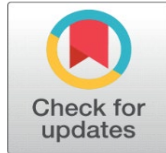


# ANALYSING GENDER ROLE PERCEPTIONS IN INDIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS: A STUDY IN MATHURA, UTTAR PRADESH

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to comprehend the perceptions of young people regarding the images, roles and to know the changing trends regarding women and men's portrayal in various advertisements in Mathura region. This study's novelty lies in shedding light on the impact of culturally bounded aspects of advertising and perception of youth in Mathura. It also aims to highlight shifts in youth perceptions before and after exposure to these ads, urging advertisers to promote gender equality and reflect societal realities more accurately. The study was conducted with the school students in Mathura based on gender, age, and interests, Uttar Pradesh, India, to find their perceptions and opinions regarding the roles, trends and depictions of males and females in advertisements on television. This exploration is facilitated through a semi-structured questionnaire and a knowledge inventory test. The age of the young audience preferred for the study is between 15-19 years. To understand that what youth knows about the gender roles while watching ads on television and what are their perceptions on the images, roles and portrayals of women and men in the Indian television ads. The study initially collected data on viewers' perceptions of gender roles in selected Indian TV ads during prime time (8-9 pm). Two channels with the highest TRP were chosen, and six frequently aired ads were selected. A sample of 40 respondents, evenly split between genders aged 15-19, underwent a knowledge inventory test. Findings revealed stereotypical portrayals, with women mostly depicted in domestic roles and highly objectified. Men were shown as breadwinners and occasionally in domestic settings. This study also offers new critical insights into advertising that still employs gender stereotypes, such as gender roles mainly associated with men, implying that empowered women must behave like men.

**Keywords:** Advertising, advertisements, Gender, India, Television, Perception, Mathura



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising serves as a potent instrument, not only for promoting products and services but also for expressing aspirations and conveying societal norms regarding behavior and gender roles. Gender roles depicted in advertising originate from the diverse societal expectations placed upon individuals based on their gender, influenced by cultural norms, values, and perceptions of masculinity and femininity. Advertisements affect the way people think about their gender and contribute to the continuous social stratification of genders in our society. This evolved ideology subsequently influenced advertising, leading to the development of femvertising (female empowerment advertising) (Varghese and Kumar, 2022). For many

decades we have been viewing the women and men in performing stereotypical roles as accepted or depicted by the society in Indian television advertisements<sup>1</sup>. Advertising is a component of our daily cultural experiences, and it have become an elemental part of human life that it is impossible to avoid them. Advertising is not just about what manufacturers say to consumers, but it is about how it is said. The impact of ads is very beyond a simple message about a product. Ads introduce the characters which play the roles by which we connect ourselves to those gender roles and then we accept those roles and considered them. It is a potent platform crafted not only for selling products and services but also for conveying aspirations and communicating ideas about acceptable behavior and gender roles. Television is the most watch mass media which is highly consumed and visible by most people (Shah & D'Souza, 2009). Though many attempts have been made to break or overcome the stereotypes still we don't see too many changes. There is a need to have an in-depth understanding of the concept of gender & its portrayal in the ads. The media increasingly features "femvertising," an advertising style that highlights women's talents, centers on pro-woman messaging, and counters stereotypes. However, no systematic attempt has been made to understand the reasons behind its growing social acceptance (Varghese & Kumar, 2020). And this study can try and fill those gaps with its research in a small city in northern India and understand the social acceptance norms in the holy city of Mathura.

### **1.1. ADVERTISING**

Advertising as "any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services" (Kotler & Keller, 2008). It serves as a means of informing and influencing the public to purchase products or services through visual or oral messages. Advertising plays a crucial role in shaping societal perceptions of gender, contributing to the ongoing social construction of gender roles. Advertising is instrumental in creating brand images, which are essential for companies to market their products effectively (Belch & Belch, 2008).

According to social cognitive theory, people learn from social experiences, including media, by identifying with others, observing their behavior, processing it, and later imitating it—typically in a manner deemed gender-appropriate by society (Varghese & Kumar, 2020). In today's competitive and rapidly evolving market, advertising has become increasingly significant, shaping consumer preferences and driving economic development. By conveying diverse cultural messages, advertising helps bridge societal gaps and stimulate demand, thereby contributing to overall economic growth. Many social scientists have underscored the progressive role of advertising in communication, highlighting its influence on cultural, economic, and social trends. Advertising serves as a primary source of information and exerts a significant impact on audience perceptions and behaviors, particularly among children (Asadollahi & Tanha, 2011).

Advertising has an impact on its audience through the images, sounds and text used, which may be based on stereotypes i.e. gender stereotypes and also on portrayals of women and men in advertising. "Domestic" commercials, there are three kinds of women has been shown in the ads that are "woman-child", "woman-woman" and "woman-mother" and men are shown in all characters (Jurčić & Jurčić, 2018). Gender stereotypes in advertising are prevalent worldwide (Prokopis K. Theodoridis et al., 2013), facilitated by the global expansion of brands and companies. However, these practices are culturally bound (Durriya H.Z. Khairullah and Zahid Y. Khairullah, 2009). To better understand consumer attitudes and perceptions (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2020; Varghese & Kumar, 2022), the cultural

nuances and distinctions of the region such as Mathura is explored in the following study. Advertisements serve as the primary channels through which companies and the advertising industry convey their messages to consumers. Their aim is to influence consumer behavior by promoting the purchase of goods or services, altering perceptions, or generating excitement. Ads are typically purchased (either space or time) and are public in nature, as opposed to personal (Sharma, 2012). Various categories of ads include print, mail, telephone, radio, television, and the internet. Numerous ads have depicted women as passive, deferential, unintelligent, shy, dreamy, gentle, easily manipulated, and submissive, with body language indicating psychological withdrawal and supplication (Browne, 1998). In contrast, men are often portrayed as assertive, powerful, independent, accomplished, and their body language conveys traits of power, control, and dominance. There are some ads, men are being shown as financial providers to the family, goes outside for the work, only breadwinner of the family, taking responsibility and as head of the family. However, the exceptions are also there, but not in greater extent. Ads like Keya Love Food where man is helping his wife in kitchen, Ariel #Share the load in which father is shown in guilt of not setting the right example for his daughter and in Raymond the complete man it had been shown that men do not go to office, but he stayed with his baby and let her wife go to the office instead of him. Whereas if we see how women are portrayed, they are being shown as loving wives, always stays in the kitchen and taking care of family and children. But there are some ads, where the roles are getting replaced and women are shown in professional work too & outside the home. Advertising is an integral part of our daily life, and it affects the way people think about their gender, and which further contribute to the ongoing social layering of gender in our society.

