

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

How wrong is it for a woman to expect the man to build the world she wants rather than to create it herself? – Anais Nin

This chapter concludes the research work by reassessing the main issues that are discussed in the preceding chapters. After studying the print, electronic and cyber images of women in marketing literature, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The advertisers use many appeals to attract the attention of the viewers. Some of these appeals are fear, comfort, pleasure, appetite, sex/romance, humour, emotion, rationality, security, friendship and happiness. For ex. in the print advertisement of the timesmatri.com, the use of fear appeal is made by showing a question mark on the forehead of a woman who seems worried regarding marriage. (Print ad.1) The use of sex appeal in advertising is not new. It is observed that what is new is the intensity of such appeals and the increasing number and the variety of products being advertised with sexual overtones. For ex. in the print advertisement of silk museum shopping mall, the advertisers have used sex appeal by showing a woman by exposing her breast and in a sleeping position. (Print ad.2) A woman is presented with the sex appeal in the print advertisement of the Nokia 3230 model where a woman states her style by exposing her navel. This is definitely sexual objectification of a woman. (Print ad.3) The same is the case in the print advertisement WHITE MISCHIEF Holidays where a young man looks through his x-ray glasses at the young women with bra and panty on the beach. (Print ad.5) The print advertisement of the durian furniture also shows a woman sleeping on the furniture itself and trying to attract the attention of the customers in a seducing mood with sleeveless top and thigh length dress. (Print ad.7) Beauty and romance appeal go hand in hand especially in the advertisements of skin cream and shampoo. For ex. in the print advertisement of a Clinic All Clear- Anti Dandruff Shampoo beauty and romance appeal are combined together to attract the attention of the potential buyers. (Print ad.10)

The advertisements appearing in the media with young women as models tend to convey that new generation women are available to expose their body if they are paid for it. There is hardly any justification or relevance to advertise a new brand of cigarette, after-shave lotion or men's suiting with the help of semi-nude female models. There are many products, which have no relevance to women but they are marketed with the help of vulgarized advertisements using beautiful female models.

In a capitalist society, profit becomes the main motive and the needs and necessities of the consumers take the secondary place. In such a society, individuals are reduced to the level of mere commodities. The use of female models for advertising all kinds of products is a planned and cleverly worked out strategy to keep customers' interest alive for promoting sales. The media show multitudes of advertisements exhibiting stereotype portrayal of women. The media have been showing women in advertisements in such a way that one gets the image of women with their commoditization as the sex object. The advertisers have been making use of women from 4 to 80 years in advertisements as per their own business tactics in print, electronic and cyber media. Whenever a new product is launched in a market- may it be a car or a mobile- it is advertised with the help of female models. It has been the already proved fact that the media have been misrepresenting women. It is observed that the advertising industry has been swept by the market forces and the result is that sexist display depicting women in demeaning manner has become the norm. The advertising has not kept up with the times in portraying women in the wide variety of roles they play in today's world. So it is high time for us to capture gender related dimensions in any organization and make sure that resources from women are utilized effectively. The current trend in advertising is that women are depicted as well-groomed, passive recipients of consumerism. The result of the depiction is that it not

only distorts reality but also enforce outdated and gender-biased ideals of womanhood. The superwoman image of today's media is as dangerous a myth as the self-denigrating, sacrificing woman of the past and it needs to be addressed with equal seriousness. The media have been deliberately depicting women to perpetuate the traditional mindset regarding women's capacities and responsibilities. There is a need for the media to serve to strengthen and reinforce the women's capabilities and change the existing stereotypes regarding women's role and standing in society. There is also the need to end discrimination and other practices harmful to women. It is observed that by using women in advertisements, women's dignity, self-esteem, psychological and emotional health are undermined. Print, electronic and cyber media portray patriarchy in the advertisements which is the pre-dominant ideology of Indian society. The print, electronic and cyber images are different from each other as these media have their own structure and their functioning is different from each other. The images of women exhibited by the print media are different from those of electronic images. Both print and electronic media have their own advantages and disadvantages. Print images of women have longer life span than electronic images. However, electronic media transcend the barriers of literacy. This means that educated as well as uneducated viewers can enjoy television. On the other hand, newspapers can be read only by those who are educated. The images are rapidly spread by educated viewers. Electronic images have direct and immediate impact on the minds of the viewers as television is an audio-visual medium. Television has its own special feature as it has its intrusion value which is not available with the newspapers. Newspapers and television are different from each other in respect to the cost of advertising. This is because of the different nature of the two. The rates of newspaper advertising are according to the space occupied by the advertisement in

