepresented. Even though in health categories, women outnumbered men as primary characters, they are mainly shown as either moms who are concerned about the health of their family members or as housewives who get body aches due to doing chores all the time, instead of showing them in high-status roles such as medical professionals. According to Gender Bias & Inclusion in Advertising in India (2021), women only represent 11% of workers in healthcare. Hence, the number of women outnumbering men in the health category of advertisements is unexpected. The reason behind such stereotypical representations in product categories could be, as Wolf (2009) suggested, that the expression of modern feminism works differently in India. Indian women view equality as something family-centered instead of individual-centered, and still, they prioritize family and value their roles at home. That is why it is believed that household

products will draw more consumers if females market them in television commercials as primary characters. By doing so, these advertisements uphold traditional gender roles for women in society. Females are limited to making decisions about household products and convincing other ladies about why a certain household product is better than the other.

On the other hand, the banking and technology, development, and transportation categories of products overall showed significant differences between male and female representation because these industries have historically been male-dominated. Gender imbalances in the workforce are reflected in TVCs. The quote, "Home and childcare taste sweeter to women while business and profession taste sweeter to men," has long enjoyed unquestioning social acceptance in Indian society (Sivakumar & Manimekalai, 2021). In India, men are socially grown in ways that prepare them for management and leadership roles characterized by competitiveness, aggression, and risk-taking behaviors (Sivakumar & Manimekalai, 2021). The advertisers trust the established gender stereotypes. Engineering or technical skills, innovations, development, banking, and health have an authoritative side or seriousness, which makes them associate these professions with males. Also, fields such as transportation or finance might make advertisers believe that they are catering to a consumer base that is predominantly male-centric.

Existing pieces of literature reveal that the association between females with home and household products is found to be pronounced a global trend (Furnham & Paltzer, 2000) in a similar format both in Asian and non-Asian countries such as Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Philippine (Bresnehan et al., 2001; Das, 2010; Prieler & Centeno, 2013), Brazil, France, Germany, Netherlands, Slovakia, Romania (Matthes et al., 2016), Italy (Furnham & Voli, 1989). Associating males with

non-domestic products, technology products, vehicles, especially cars, and finances are found to be a common trend in Spain, Brazil, Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Italy, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Japan (Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007; Matthes et al., 2016; Das, 2011; Bresnehan et al., 2001; Furnham & Voli, 1989; Nassif & Gunter, 2008). Categories such as health and development were not found to be used by previous studies conducted using a similar method; hence, a comparison was not possible. However, findings related to these categories speak of the novel value of the present findings

Voiceovers and Settings

As Indian society is quite traditional and patriarchal, and more importantly, it is in Asia, the number of male voiceovers exceeds the number of female voiceovers. As Paek et al. (2010) showed, there is a connection between a higher masculinity rate and a higher number of male voiceovers, and that trend is more prevalent in Asia and Africa (Furnham & Mak, 1999; Grau & Zotos, 2016). Also, in this study, it is noticed that there is a close association between the gender of the primary characters of the TVCs and voiceovers, as found by Eisend's (2010) meta-analysis of advertisements on TV and radio. The number of male primary characters is higher in each product category, apart from the home/household and health products, which could be a possible reason behind the number of male voiceovers being significantly higher than the number of female voiceovers. A similar trend has been found in other Asian and non-Asian contexts, such as India, South Korea, Japan, China, Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Singapore (Arima, 2003; Bresnehan, 2001; Das, 2011; Lee, 2004; Matthes et al., 2016; Prieler & Centeno, 2013; Shrikhande, 2003), Brazil, Germany, Romania, USA, Italy, Spain, Australia, UK

(Furnham & Voli, 1989; Matthes et al., 2016; Milner & Higgs, 2004; Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007). One reason behind this commonality between different countries could be that the male voice is often associated with authority (McArthur & Resko, 1975; Silverstein & Silverstein, 1974).

Regarding character settings, prior works have found women in home settings (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Das, 2011) and men in workplace settings (Prieler & Centeno, 2013), and some studies found men in outdoor settings more than women (Prieler & Centeno, 2013; Furnham & Voli, 1989; Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007). The cultural norms in India dictate that women should be modest and reserved. Advertisements portray women in a home setting to create a benchmark for the ideal Indian woman who is devoted to her family and the homemaker role.

Like many other patriarchal societies, there is still a disparity in the labor force, working environment, and pay rate between men and women (Dutta, 2017). Historically, too, there have been limited opportunities for women. Advertisers design their campaigns to resonate with the culture and mindset of the target audience. Hence, they tend to show more males than females in workplace settings. It also goes with the traditional perspective of men being the provider.