## **1.2. GENDER AND ADVERTISEMENTS**

Advertising effects the people perception about gender roles. Roles which are assigned in the ads where women do all the household work and providing dinner on the dining table to all the family members whereas men go outside for the office work and sit on a central chair as the head of the family on the dining table where women is serving food to him. Since the roles which are assigned in the ads makes the people accept the ideas propagated in the ads as realities and create opinions in the society. Ads are the image of the gender comparison of a particular society. Over time, gender roles have evolved to become more defined and limited. Advertisers often rely on traditional gender stereotypes in their ads, assuming that audiences are familiar with these images and that they aid in conveying the ad's message clearly and without ambiguity. In ads, gender has always been portrayed in different and foreseen stereotypes. In ads women are shown in more traditional housewife and mother who perfectly and happily solve household problems and works inside the home. Women are disproportionately featured in advertisements for cosmetics, kitchen, and bathroom products, while they are less likely to appear in ads for cars, trucks, and related items (Courtney and Whipple, 1974). This tendency suggests a reinforcement of traditional gender roles, portraying women predominantly in domestic settings to convey the message that their place is primarily within the home. In ads, gender portrayal shows that male is active, and women are passive, dependent, domestic. In TV ads women are mostly shown dependent roles whereas men are shown in independent roles and bread earner of the family. Now the situations have been changed with time and improvement could be seen in the portrayals of role of women in ads in which shows that their role has been upgraded now they are shown in working and independent roles but if we as compared this

to men, they are still showing less. Men in ads are shown in power, control, and dominance and have the authority to make decisions whereas women are shown as shy, dreamy, gentle, likely to be manipulated and always take the orders.

Ads reflect societal norms and desires, portraying men as strong, independent achievers, while depicting women as nurturing, empathetic, softer, and reliant on others. This perpetuates traditional gender stereotypes and roles within society. Most women in advertisements are depicted as young and often portrayed in traditional roles, although there has been a gradual shift towards showing them in more professional capacities. Historically, women were predominantly featured in ads for body products, beauty items, personal care products, and household cleaning products, whereas men were commonly associated with advertisements for cars, telecommunications, electronics, technology, and computers (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010)

Additionally, the setting of ads often reinforces gender divisions, with women typically depicted in home settings and men in workplace settings (Das, 2011; Prieler & Centeno, 2013).

Gender roles are socially constructed expectations regarding behaviors, roles, and responsibilities assigned to individuals based on their sex. Traditionally, women were expected to fulfil nurturing roles, focusing on family and household duties, while men were expected to be leaders, providing financially for the family and making decisions independently (Kanter, 1977). These roles extend beyond the household into the workplace, where men and women are often assigned different tasks and roles based on their gender.

Gender roles are social constructs that vary across societies and cultures and change over time within the same society. They can be influenced by stereotypes about gender and are manifested in the expectations placed on individuals in various social contexts, including work environments (Williams, 1995).

### **1.2.1. GENDER STEREOTYPES IN INDIAN ADVERTISEMENTS**

Gender stereotypes were based on the belief, culture and traditions of the society. They are made according to sex by the people who live in society. According to them, women should always be looked nice in the home as a perfect house maker and dependent on men whereas men should always go outside for the work, bread earner of the family and independent individual. Today's media women and men are looked upon as a tool that helps the advisors to sell their products in

which women are shown in more fascinating and attractive looks like a sex object whereas men are shown as flirtatious and funny looks.

Gender stereotypes are oversimplified perceptions of males and females and the perceived disparities between them. Individuals often base their views on appropriate gender roles on these stereotypes, which can lead to false or inaccurate assumptions about the characteristics of men and women. Stereotypes serve as descriptive elements of gender roles, portraying the attributes attributed to a particular group (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). Men are commonly viewed as agentic, characterized by qualities such as competence, assertiveness, independence, mastery, and achievement orientation, while women are often seen as lacking in agentic traits. Consequently, women are typically associated with communal qualities like cooperation, friendliness, warmth, selflessness, sociability, interdependence, emotional expressiveness, and relationship orientation. These stereotypes have profound implications for the economic, political, social, and environmental opportunities and challenges faced by individuals of both genders.

### **1.3. PERCEPTION OF YOUTH TOWARDS GENDER ROLES AND GENDER PORTRAYALS**

The perception of adolescents on the portrayal of women in TV ads is discovered and it is disclosed that most of the respondents felt that ads show women in stereotype roles, and they had not represented the personality of Indian women (Aruna et.al, 2008). In the ads, the presence of a female model inspired the liking of both the genders for a particular type of product. While boys said that the model in the ads stays on their mind, and they want women should be projected in fashionable and glamorous roles whereas girls think that their fashion trends are followed by these models and the most of women want that they should be shown as confident, independent and empowered women. The portrayal of gender influences the society views about the particular role of men and women and also affects the younger people more because they learn easily and also about gender behaviour and attitude.