centimeters/inches. On the other hand, television advertisements are charged as per the time of telecast and the time duration of a particular advertisement. As these advertisements are directed towards targeted audience, time slots provided for them also counts much not only for the advertisers but also for the channels. For ex. the television advertisements during cricket matches like Indian Premier League in the initial stage of the tournament are charged less as the viewing public is limited. However, during the semi-final and final matches, the rates per second are very high because of the reach that a particular advertised product gets across the public. At the same time, growing popularity of television and the ever increasing number of channels and the attraction of the young generation towards television also make a suitable medium for the advertisers. On the other hand, newspaper is only a visual medium and it has a short life. Therefore, newspaper advertising is comparatively cheaper than television. Television advertisers can make use of sophisticated technologies to present their products with their qualities by using various methods /techniques. On the other hand, newspaper advertising can make use of limited technology owing to its nature. Repetition can be used while advertising a product on television so as to attract the attention of the viewers during and between the two sections of a television serial. On the other hand, newspapers lack this facility owing to its own nature. Many times it happens that the readers read the papers quickly and are not attracted towards the messages/pictures in the advertisements. Therefore, for the newspaper advertisers, the specific spot in the newspaper is very important. Advertisers vie among themselves to capture the main spot on the main page. To top to this all, some newspapers today attach a special full page with advertisement before the front page.

To avoid the disturbance of the advertisements during the television serials, a new Digital Video Recorder (DVR) technology is used by the viewers which enables them to record the serial without advertisements and view it as they get time. However, the advertisers have found a solution to this and now they show the advertisements on the screen -vertical and horizontal- during the television serials. Therefore, the viewers are forced to look at these advertisements while they are watching serials. Cyber media i.e. the Internet advertising is the medium of the new millennium in comparison with print and electronic media. As goes its nature and structure as well as style of functioning, cyber images are totally different from those of print and electronic images of women. Cyber advertisements flash continuously on the computer screen one after the other with repetition and therefore they achieve their effects on the human mind quickly in comparison with the print and electronic images of women. At the same time, it must be considered that the web surfers are not disturbed by the flashing advertisements and they can continue their work. Even though the Internet is the new baby on the advertiser's block; it is growing fast with tremendous power with it. Viewers are now migrating from television to the Internet and e-mail. The Internet advertisers have the freedom of advertising their products by using various technologies like banners and flashes to attract the attention of the customers. Web surfers, while surfing for their needed information are showered with various flashes and banners of many advertisements. This is advantageous for the advertising companies as they are able to target the members of young generation. The Internet advertising makes use of semi-nude female models to attract the attention of the viewers. Therefore, there are many advertisements creating problems related to ethics and encroaching one's privacy. For the smooth functioning of the media and welfare of society, it is very necessary for any country that it should have an accepted

code of conduct. India is a large country and the media functions are carried out through many languages. Therefore, it is very difficult to find out a consensus among various segments of the media. It must be accepted that media is as important as other professions as medicine; law and engineering. Media ethics is a matter of concern for the whole world. As there are number of satellite channels launching in every corner of the world and the arrival of the international newspapers, it is the need of the time to have certain restrictions of ethics on print, electronic and cyber media. This is particularly needed when a company promotes a product or a service by using women from all age groups. The issues like invasion of one's privacy, truth telling, exploitation of women and violence against them in advertising must be dealt with seriously by evolving a strict code of conduct. At the same time, there is no any system of evaluation of the advertisements before they reach to society through print, electronic and cyber media. The question is whether children believe in the claims made in advertisements and do they understand them. It is difficult for the younger children, below the age of five years to distinguish between fantasy and reality and therefore, television is a seamless experience for them. They hardly know when a programme is over and an advertisement has begun. For ex. the television advertisements of male and female undergarments like Amul Macho are really objectionable (not used in the thesis) in which a woman is shown washing a male undergarment by exhibiting sexy movements and expressions on her face. Or in other Amul Macho advertisement, orangutan, an animal, enters the bedroom of a married young couple as they are sleeping and runs away with the female undergarment and wears it and starts dancing with its friends. A young woman runs out of her bedroom and she also is pleased to the act of the orangutan. The advertisers don't follow any

business ethics while advertising their products in newspapers, television and the Internet.

While studying the print, electronic and cyber media, the researcher noticed the following disadvantages.

