REPRESENTATIONS OF GENDER AND WOMEN IN PAKISTAN'S TELEVISION ADVERTISING: ISSUES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Abstract - During the last decades, interest has emerged in analyzing the representations of gender in advertising that are introduced on television. These studies have shown that marketers and advertisers define gender roles they subsequently project as representations in various content. Similarly, these representations that are broadcast on television are reproduced on social networks. This means that in marketing and advertising, gender representations are displayed that may or may not be ethical. An ethical representation of a group or a phenomenon occurs when it does not reinforce stereotypes, discrimination, or injustice. For example, with women, the representations have shown them as passive and submissive subjects, but, in recent times, there are more representations of empowered women with strong leadership. This paper aims to analyze the representations of gender and women in Pakistani television to discuss social justice issues in advertising and marketing. With this, it is expected to contribute to the studies on these two disciplines regarding gender justice and ethical communication.

Keywords - Area-Efficient, Low power, CSLA, Binary to Excess One Converter, Multiplexer.

I. INTRODUCTION

During the last four decades, an interest in analyzing gender representations on Pakistani television has emerged within interdisciplinary media and advertising studies. These studies have explored available information on how the representations of Pakistani men and women in television advertising have been manifested. Likewise, the Internet has played a fundamental role in how these representations have been communicated in different formats. Hence, it is essential to analyze how ethical these representations are so that they do not lead to reinforcing stereotypes, discrimination, or injustice.

Women have historically been represented as passive and submissive subjects who experience innumerable forms of violence. Rarely is their agency recognized, and this has been the subject of attention in third world feminist studies, especially in feminist studies dealing with media and advertising. Even advertising has the power to determine what roles correspond to men and women. This has been explained by Pedelty and Kuecher (2014) as a marketing and advertising obsession with gender. Hence, marketing and advertising have too much power over the existence of women.

Representations of women and gender differ racially. Gender stereotypes in media and advertising can be explained through the concept of intersectionality, which designates how the oppressions of gender, race, sexuality, and class intersect to generate multiple forms of domination. Thus, the gender representations of women in Pakistan are not only determined by gender but also by ethnic identity and race. The same happens with women whose identity is determined by cultural differences, such as women from Korea (Eun, 2005), Japan, Malaysia (Bresnahan, 2001), Egypt (Ahmad, 2002), and India (Das, 2011).

This research aims to analyze the representations of women and gender in Pakistani television to discuss issues of social justice in advertising and marketing.

II. GENDER AND REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA AND ADVERTISING

Current research on gender representations in the media and advertising privileges the following themes: gender and voice or body-overs; gender and portrayed roles; gender and age; gender and product categories; gender and settings or locations; and general representations.

Concerning gender and voice or body-overs, academic research determines that men assume roles as voiceovers, while women are passive subjects of representation in advertising. Thus, both Furnham &Mak (1999) and Bresnahan (2001) have highlighted how men project themselves as creators of representations about women, while women assume a passive role in which they have no decision or agency on how they want. When women take an active role in creating representations, they do so to refer to products and services related to babies, dogs, children, or dietary supplements. This trend is manifested in the advertising generated in the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and Africa (Nassif& Gunther, 2008; Furnham &Mak, 1999; Bresnahan, 2001).

Similarly, women are portrayed more as product users, while men are shown in central roles in television advertising in the US, UK, Mexico, Italy, and France. In contrast, Saudi Arabian advertising shows women in more preponderant roles, even if they are related to the home and the domestic sphere, and less with leisure occupational activities (Nassif & Gunter, 2008).

Age says essential things about gender portrayals on television. For instance, in television advertising, representations of middle-aged women are preponderant, while younger women have more important roles in product promotion (Ahlstrand, 2007; Furnham &Mak, 1999).

Regarding the representations of genders and products, research on advertising and television shows that men occupy commercials for products related to them (Aronovsky& Furnham, 2008). Instead, women appear in commercials for food or drinks. The representations of women are recurrent in advertising health and home products. Women in adverts were often portrayed at home, while males were frequently during leisure or outdoor activities in the United States (Furnham &Mak, 1999). What has to do with home duties and parenting will have women, showing how females are good at such work while males are frequent with sales of the automobile and sports compared to females (Eun, 2005). For example, in their study in Brazil, Acevedo et al. (2006 showed that women's roles in advertising in Brazil are oriented to idealized stereotypes of them that have a cohesive function in specific communities.