Young people are particularly susceptible to advertising influence due to their novelty, curiosity, and lack of experience as consumers, making them prime targets for advertisements. During the formative stage of discovering their values and identities, advertisers often emphasize themes of sexuality and physical attractiveness to sell products. Women in ads are frequently depicted as groomed, passive consumers, perpetuating outdated ideals of womanhood (Bahuguna, 1997). The inclusion of film personalities in ads further appeals to youth. Most ads portray women in domestic roles, while men are depicted as decision-makers and in superior positions. Women are shown as users of products but rarely as creators, unlike men who are represented in both roles. Television ad repetition leaves a lasting impression on young minds, influencing their perceptions. In surveys, girls express a desire for confident, independent female portrayals, while boys prefer glamorous depictions. Ads rarely depict women in diverse career settings, reinforcing traditional gender roles. Despite some progress, women are still largely shown in decorative roles rather than as professionals (Zotos & Lysonski, 1994). Women are often portrayed in traditional mother and wife roles, which does not accurately reflect modern women's realities (Rajagopal & Gales, 2002).

Historically, India has adhered to traditional patriarchal norms, shaping women's portrayal in advertising as subservient to male dominance (Sharda, 2014). In the late 1970s, advertisements depicted women conforming to societal ideals of the perfect homemaker, primarily confined to domestic roles and financially dependent on men (Gupta, 2012; Yakkaldevi, 2014). Often objectified and lacking individual identity, women were portrayed mainly as sex symbols. The newer generation showed less aversion to such portrayals of women in decorative roles (Das & Sharma, 2017). With globalization and the influence of Western culture, perceptions began to modernize, challenging the traditional image of the self-sacrificing husband-worshipper while retaining some cultural elements. Some ads portrayed women in independent roles, but they are shown in fashionable, glamorous, decorative and sex object and very less as career oriented. India is a patriarchal society where importance is given to so much to family and the new generation watch their family members their roles through which they act the same by seeing them.

Contemporary independent women prefer advertisements depicting women as confident, independent, and career-oriented rather than mere decorative objects (Aruna et.al, 2008).

## 2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The impact of media in our lives can be seen very easily and we all know the media targets are youth or young generation. Youth is the most valuable segment of the population and so their perception shows the reality represent the present of a country. Studying the perceptions of enthusiastic, vibrant, innovative, and dynamic individuals is crucial as they represent the most valuable human resource for fostering a nation's economic, cultural, and political development. Understanding their views on gender roles is particularly important given their strong passion, motivation, and willpower. The ads perform the functions of making the attitudes and behaviour of the viewer's and provides the message to the audience.

Advertising provides information, provides attention to and designed the ads which promotes the idea of selling products, or service. In everyday life many people come in the contact of various ads. Television is a very important tool and has a tremendous effect in forming the opinion and very resourceful medium of edutainment. Television advertising reaches too many masses audience. The study proposes to select the ads because ads are very persuasive, eye catching and attracts the people easily. The evolving trends in advertising have shifted perceptions towards gender roles, yet disparities persist. Women are often depicted in traditional homemaking roles, while men continue to be portrayed as the primary breadwinners of the family. When men and women appear together in same ad, we can see that women are shown in more of submissive and men are shown more as dominant. When women are shown in the ads alone, we can easily identify that the stereotype of the female as they are shown as sex object and on the other hand men are shown as strong and superior to women.

In television ads, men are always portrayed in superior authority, dominance, control and intelligent whereas women are shown all opposite. Recently the trends have been changing now women are not shown only in house maker role but more in decorative role whereas men roles are also changing they are also seen in kitchen and taking caring of kids. Hence, it is crucial to investigate the youth's perception of gender roles in Indian TV ads by examining the views of young students based on their gender, age, and interests. This will be achieved using semi-structured questionnaires and knowledge inventory tests. So, this study finds out how young students perceive the roles which are shown them in the ads.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for conducting the study entitled "Analysing Gender Role Perceptions in Indian Television Advertisements: A Study in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh", was undertaken to

understand the perception on the depiction of men and women portrayed in the advertisements on television. The images, roles and trends men and women portray in various advertisements was studied.

### 3.1. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To explore the perception of the youth concerning the gender roles, stereotypes, and portrayals in selected Indian television ads
- To study the portrayal of gender in the selected Indian television ads in the prime time.

- To build an understanding on the changing trends in the Indian television ads during the prime time.

### 3.2. LOCALE

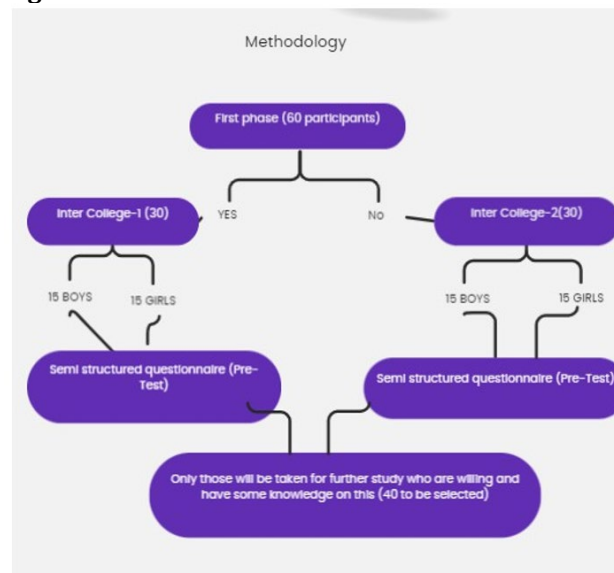
The present study entitled “Understanding the Perception about the Gender Roles in Indian Television Ads: A Study in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh” will be conducted in Mathura. Mathura is in the northern region of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. It lies between parallels of latitudes of 27°14' north to 27°58' north and its longitude extension 77°17' east to 77°58' east. It is primarily a Hindu dominated city with the Muslim population confining only to a small portion. Hinduism is the majority religion in Mathura city with 81.54 % whereas Islam is the second most popular religion in the city of Mathura with 17.22 % (Census of India, 2011).