Disadvantages of Newspaper Advertising

Short Life Span: People tend to read newspapers quickly and only once. The average life span of a daily newspaper is only 24 hours; so naturally the life span of a newspaper advertisement is also limited.

Clutter: Most newspapers are cluttered with advertisements, particularly on supermarket advertising days and on Sundays, when information overload reduces the effect of any single advertisement. Even supplemental inserts are now so thick that they represent additional clutter.

Limited Coverage of Certain Groups: Although newspapers have wide market coverage, certain market groups are not frequent readers. For example, newspapers traditionally have not reached a large part of the under -20- age group. Newspapers often cannot provide total market coverage for national advertisers because of cost and the fact that there are few national newspapers.

Poor Reproduction: Despite the introduction of new production technology, with the exception of special printing techniques and preprinted inserts, the reproduction quality of newspapers is poor especially for color advertisements, compared to magazine, brochures and direct mail. In addition, the speed necessary to compose a daily newspaper prevents the detailed preparation and care in production that is possible

with weekly or monthly publications. Even though, television is a powerful medium of advertising, it has the following disadvantages.

Disadvantages of Television Advertising

Clutter: Clutter remains the primary problem with television advertising especially on syndicated programmes. The average for syndicated programmes is 13 minutes and 56 seconds of commercials per hour. It may happen that there are more commercials than syndicated programmes. The rate is 14 minutes and 51 seconds per hour. On an average, a 30 minutes television programme is packed between 12-15 commercials. As a result, many viewers switch channels during these long commercial breaks. So, messages at the beginning or near the end of the break have the best recall. Those in the middle have virtually no impact. Therefore, clutter makes it difficult for a single message to have much influence.

Short Life Span: Television commercials have short life spans. Many of the television commercials are of 30 seconds. Occasionally an advertiser purchases 45-60 seconds advertisement, but these cases are rare.

Production Cost: Another disadvantage of television is that there is high cost per advertisement not only for the media time but also in terms of production cost. Although cost per person reached can be relatively low, the absolute cost can be restrictive, especially for small and midsize companies. Outstanding commercials are expensive to produce. Production fees account for the largest portion of the art. Production cost includes filming the commercial, paying the talent- writers, directors and actors. Other costs include editing and finishing, creative/ labor fees and music.

Wasted Reach: Advertising on television includes a great deal of wasted reach. It may happen that the commercials directed at an unresponsive or uninterested audience go in vain and may not fit in the plan of the advertisers. Television advertisers have to consider the audience to target with their advertised products and time slots for such advertising are very important. For ex. the products related to women and their world of beauty like washing machine, shampoo or the beauty soap are advertised during the daily serials which are generally in the evening when women are expected to be in front of the television. The advertisement may go waste if the targeted potential customers are not available. Therefore, it is very important for the advertisers to see that the right viewers are in front of the television at the right time when a particular product is advertised.

Rigidity: Production of a television commercial takes weeks for local spots and sometimes months for national network commercials. At the same time, it is not possible to make the last-minute adjustments in copy and visuals.

Intrusiveness: Television commercials intrude into the programmes and are theretofore more irritating than other forms of advertising. The high irritation level is what has led to mute and zap commercials and use DVRs that make it possible to eliminate the advertising altogether. However, the advertisers have found a new technique to use the strips of commercials to the bottom part the television when the programmes are running.

Repetition: Another disadvantage of television advertising is that the spots are shown so frequently that they quickly lose the ability to attract the viewer's interest. So the companies are forced to replace the advertisements with something new before the

consumers get tired of them. At the same time, marketing team wants to run an advertisement long enough to recover the production cost.

Disadvantages of Internet Advertising

Clutter: Internet clutter is one disadvantage. Due to the typical nature of the medium, there is simply an explosion of numerous advertisements on various sites on the Internet. These advertisements are many times several layers deep. The Web surfers bypass these advertisements which disturb the plan of the advertisers. In addition to this, a Web site filled with advertisements that delay its loading causes many surfers to become impatient and move on to other sites. However, there are some tactics used by some companies to counter this problem of clutter.

Short life spans: Another disadvantage is that the Internet advertisements have very short life spans. The wear-out time for Internet advertisements seems to be shorter than that for other media. To remedy this, the advertisers have to spend more time updating the advertisements if they hope to retain the audience's attention.