The stereotyped portrayals prominent with females in advertisements revealed: feminine touches, function ranking, body revealing clothes or nudity, dependent, housewife, decorative role, women as physically beautiful, emotional, window display, an object of ridicule, superwoman and women as low-income earners (Acevedo et al., 2006). The idealized portrayals are as physically perfect or Caucasian ethnic characteristics. Plural depictions are shown as independence, home and family task equity, function equity, rationale, or women in prestigious, professional, or higher income earners (Acevedo et al., 2006). Thus, it is shown that gender representations are also racialized.

III. GENDER AND WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN PAKISTAN

Discrimination and gender inequality in Pakistani society are recurring events facilitated by traditions, cultural practices, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, and family perceptions. Likewise, the gender gap prevails in various layers of the population of Pakistan, but mainly in areas such as education, access to health, the workplace, and business. All of this affects the way Pakistani women are portrayed in the media and also in television advertising.

Women experience various discriminations in Pakistan that affect their media representations, such as domestic violence, acid attacks, and forced marriages. However, the perception of gender varies among Pakistani citizens. The perception of gender discrimination among Pakistan citizens differs essentially. Studies conducted using a survey to review the differences in perception show that 63% of the people believed that women are vastly unfairly treated, 71% thought this discrimination against women is prominent in education, while 57% considered the parental influence, which is shown to favor taking care or educating sons compared to daughters in the community is the root cause (Rabia et al., 2019). In summary, women face discrimination at home, in education, and the. Gender discrimination in Pakistan shows that women are exploited in the name of traditions, customs, religion, or culture.

Regarding cultural practices in Pakistan and their impact on gender disparity, it is notable how the persistent influence of mothers on their children's gender roles and attitudes has primarily been evaluated and noted to be related to how the mothers express their values or conduct. This dramatically affects what the daughters believe and seek to model (Zia-ur-rehman et al., 2015). The study conducted by Zia-ur-rehman et al. (2015) shows that women largely contributed to the Pakistan economy, but gender discrimination leads to many being discouraged or disheartened. However, they are getting accepted by the society gradually developed from the family and then the society in a current survey (Zia-ur-rehman et al., 2015). Several factors influenced the trend, such as women's role in family finances and education.

Zahid & Ali (2014) emphasize gender discrimination from the violation of women's rights perspective, which is considered devastating to society. The author confirmed the role of women's socioeconomic status, which is hugely affected by their upbringing, and men are believed to be raised as violent individuals in Pakistan (Zahid & Ali, 2014). Women were thought to lack the due right that the constitution and laws and their religion supported. Many developing societies have been unable to protect women largely due to other factors that militate against obtaining their due rights (Zahid & Ali, 2014). Ejaz (2019) perceived religious culture as strongly influencing gender discrimination in many societies, including Pakistan. The author emphasized how women have never been given equal status in primary scriptures, which mainly described them as weak, inferior, or spiritually inadequate in some instances (Ejaz, 2019). Hence, this also contributed to changing the perception and what the society is considered to be normal.

The media is one of the primary sources of information containing representations of gender and women in Pakistan. Thus, different research works have explored how marketers and advertisers create ideas about gender roles. Marketers have thrived on this by focusing on the channel's strengths and weaknesses, emphasizing what people consider the

norm and what remains appealing to them. In Pakistan, media, images, symbols, and videos are designed to pass messages utilizing different genders for a specific output. Various analyzes have been conducted to understand the terrain and trend. Females are favorites when it comes to advertisements (Guenes, 2005).

As with studies of gender representations in media and advertising in other countries, women remain a target audience for all marketing strategies for specific products in Pakistan. It is believed that women can be attractively portrayed to influence buyers' purchasing decisions by appealing to beauty. In this way, women play an essential role in beauty or household products.

Additionally, in Pakistan, men continue to be represented as active and violent subjects, while women are portrayed as oppressed or favored by men who are considered superior in society (Rameez et al., 2015). At the same time, females are submissive and thus run the household affairs. It is the fight for feminism that has now gradually changed the tide, making women step out of their houses, get educated, and build their careers. A better explanation for this trend relates to the cultural influence on what has been the norm in Pakistani society. That culture is found to have sharpened the audience's conception of what gender entails and what is expected (Popa &Gavriliu, 2015).

In television advertising, the influence of images of women on the audience has been used by various marketers to reach more audiences. Hence, objectification of women in gender representations has been generated. For example, more of what is depicted regarding gender portrayal has shown the female body to be portrayed in advertisements that relate to the object of sexual stimulation. In contrast, men are commonly associated with roles or representations of physicality or mental activeness in Pakistan (Mason, 2003). According to Rameez, Huda, and Ali (2015), the media, advertising, and marketing tend to turn women from all population sectors into objects, subjecting them to gender violence and harassment dynamics. Thus, stereotypes of Pakistani women linked to beauty and submission are generated.