### 3.3. Phases of the study

**The current study was carried out in two stages:**

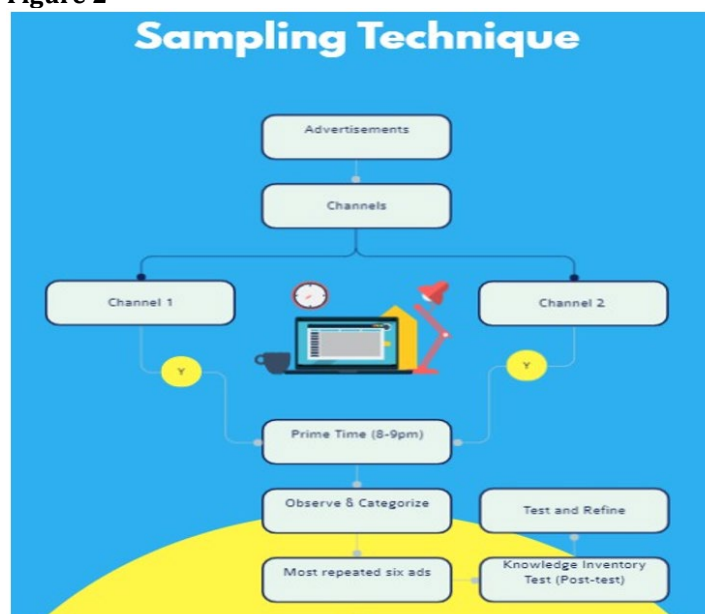
- 1) **Phases-1:** The study in this phase focused on the collecting data on the information and understanding of the respondents according to our first two objectives. The study will be conducted with the sample size of 60 respondents ranging from the age group from 15-19 years of age. For this phase semi structured questionnaire will be used as pre-test.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Methodology

- 2) **Phases-2:** The study in this phase was conducted on a sample of 40 respondents. The focus was on the understanding the changing trends in Indian television during prime time. Two top rated private Television Hindi & English general entertainment channels (GECs) will be selected based on their TRP ratings. Ads will be watched during the prime time (8-9pm). The six ads will be selected from top three high rated channels based on highest TRP and in which six ads will be selected based on repetition during the prime time (8-9pm). The tool will be knowledge inventory Post-test for collecting the viewpoints of respondents.

**Figure 2****Figure 2** Sampling Technique

### 3.4. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

#### 3.4.1. SAMPLE SIZE

**Phase-1:** To obtain a comprehensive understanding of respondents' perceptions regarding gender portrayal in Indian TV, a purposive sample of 60 participants was chosen. The sample consisted of an equal number of males and females aged between 15 and 19 years. Semi structured questionnaire was used as pre-test.

**Table 1**

Table 1 Population Segment	
POPULATION SEGMENT	NUMBER
Males (15-19 years)	30
Females (15-19 years)	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>

**Phase-2:** To understand the changing trends of advertisements on television six ads were chosen for this phase and shown to 40 respondents which was selected. The sample comprised of equal number of males and females. Knowledge inventory test was used as post-test. The six ads selected were as follows:

- Spotify Wrapped\_Wedding to Traffic Well Played India
- Dabur Honey-India's No.1 Pure Honey
- New Year's Eve-Expectations Vs Reality
- Sensodyne
- Vaseline Deep Restore Body
- Voot kids\_Mati Mein Achhai

### 3.4.2. INCLUSION CRITERIA

Mathura is a holy city. The literacy rate for male and female are 81.97 and 56.89%. The gap between male and female literacy is a sensitive indicator of social discrimination (Kaushik & Kaushik, 2012). Mathura is on 37th position of literacy rate as compared to other districts in Uttar Pradesh (Census of India, 2011). So, it will be interesting to understand the perception of both genders (male and female) on gender roles and stereotypes. The young school students are chosen as a sample in this study because they represent the next generation, and their perceptions and attitudes are crucial in understanding the evolving dynamics of cultural and social issues. In a city like Mathura, where traditional values of Hinduism and patriarchy are deeply embedded, young students can provide valuable insights into how these influences shape their views on key issues and stereotypes. Additionally, examining their reactions to Indian television ads can reveal how media impacts their perspectives while growing up in this unique environment.

Two General Entertainment channels with the highest TRP were chosen. The timing chosen is between 8 pm- 9 pm as this comes as part of prime-time broadcasting (Rajagopal, 1993). The six ads chosen for the research were the most frequently aired ads during the chosen time slot of 8pm- 9pm.

### 3.4.3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Purposive sampling technique was used in form to get the representative sample. Purposive sampling in this study involved selecting participants based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives, such as age, gender, and socio-economic background. This method was chosen to ensure that the sample represented diverse perspectives on advertising and perception within Mathura's unique cultural milieu. Participants were chosen deliberately to capture a range of experiences and viewpoints that could enrich the understanding of how advertising influences perceptions among local young students. It was essential to capture this idea from the lens of the females as well as male students, as male students have varied experiences on the exposure to ads.

The sample size of 60 participants was determined based on several considerations. Firstly, the aim was to achieve data saturation, which means gathering enough information to thoroughly explore all relevant themes and perspectives within the study's scope. This ensures that the findings are comprehensive and reflective of the diversity of opinions present in the population.

Secondly, the sample size balanced feasibility with the depth required for analysis. Semi structured questionnaire focuses on depth rather than breadth, aiming to delve deeply into participants' experiences and interpretations. A sample size of 60 was deemed sufficient to achieve this depth while remaining manageable in terms of resources and time constraints. Plus, post-test using the Knowledge Inventory Test was also used with the 40 participants (20 each from male and female), which justify small sample size as it likely provided robust insights and enable reliable conclusions about advertising perceptions specifically within the cultural context of Mathura.