Lack of intrusion value: As compared to television, the Internet has no intrusion value. Web surfers do not have to stop an advertisement as one would have to do when looking at a magazine or newspaper. To get the surfers to stop, advertisements featuring streaming videos and flashing displays have been developed. Some advertisers have developed a new technology which is called *interstitial advertising*, which interrupts a person on the Internet without warning. These types of advertisements have to be clicked off to remove them from the screen as they are extremely controversial. Even though these advertisements have intrusion value, they are annoying. Interstitial advertisements can come onto the person's computer even after logging off the Internet or come on the screen the next time the person logs on.

Interstitial advertising could prove extremely valuable and advantageous to business-to business marketers, but these advertisements are untested and controversial. Targeted advertisements could be sent to members of the buying center even after they log off the computer. The chances of capturing some level of attention increase because these advertisements must be clicked off. At the same time, if the business buyer has been searching for information about a product and an advertisement for that product pops onto the screen, the individual is likely to study the advertisement to see what is being offered. Studies have shown that Web users tend to ignore banners and most Internet users can't remember the last banner they clicked on.

The researcher came to know the following types of portrayal of women in advertisements.

Portrayal of Woman in Advertisements

A woman is portrayed in advertisements with variety of roles to them as a housewife, object, sex object, beauty object, housewife pathologically obsessed by cleanliness, thin woman, beautiful woman, nymphomaniac, woman who is conditioned to view her body as an object, feels guilty for not being more beautiful, woman who debates the virtues of cleaning products with herself and other women, woman who has just a mannequin-like lifeless role, woman who gives dummy poses, woman who wears catalogue expressions, woman who is just a sexual or attractive stimulus, girlish woman, and woman who makes erotic or sex appeals. For ex. in the advertisement of Maruti Omni, male is in the driver's seat and female is only to give him a company with children. She is given a passive role as an object. On the other hand sexual objectification of a woman is very rampant in the world of advertising irrespective of whether the product or the service is meant for women or not. Female sexuality is used to sell almost every product. These advertisements communicate to

women that they exist only for male gratification. Almost all the new models of mobile are advertised with female models exposing their body parts. The advertisers use sexuality as an innovative tool to sell their products. Many advertisements on television promote the idea that women should primarily concern with attracting and sexually satisfying men. For ex. The Zatak Deo, body freshener, is advertised with the sexy lady dentist who opens her upper top to attract the attention of her male patient while checking his teeth. (Television ad.4) The researcher observed the following types of image of woman in advertisements.

Images of Woman in Advertisements

In advertisements, the image of a woman is presented as the artificial image, society weakening image, unrealistic image, unattainable image, unacceptable image, negative image, passive and non-functional image, dependent image, male-relationship oriented image, victimized image, corporate image, decorative image, recreational image, self-involved image, carefree image, superwoman image, and subordinating image. The Barbie Doll image and superwoman image is literally unrealistic and unattainable. In the advertisement of male underwear Smash, there is the victimized image of a woman. (Print ad. 4) This is particularly observed in the cyber advertisements. (Cyber ad.6) These images are pre-conceived and carefully planned by the advertisers so as to suit their business purposes. Their main intention is to attract the attention of the potential buyers and persuade them to purchase these products irrespective of whether they are necessary or not. For ex. the superwoman image of a woman is seen in the advertisement of Nirma or Ariel like detergent in which women wearing white dress/saris are shown pulling out a heavy vehicle out of a ditch/mud. All the claims made with the beauty objects present women with an unattainable image. The advertisement of young girls on a two-wheeler like TVS

scooty painting their lips while driving presents a carefree image of women. There is one new image of a corporate woman who is busy in her office schedule and her appointments. The images of women in cyber advertisements are corporate images where women with colourful and attractive company uniform tell the secret of the non-stop work to certain fitness centre or advertise a particular air line like Kingfisher. The advertisement of a Maruti Omni where male is in the driver's seat and a female is only to give him a company with children shows a dependent or subordinating image of woman. The recreational image of a woman is observed when she is presented in advertising a television programme related to entertain the viewers. For ex. the advertisement of Manikchand Film Fare Awards on Sony entertainment channel shows a woman exposing her navel, breast and backside for viewers' recreation. The fact is that a woman is the victim of a war for TRP among TV entertainment channels. (Print ad. 8 (a) and (b)) Passive and supporting image of a woman is the often found formula in most of the advertisements in print, electronic and cyber media.