In addition, the representations of gender in Pakistani advertising broadcast on television reflect a patriarchal ideology. Gender representation in Pakistani media has fostered a form of stereotypes of specific societal ideologies irrespective of the population differences. Shafiq (2018) shows that gender stereotypes are linked to reproducing images of men and women. Men are seen as dominant, active, and leading roles where no primary character qualification has been established to depict men's roles in media, while women as obedient to family, wearing the dupatta, focusing more on household roles and children (Shafiq, 2018). Also (Shafiq, 2018). Women have limited professional roles to play; they are painted as inferior to the male folks in the form of weak, childish, dependent, gullible, irrational, and scheming (Rameez et al., 2015). The husband is portrayed as a divine creature to whom the woman must be submissive and remain dutiful (Rameez et al, 2015). The advent of television broadcasting to private owners has allowed a gradual change in the sector where more women are working in front or behind cameras close to the men (Rameez et al., 2015). It has been found to help relieve the issue of insecurity of women.

The classic distinction between good and evil is an inherent element of this patriarchal ideology that runs through gender portrayals in Pakistani television advertising. For example, women have been associated with an image of moral perfection. At the same time, men are more permissive when carrying out works considered good or bad in Pakistani society. Shafiq (2018) has explained that regardless of their educational qualification or population in the community, their submissive and homely role has been determined to determine their current character type (Shafiq, 2018). As a result, an image of a "perfect" woman is generated, which becomes a stereotype for women in Pakistan. This is reflected in television advertising but also in dramas.

Other authors have also explored the equating of Pakistani women to moral perfection in media portrayals and television advertising, such as Geuns et al. (2016). In a research paper on advertising in Pakistan, Geuns et al. (2016) found that the presence of the features led to the conclusion that there are complex stimuli in advertisements that are associated with implicit gender stereotype activation; hence at the implicit level, warmth gives a better indication of the ad evaluation. Furthermore, the implicit evaluation shows that men are associated more with agency-related traits while women with related communal characteristics regardless of their explicit attitude differences. Geuens et al. (2005) then show that gender beliefs and attitudes are less likely to show differences based on participants' sex or conscious beliefs.

The representations of gender produced in television advertising and the media have had a social impact on the population of Pakistan. Regarding how these generate inequalities through representation, Rasul (2013) explains that the media affect the structure of inequalities and injustices that permeate women. Ali (2018) explored different gender role variables in television advertisements in Pakistan and the existence of a strong relationship between television and gender stereotypical roles of women. The results of the variables have found a gradual change where the media is tagged to play more mature roles compared to older times. However, despite the incremental changes, the stereotypical gender role depiction is still vital (Ali, 2018). According to Ali

(2018), this still creates an oppressive representation of women in media or where they suffer and remain vulnerable. This still indicates a level of inequality that has existed in society over the years, although at a lower rate. The role media has continuously played in our lives is of great importance. It has invaded our lives and distorts how we perceive men's and women's roles in society.

In conclusion, gender stereotyping in the media has profound implications, especially when women are continuously shown to the audience as victims, passive, dependent, weak, sexualized, or only meant for domestic roles and men dominating roles. It greatly influences the development of boys and girls about how they see themselves. It could also affect the marriages in the society if the younger ones have already had a gender construct in their mind in those lines of portrayal. Many women may not be motivated to go for professional roles in their lives since they are always victims or end up at home.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this research, it was argued that, during the last decades, interest has emerged from academic research on how gender representations are introduced through the media, advertising, and marketing. In fact, those in charge of these areas define what men and women do in societies according to beliefs rooted in the culture. As a result, there are gender stereotypes in these representations and forms of discrimination and injustice. While women are represented as passive subjects or beauty, men are linked to action, agency, and violence. This remains for gender representations in Pakistan.

To begin with, this paper argued that women in Pakistan experience innumerable forms of violence and discrimination, which are accentuated through gender representations. Women are often presented as morally and aesthetically "perfect" women in Pakistan, which reinforces stereotypes about them that can foster dynamics of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment. In addition, these representations are linked to patriarchal ideologies about good and evil that designate women as "perfect" in physical appearance and actions.

What is the role of more ethical, inclusive, and diverse gender representation in media and television advertising in Pakistan? To generate these representations, the media industries, advertisers, and marketers must commit to dismantling stereotypes in representations that lead to constructing more equitable relationships between men and women.

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