Overall, purposive sampling and the choice of a sample size of 60 were deliberate decisions aimed at ensuring the study captured rich, varied insights into how advertising shapes perceptions and also changing trends of advertisements in Mathura. These methodological choices contribute to the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

### 3.5. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Around 40 advertisements were watched during a period of 15 days out of which six ads were chosen based on repetition. For the perception of youth of Mathura, a semi-structured questionnaire was administered. After finalizing the questionnaire, it was distributed in schools and data collection was carried out. The data collection was done on weekdays during the month of January.

### 3.6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to a certain age group of 15-19 years.

The study is based on the perceptions and opinions of youth, and it can change over the period and future situations.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research was carried out in two stages. The initial phase involved a semi structured questionnaire used as pre-test and the second phase was conducted in Post-test method with a Knowledge Inventory Test.

Purposive sampling was used for the collection of data. In order to have a wider coverage and in- depth study, a purposive sample of total 60 respondents were chosen. The research tool was implemented with a total sample of 60 respondents. For exploring the perception of youth concerning the gender roles, stereotypes and portrayals in Indian Ads, a semi structured questionnaire was used.

#### The Salient Findings of The Study Are:

##### PHASE 1

##### Demographic profile of the respondents

- Equal number of male and female respondents were chosen as the sample for the study i.e. 30 male and 30 female respondents making a total of 60 respondents.
- Maximum number of male (50%) respondents belonged to 16 years old and maximum number of female (30%) belonged to 16 to 18 years old.
- Maximum numbers of male respondents (60%) and female respondents (50%) were in class 11th standard.

##### Tele-viewing patterns of respondents

- 100% of male and female respondents watch the television.
- Most of the male respondents (67%) watch television for one to two hour and most of the female respondents (73%) watch television for one to two hours.
- About 84% of female respondents and 40% of male respondents watch entertainment channel.
- Maximum number of boys (40%) watch sports programme and maximum number of girls (40%) watch entertainment programmes followed by sports, music, news and movie channels.
- 100% of male and female respondents carefully listened to and watched ads on television. Most of the female respondents (33%) watch Fair Lovely ad whereas 13% of male respondents watch ads like Sensodyne, Hero Motor cup and Zomato on the television.

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### **Opinions of respondents on central images and settings shown in Indian Television ads**

- About 33 % of female respondents (33%) said that Lux soap ad focused more on women whereas 27% male respondents said that Fair Lovely ads focused on women as a central image which is followed by Hero motor cup, Boroplus, Surf excel, green tea and Sensodyne.
- Majority of female respondents (34%) and male respondents (17%) said that Garnier men ads focused more on men as central image followed by Zomato and Swiggy, Fairness handsome, Netflix ads, Fogg Perfume, Honda Activa and Dollar Big Boss.
- According to most of female respondents (80%) and male respondents (67%) believe that women are shown mostly in housewife setting that means within the kitchen whereas only 33% male respondents and 3% female respondents said that women are shown mostly outside of home as independent women i.e. working women. About 77% of female respondents and 33% of male respondents said that men are shown mostly as bread earner of the family whereas only 33% male respondents and 3% female respondents said men are shown mostly as independent men that means working outside and not depending on others.

### **Perception mapping of viewers about the roles, portrayals of men and women in Indian Television Ads**

- Majority of female respondents (37%) and male respondents (17%) perceive that woman are portrayed mostly as housewife in ads on the television. 60% of male respondents and 30% female respondents said that men are shown as the head of the family.
- About 47% of female respondents and 30% of male respondents believe that women have been shown in a role of housewife. Majority of female respondents (47%) and 17% female respondents said that men have been shown as a bread earner of the family role.

### **Opinion on satisfaction of image of women and men portrayed in ads on Indian Television**

- Most of the male respondents (90%) and female respondents (83%) are satisfied with the image of women being portrayed in the ads. 83% of male respondents and 74% of female respondents (74%) said that they are getting equal roles like men which means that now a days images of women have been improvised as compared to earlier times where they were only shown in limited roles which were less valued than men.
- Majority of female respondents 97% and male respondents 77% are satisfied with the image of men portrayed in the ads. Majority of female respondents 64% and male respondents 20% said that they are satisfied with the image of men because of equal roles that now a days has been shared by men like women. Henceforth, such advertising (femvertising) has been linked to potential increases in a brand's revenue (Francesca Sobande, 2019) and favorable responses from female target audiences (Sara Champlin et al., 2019). Contemporary branding and advertising increasingly emphasize intangible aspects such as emotions, values, and empowerment, thereby commodifying these elements over tangible goods (Sarah Banet-Weiser, 2012).

### **Understanding their perspectives on the kind of roles to be presented by women and men in the ads**

- 53% of the male respondents and 27% of the female respondents said that women should be performed the role of independent women in the ads whereas 27% male and 10% female respondents said that women should play a role of housewife within the ads. Most of the female respondents 67% and 37% male respondents said that men should play a role of home maker which means helping in household chores as in kitchen, laundry etc.

### **Opinion on changing trends of men and women in the ads**

- Trends are changing for men and women in the ads as improvement can be seen. Now a days roles are being interchanging. Trends means changing in situations or behaviour in the ad Both male respondents (83%) and female respondents (50%) agreed on the changing trends in the ads. 24% male respondents give the example of those ads in which trends can be seen i.e. Airtel ad followed by Ghari soap, I-phone, Colgate max fresh, Life buoy soap, Sensodyne whereas only 17 % female respondents said that Ghari soap ad.
- Now women are shown in equal status with men like working with outside whereas men are shown now more connected to their kids and most of the time they take care of their family when wife is working outside.

### **Opinion on characteristics of ads**

- It was felt that 50% of male respondents (50%) and 17% of female respondents said that characteristics of good ads are that equal roles should be given to both male and female which further promotes the gender equality whereas only 30% female respondents and 20% male respondents said that they should provide good message to society which is relevant to everyone.