However, this study did not find significant differences between men and women in outdoor settings, probably because technological and generational change is occurring and impacting consumers' tastes and lifestyles. In terms of advertisements for travel, recreation, and everyday activities, there is increasing participation of women. It is expected to assume that advertisers would try to reflect that reality to appeal to a broader audience. Novel ideas and unique storytelling strategies of the modern world among

advertisers might make them want to avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes, be more sensitive, and create meaningful content (Gupta & Siri, 2021). The audience also prefers more inclusive and gender-neutral content, as studies showed that portraying women as submissive and weak characters in advertisements influences consumers' willingness to buy products in a negative way (Sharma & Bumb, 2021).

The tendency to depict women in home settings is also found in Brazil, Germany, Romania, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Australia, South Korea, China, and Philippines (Furnham & Voli, 1989; Matthes et al., 2016; Milner & Higgs, 2004; Prieler & Centeno, 2013; Tsihla & Zotos, 2016; Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007). On the other hand, showing men in a workplace setting is a prominent finding in studies done in Austria, Australia, France, Germany, Netherlands, UK, Italy, Cyprus, Japan, Spain, the Philippines, and India (Furnham & Voli, 1989; Gender Bias & Inclusion in Advertising in India, 2021; Matthes et al., 2016; Milner & Higgs, 2004; Prieler & Centeno, 2013; Sarkar, 2015; Tsihla & Zotos, 2016; Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007). Depicting men significantly more than women in outdoor settings has been shown in studies conducted in India, Malaysia, South Korea, Spain, and Cyprus (Sarkar, 2015; Bresnehan et al., 2001; Kim & Lowry, 2005; Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007; Tsihla & Zotos, 2016).

Limitations

Like any other study, this study also had several limitations. Firstly, it did not have intercoder reliability due to time and resource limitations. Also, considering India's cultural richness, only the study of Hindi advertisements limits generalizability. Despite Hindi being the most prominent official language in India, there are 21 other officially

recognized languages there. Thirdly, the strategy to select not more than one advertisement from each brand filtered out a vast number of advertisements since the sourcing platform was YouTube. For the sake of generalizability, 120 advertisements are not enough to study for a period of 10 years. A larger and linguistically diverse sample size would have given us a more reliable picture. Another limitation was that the number of advertisements in each category and each year was not equivalent.

Future Research and Conclusion

This study reveals the presence of gender stereotypes in Indian television advertisements. The results found from this study confirm findings from extant literature. Asian traditional countries demonstrate more gender stereotypes in comparison to their Western counterparts. Women are more likely to be shown in a home setting and are associated with the home and household products more than their male counterparts. Also, women are found to be less popular choices for voice-overs, which require specific characteristics such as authority and expertise. On the other hand, men are more likely to be featured in other categories of products such as finances, technology, automotive, etc., and they would also be depicted in workplace settings more than women and considered to be more reliable for voiceovers than their female counterparts.

Considering India's vastness, such kinds of quantitative studies are surprisingly few. Hence, it can be a good stepping stone to explore further aspects of this topic. As Media Framing Theory holds, mass media may use different frames to show negative issues in a positive light and influence viewers' perceptions of reality in different matters. For this study specifically, the media uses a gender frame, and to ensure a positive reception of their products among consumers, marketers tend to conform to the prevailing

stereotypes. Repeated exposure to such stereotypes makes them a ready reference for the audience and strengthens their existing beliefs.

On the other hand, Social Learning Theory shows how the audience acquires gender stereotypical behaviors by observing and modeling them. Finally, those behaviors get reinforced by the audience's acceptance of them. Specific to this study's context, with the same process, gender stereotypical perceptions and attitudes become internalized in society.

Considering that Indian culture is highly diverse and vast, this country offers immense potential for conducting studies related to communication. In the future, other forms of media, such as newspapers, magazines, social media, and so on, can also be analyzed. The quantitative findings from this study can be supplemented with qualitative elements such as interviews with the advertisers and consumers to know what motivates them to consume and produce gender-stereotypical content. Future research can also investigate the influence of such stereotypes on Indian children and adolescents. Furthermore, it is essential to measure the efficacy of various strategies aimed at challenging and mitigating gender stereotypes in Indian television advertisements. In the future, a longitudinal study can be conducted to analyze gender portrayal in India over time.

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APPENDIX