Comparison of Images of Women: Newspapers, Television and Internet

Before we compare the images of women in newspapers, television and Internet, it is very necessary to consider that these three are different from each other in their nature and style of functioning as media. If we compare the images of women in newspapers with that of television images, we come to know that there are some similarities as well as differences between them. This is because the two media differ in their nature. The print images in newspapers have comparatively longer life than the electronic images in television. A newspaper reader may keep the newspapers with him for a long time. On the other hand, the advertisements in television may be seen for some ten to twenty seconds and therefore they have a very short life.

However, the television as a media enjoys the freedom of telecasting the same advertisement again and again imbibing the message on the minds of the viewers for definite and assured effects towards buying the product by the viewer. Newspaper advertisers may also print the advertisement of the product daily and affect the buying habits of the readers as consumers, but the print image of a woman in a newspaper is not as strong and effective as the electronic image of a woman in television.

If we compare the print image of a woman with that of cyber image, we come to know that cyber images are very quick, continuous and sudden. While the user is surfing on Internet, images of women may come to him after certain intervals imbibing the message on the mind of the users from time to time. Newspaper advertisers observe certain social and ethical norms. However, Internet advertisers may take a lot of liberty regarding the portrayal of women in advertising. As some videos on Internet have the facility to replay them as per the will of the Net surfers, the images of women in Internet advertisements come to the users again and again. At the same time, Net users can play the video slowly. The print image of women is totally different from that of the cyber image of Internet.

If we compare the electronic image of a woman in television advertisement with that of the cyber image of Internet, we come to know that television images are more permanent than the cyber image. This is because of the fact that television advertisements are vibrant, accompanied by music and dialogues, and performed by live characters. As the cyber advertisements are flashes, banners, skyscrapers, they lack live dialogues. At the same time, we have to consider that the television users at present are more than the Internet, the television advertisements may achieve extra effects on the minds of the viewers regarding the product or a service. Print images of women in advertisements are not as harmful as electronic images of women in

television and electronic images are not as harmful as the cyber. Whatever the differences and similarities regarding the images of women among print, electronic and cyber media, one thing certain that these images are not real and therefore not acceptable because they finally contribute to the marginalization and subordination of women to men.

In this age of movies, music, videos and advertisements, negative images of women are perpetuated with some traditional stereotypes. This has become all commonplace that advertisements present degrading and demeaning images of women. Print, electronic and cyber images of women in marketing literature are surreal as they depict the distorted picture of women. It is true that female models get a large amount of payment as they act in the imaginary world of advertising. But it must be considered that the advertising companies have earned tremendous profit with the help of these female models. Unfortunately, women's contribution to the economic growth of the company remains neglected. For ex. Film actress Madhuri Dixit's contribution to the rising sales of the soap Lux is not known. In spite of this, there are some positive images of women that media has been presenting in the new millennium. For ex. the corporate image of woman shows her as an individual who works hard to meet her deadlines, achieve her objects, works hours together to prove her capabilities by working shoulder to shoulder with her male counterparts in all walks of life. The researcher is of the opinion that the portrayal of women in media has improved over the last twenty years or so, but we have to go a long way to before we settle our standards of what is beautiful and healthy regarding women. It is very necessary for the advertisers to resist the temptation of being swayed away by preposterous stereotypes and unachievable ideals while promoting a product or service by using female models. All of us have to believe that the issue of the images

of women in print, electronic and cyber media has very real ramifications on the lives and esteem of women as human beings and therefore try to change them to positive side for the betterment of society as this is more of a social issue than the topic of any conference or seminar presentation.

Conclusion

As history of media shows, people have shifted from radio to television and nowadays, large number of young people are shifting from television to Internet. As young audience, they have an attraction for new forms of communication with advanced technology in computers and mobiles. These machines help them to maintain their privacy from parents and friends. The increasing number of Internet users finally proves beneficial for the advertising companies to promote their products or service and reach as many potential buyers as possible. While going to the conclusion, a note must be taken of the growing social networking sites like Facebook, Orkut or Twitter and their popularity among the young generation. As the nature of cyber media is changing, it must be very interesting to study how the cyber images of women in marketing literature have changed in the context of newly emerging social networking sites. It was out of the scope of the present researcher to study these images. The researcher is of the opinion that the uncontrolled and unguided use of Internet by the young generation will really harm the social structure in future. This is so because the cyber advertisers will continue to captivate the young people for their products by using the female models and various hidden tricks. Naturally, the youngsters will form wrong images of women in their minds neglecting the natural capabilities and qualities of women as human beings. This will finally disturb the family system and society as well. It would be very interesting to study

the relation between these images on one hand, and the growing incidences of violence against women on the other hand, these days.