## **5. DISCUSSION: PHASE 1**

Through the findings we delve into how television advertising shapes and is perceived through gender roles in Mathura. With a balanced representation of 30 male and 30 female participants, primarily teenagers in class 11, the demographic profile underscores a comprehensive exploration of youthful perspectives. Television viewing habits revealed a widespread consumption of television among respondents, with males favoring sports channels and females leaning towards entertainment channels. Both genders exhibited attentiveness to advertisements, with distinct preferences noted; females were drawn to products like Fair Lovely, while males showed interest in a variety of advertised items. Perceptions of central ad images highlighted gender-specific interpretations: females tended to identify with ads depicting women in domestic roles, whereas males often perceived men as primary breadwinners. Despite these differences, satisfaction with women's portrayal in ads was generally positive, indicating a perceived improvement in gender role depiction and a gradual shift towards greater gender equality in advertising. Respondents acknowledged evolving trends in ad portrayals, citing examples such as Airtel and Ghari soap ads as indicative of changing norms. There was a collective expectation for ads to advocate gender equality and convey positive societal messages, although viewpoints on what constitutes an "ideal" advertisement varied slightly between genders.

Summarizing, the study provides a nuanced examination of how gender roles are represented and interpreted in television advertising within the cultural context of Mathura. It sheds light on ongoing transformations towards more equitable depictions while also revealing enduring stereotypes and differing perspectives on effective advertising characteristics. These findings contribute significantly to broader discussions on gender representation in media and underscore the role of advertising in shaping societal norms and perceptions.

### **Phase2**

For studying the portrayal of gender and to build an understanding on the changing trend in the selected Indian television ads in the prime time, around 40 ads were watched during a period of 15 days out of which six ads were selected based on the repetition. Those ads were selected from two channels which has highest TRP. A purposive sample of total 40 respondents was chosen based on interest and who has little knowledge about the ads. The research tool was implemented with a total sample of 40 respondents. For the purpose of collecting the required data on the understanding on the changing trends in the selected Indian Television ads, a knowledge inventory test was used.

### **Demographic profile of the respondents**

- Equal number of male and female respondents were chosen as the sample for the study i.e. 20 male and 20 female respondents making a total of 40 respondents.
- Majority of male respondents (50%) and female respondents (30%) are of age of 17 years old.
- Maximum numbers of male and female respondents were e in 11th standard. 50% female respondents and 40% male respondents were in 12th standard.

### **Image of women and men in selected advertisements on television**

#### **Spotify Wrapped\_Wedding to Traffic Well Played India Ad**

- According to the respondents the three prominent images of women which are built among the viewer's mind were of confident, health conscious and independent. Majority of female respondents (60%) and male respondents (50%) said that image of women has been portrayed very confident.
- According to the respondents the three prominent images of men which are built among the viewer's mind were of funny nature, concerned and confident. 60% of male and 45% of female respondents said that men are shown mostly in funny nature.
- If we see the image of women the respondents perceived the Spotify ad, on the complete women as confident and independent. So, it would not be wrong to say that the ad does justice or show the right information about modern women.

#### **Dabur Honey-India's No.1 Pure Honey ad**

- The participants expressed their views on the portrayal of women in ads shown as responsible, concerned/protective and dominating image, which generates a very bold image in the viewer's mind. According to 55% of male respondents and 45% of female respondents said that women are shown more in responsible image.
- According to the respondent's image of men like family oriented, family oriented and caring/loving shown in this ad. Majority of female

respondents (90%) and male respondents (75%) said that men are shown more as family oriented.

#### **New Year's Eve-Expectations Vs Reality Netflix ad**

- The respondents stated that the image of women in the ad is shown as a sexy/attractive, confident and smart, who generates complete women i.e. beauty with brain image in the viewer's mind. Majority of female respondents (50%) and male respondents (45%) said that women are shown in more in sexy and attractive in image.
- The respondents stated that the image of men in the ad is shown are funny/flirtatious and smart. Most of the female respondents (100%) and male respondents (90%) said that men are shown as funny and flirtatious.

#### **Sensodyne ad**

- Mostly male respondents (65%) and female respondents (50%) said that image of women in this ad was shown as concerned and protective. Majority of male respondents (90%) and female respondents (75%) said that men are shown more as in concerned image in the ad.

#### **Vaseline Deep Restore Body ad**

- According to the respondents the images which comes out from this ad were sexy/attractive, responsible, confident, and smart. About 50% of female respondents and 40% of male respondents said that women are shown more as sexy and attractive. Majority of male respondents (100%) and female respondents (100%) said that image of men are shown as more in confident in this ad.

#### **Voot kids\_Masti Mein Achhai ad**

- The respondents stated that the image of women shown in this ad were family oriented, loving/caring, responsible nature and smart. Mostly female (40%) and male respondents (35%) said that women are shown in more as family oriented in this ad.
- The most commonly image shown in this as are of responsible, family oriented and caring/loving. Mostly of female (60%) and male respondents (50%) said that image of men is shown as responsible.

#### **Roles performed by women and men in the ads**

##### **Spotify Wrapped\_Wedding to Traffic Well Played India ad**

- The roles which come out of knowledge inventory test of women were bridal role, trainer and housewife. According to 75% of female respondents and 50% of male respondents said that role performed by women in this ad was mainly of bridal means in wedding look.
- The roles which come out of knowledge inventory test were delivery boy, independent, educated men and driver. Majority of female respondents (40%) and 25% male respondents said that role performed by men are delivery boy.

##### **Dabur Honey-India's No.1 Pure Honey ad**

- Majority of male respondents (90%) and female respondents (80%) said that women played the role of housewife in the ad. Majority of female respondents (90%) and male respondents (85%) said that role performed by men were of husband.

### **New Year's Eve-Expectations Vs Reality Netflix ad**

- The respondents perceived the role of women as a coolest girl, independent and modern girls. Majority of female (55%) and male respondents (50%) said that women play the role of coolest girls in this ad means don't care about society and independent.
- All the respondents perceived the role of men as a college going boys (100%).

### **Sensodyne ad**

- Female 80% and male respondents (65%) said that women are shown in more in roles of doctor whereas majority of both male (100%) and female respondents (100%) said that men play the role of patient in this ad.

### **Vaseline ad Vaseline Deep Restore Body ad**

- The respondents perceived the role of women as owner and independent roles. Majority of male (100%) and female respondents (100%) said that women are shown in more in role of owner in this ad means women has been in more independent roles.
- The respondents perceived the role of men as a servant and manager. Mostly male respondents (65%) and female respondents (55%) said that role performed by men are manager in this ad whereas 45% female and 35% male respondents said that men play the role of servant in this ad.

### **Voot kids\_Masti Mein Achhai ad**

- According to the survey, the respondents stated that the role of women as independent, housewife and mother. Mostly 60% male respondents (60%) and female respondents (50%) said that women performed the role of independent women.
- Majority of female respondents (60%) and male respondents (45%) said that role performed by men are of father whereas 55% male and 40% female respondents said that men play the role of husband in this ad. The roles which are perceived by the viewers are more on the character based not on the gender.

### **Type of Setting used for women and men in the ads**

#### **Spotify Wrapped\_Wedding to Traffic Well Played India**

- 85% of male and 75% of female respondents said that women were shown in more on outside of the road as compared to inside home setting. Majority of female (90%) and male (80%) respondents said that men are been used in the outside setting.
- According to the respondents the overall type of setting for women in the ads were of outside the home which same goes for men as well.

#### **Dabur Honey-India's No.1 Pure Honey ad**

- According to the respondents the overall setting used for men and women were of home setting. Mostly male (100%) and female respondents (100%) said that setting used for women is the home setting. Majority of male (100%) and female respondents (100%) said that men are shown in the home setting in this ad.

### **New Year's Eve-Expectations Vs Reality Netflix ad**

- About (80%) of male and (60%) of female respondents (60%) said that setting used for women is more of club setting. Majority of female respondents (75%) and male respondents (25%) said that men are shown in the setting of outside of home setting.
- The respondents perceived the image of a modern girl and modern boy from this ad.

### **Sensodyne ad**

Majority of both male (100%) and female (100%) said that women are shown in more of hospital settings. Majority of male respondents (80%) and female respondents (65%) said that men are shown in office setting.

### **Vaseline Deep Restore Body ad**

- Majority of female (90%) and male respondents (75%) said that setting used for women is office setting followed by outside of home. Mostly of female respondents (85%) and male respondents (70%) said that men are shown in office setting. The respondents perceived the image of women and men that equal roles are being given now both are working outside.

### **Voot kids\_Masti Mein Achhai ad**

- Mostly male respondents (95%) and female respondents (80%) said that setting used for women in this ad are kitchen setting where most male respondents (85%) and female respondents (30%) said that men were shown in kitchen setting. Both shown at one place.

### **Stereotypes related to women and men in selected ads on television**

#### **Spotify Wrapped\_Wedding to Traffic Well Played India ad**

- The stereotypes related to women were wearing short clothes, number of women is more than men, concerned about health and figure and shown in more grooming. About 50% female respondents and 30 % male respondents said that women were wearing short clothes in the ad. Stereotypes related to men were dancing on the road, representation of men was less than women and roles should be more given to the men. 65% male respondents and 20% female respondents said that men representation was very less than women.

### **Dabur Honey-India's No.1 Pure Honey ad**

- Majority of female respondents (55%) and male respondents (5%) said that women were shown in the role of housewife. Majority of male respondents (60%) and female respondents (30%) said that men shown in submissive role.

### **New Year's Eve-Expectations Vs Reality Netflix ad**

- About 55% of female respondents and male respondents 25% said that women shown in short clothes. Majority of male respondents (80%) and female respondents (20%) said that partiality was shown in the ad with the men whereas 70% female respondents and 15% male respondents believe that men was shown flirty in nature. In this we can see that respondents are perceiving on women clothes and on the other hand rights of men i.e. on the partiality.

### **Sensodyne ad**

- Majority of female respondents (95%) and male respondents (5%) said that women shown more independent in the ad whereas most of male

90% respondents said that women shown in higher role than men within the ad. About (90%) of male and female (10%) respondents said that men were not shown in superior roles.

#### **Vaseline Deep Restore Body ad**

- Majority of female respondents (50%) and male respondents (30%) said that women were wearing short clothes according to weather. Mostly 75% female and 35% male respondents said that men should provide equal roles as compared to women.

#### **Voot kids\_Masti Mein Achhai ad**

- Mostly female respondents (45%) and male respondents (30%) said that women shown in motherhood. Majority of male respondents (45%) and female respondents (25%) said that men were shown in kitchen. As we can see the trends are changing.

#### **Gender beliefs of the people regarding the relevance of the ads in real life**

##### **Relevance of ads in today's life/society**

65% of the respondents said that ads are very relevant to today's life/society. According to them ads has an impact on viewers which left mark on the audience.

##### **Change in the image of women in ads representing the real image of the women**

According to 67% respondents they believe in change in the portrayal of images of women in the ads as compared to the past situations. According to the respondents now the status of women has been changing in ads now they are also shown in dominant image and now started showing them as responsible, smart, intelligent and independent. According to both male and female respondents stated that ads are not made on based on reality of the society and hence have no similarities with the real life.

##### **Difference between T.V imagery and the reality**

67% of the respondents felt that there is a difference between Television world and in the real world. Television does not show the reality of actual life it is something beyond imaginable where all things are so perfect but in real life it is not like that so there is a huge gap between what TV shows. Television does not show the real image of men and women. The respondents said that reality is very far from what TV shows which means it shows something else which is not present in real world, and which makes us think that it is happening in real world as well.

##### **Reinforcement of stereotyped images of men and women**

Overall, there was mixed reaction to the question that do the advertisements on the television reinforce the stereotypical image of men and women. 65% of the respondents believe that ad reinforce the stereotyped images of men and women.

##### **Trends changing for women and men**

65% of the respondents believe that trends are changing for women and men in the ads. 59% female respondents and 43% male respondents said that there has been change in status and in roles of women and men which can be seen in some advertisements. Ads like of sanitary pad, Taaza Tea, Spotify, Raymond, Honda Activa and Close Max Fresh giving us the message of change in the society.

##### **Perception of respondents regarding future portrayal of women and men in advertisements on Television.**

The respondents stated that the ads should showcase as more responsible, sensitive, family oriented, take caring of parents and looking after his children

rather than flirtatious and anger. The respondents also felt that they should provide those roles also like caring, loving, responsible, respecting women in their positions and should portray good image for society which also provide good message to society. As television image leaves an impact on young ones. It motivates the society and draw eyeballs towards the ads. So, it is very important for ad agency to come up with the ads which provide good message of equality to society, and which are also responsible towards country and in particular towards the people who are watching it. The advertisements of today should be gender sensitive which means there should be no gender discrimination between both the sexes. Thus, the advertisement companies can explore their options to come up with the more appealing ads or those ads which are gender biased which would give them better returns.

### **Discussion: Phase 2**

Findings highlight several significant observations. Firstly, both male and female respondents noted evolving gender roles in advertisements. Women were frequently depicted as confident, independent, and responsible, challenging traditional stereotypes of housewives or decorative figures. This reflects a positive shift towards more empowered portrayals aligned with modern societal expectations. Conversely, while men were also shown in diverse roles from family-oriented to professional, there was a persistent stereotype of men as funny or flirtatious, suggesting a slower evolution in representations compared to women. This dual portrayal underscores ongoing gender dynamics and societal expectations, where traditional roles for men remain somewhat entrenched despite some portrayal diversity. The study also reveals discrepancies between television imagery and real-world gender dynamics, with respondents expressing skepticism about the accuracy of portrayals. This suggests a critical awareness among viewers regarding the influence of media on societal norms and values. Moreover, respondents highlighted the need for advertisements to be more sensitive and responsible in their gender portrayals, advocating for equal representation and challenging stereotypes. This reflects a growing demand for advertising content that not only entertains but also contributes positively to societal perceptions and values. In conclusion, while there are discernible changes in how gender is portrayed in Indian television advertisements, there remains room for improvement in achieving more balanced and nuanced representations that reflect the diversity and complexity of real-life gender roles and identities.

## **6. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings concerning viewers' responses and opinions regarding their perceptions of television advertisements, the following recommendations are suggested:

- As the ads are watched by many people of different age groups, they should not portray any negative image for men and women, they should show the equality among the gender which further leads to good message to society and there will be no discrimination.
- The ads should be more realistic based not hypothetical based, because people can't
- connect to those ads.
- Gender as a subject should be thought in the schools and the concept of gender should be more strengthened in youth which will further take this new knowledge to their families and promote the gender equality.

- Ads should not show any discrimination between genders with respect to settings, work, occupation within the ads as it influences the society.
- No Vulgarity and no objectification should be the mantra of the ads as they are watched by all kinds of audiences which also include the children and kids.

## 7. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

- Data can be collected from the different age groups also like elderly people or adult because collecting their perception will help us in understanding that what they have known about the gender and gender roles.
- Data should be collected from those people who have prior knowledge of gender studies because that it will make your result and findings more interesting.
- There are very few studies on portrayal of men in the ads because men are used in more of comparison manner but there are no studies on them. Therefore, this gap should be studies.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In the exploration of how television advertising shapes and reflects gender roles in Mathura, this study offers a nuanced perspective on evolving societal norms and enduring stereotypes. By including a balanced demographic of teenagers, the research delves into diverse youthful viewpoints, highlighting widespread television consumption and distinct gender-based content preferences. Females are increasingly portrayed as confident and independent in advertisements, challenging traditional roles assigned to them, which signifies a positive trend towards more empowered representations aligned with modern expectations. Conversely, male characters often still embody stereotypes of humor and flirtation, indicating a slower evolution in depictions compared to their female counterparts.

The study underscores a significant disparity between the portrayals of gender roles on television and the realities of gender dynamics in everyday life. This disjunction prompts critical viewer awareness of how media influences societal norms, with respondents expressing skepticism about the accuracy and relevance of these portrayals. Such awareness among viewers suggests a growing consciousness of the role media plays in shaping cultural expectations, particularly regarding gender.

Participants in the study advocate for advertisements to adopt more sensitive and equitable representations of gender, reflecting a broader societal demand for content that not only entertains but also positively contributes to perceptions and values. There is a collective call for advertising to move beyond traditional stereotypes and embrace more diverse and realistic depictions of gender roles. This reflects evolving attitudes towards gender equality and underscores the potential of advertising to influence social change by promoting inclusive and respectful portrayals.

While the study identifies positive shifts in how women are portrayed in Indian television advertisements, it also highlights ongoing challenges. Despite advancements in depicting women as independent and capable, traditional stereotypes persist, particularly in the portrayal of men. This dual portrayal of gender roles reflects deeper societal expectations and norms that are slower to

change, indicating a need for continued efforts towards more balanced and nuanced representations.

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize the complex interplay between television advertising and societal perceptions of gender roles. It illustrates that while progress has been made towards more empowering portrayals of women, there remains a critical need for advertisements to accurately reflect the diversity and complexity of real-life gender identities and roles. By critically analyzing these findings, advertisers and media practitioners can better understand their role in influencing societal norms and contribute to a more inclusive and respectful media environment. This study contributes to broader discussions on gender representation in media and underscores the potential of advertising to drive positive social change by challenging stereotypes and promoting equality.

### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

None.

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