Human Nature Journal of Social Sciences
Vol.5, No.1 (March, 2024), Pp.247-257
ISSN(online): 2788-5240, ISSN(print):2788-5232

Original Article **https://hnpublisher.com**

Exploring Gender Depiction in Outdoor Advertising Across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis

Tariq Habib[1], Sajid Hussain[2]

[1]M.Phil Scholar, School of Media Studies, The Superior University Lahore, Pakistan.
[2]Assistant Professor, School of Media Studies, The Superior University Lahore, Pakistan.
Correspondence: tariq.ku@gmail.com[1]

ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how gender is portrayed in international, national, and local ads in both the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) provinces.

Methodology: The research conducted using semiotic analysis as the method of inquiry. A sample of (n=360) billboards was selected using purposive sampling, and the study was grounded in Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of social semiotics and Charles Sanders Peirce's philosophy of signs.

Findings: The findings revealed significant differences in the portrayal of gender across different product categories in outdoor advertising, as well as differences between the two provinces. Women were often objectified, and gender stereotypes such as the idea that women should be responsible for household duties, nurturing roles, and male dominance were commonly depicted in both provinces.

Conclusion: The study highlights the need for policymakers and industry professionals to establish codes of ethics for gender representation in outdoor billboard advertising in Punjab and KPK.

Keywords: Social Semiotics, Gender Portrayal, Outdoor Advertising, Punjab, KPK, Objectification Theory.

Article History

Received:
January 15, 2024

Revised:
March 21, 2024

Accepted:
March 27, 2024

Published:
March 30, 2024

Introduction

The term gender portrayal refers to ideal-looking body images of men and women and is often used with advertising messages by the advertisers. The purpose of advertising messages is to sell the products and services, but these messages provide additional values to men and women either how they should look or what they should feel and act. Briefly, these messages determine the unusual construction of gender characteristics for female and male relations . According to Blackstone (2003) “Gender, refers to the meanings, values, and characteristics that people ascribe to different sexes”. It is obvious that the term “gender” probably gives the meanings of characteristics that people attribute to both males and females.

Analogically, the advertisement has been using for a long time to promulgate the products and the services. Egyptians and Greeks used advertising sensibly on (a form of paper), wall posters to disseminate their messages . The ruins of Pompeii and Arabia are the shreds of evidence of commercial

© 2024 The authors, under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0

and political messages. The wall painting history of Southwest can be seen from 2000 BC (Schaafsma, 1986). The evidence of beginning of out-of-home media in India is that of ancient rock art (Van der Waldt & Roux, 2014).

In Pakistan, the billboards are cheap medium in its cast having vast reach in their utility. In a historical perspective, outdoor advertising (in Pakistan) has gone through many phases i.e., from the oil paint era to the newly emerged situation; the handmade movie hoardings (billboards) were the traditional ways of advertising for the coming movies in Pakistani cinemas, and for the purpose to paint the hoardings, the famous artists were hired by the cinema's authorities .) Faiz, Awan, Asad, and Anam (2017) Contended, the outdoor advertising medium in Pakistan is a more effective medium for the advertising purpose other than its contemporary media. In a study of Pakistani billboard advertising Hussain and Munir (2018) explored, the billboards are the product of advertising, so reachable in the society that a rare amount of audience can escape from them' Further the design, colors, and short messages make them so attractive to the audience.

An utmost diversity perhaps exists among the Pakistani provinces regarding language, culture, rituals, and traditions. The province of Punjab is deemed to be its popular culture and in a broad spectrum, the divide among the people exists in traditional and cast formation issues (Qadeer, 2006). The province of Punjab has a rich literature in Punjabi language; it has a long history of poetic literacy and the majority of people are literate. People have the rights for freedom of expression and the potential to bear the contrary views of the opponent philosophy (Liaquat, Qaisrani, & Khokhar, 2016). .

On the contrary, the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa has a distinctive culture . According to Lieven (2012) there is no modern culture; *one way of looking at the Pathans (the very name of Pakhtun) of Pakistan is as eighteenth-century Scots without the alcohol.* Further, he quoted someone from KPK culture:

> *"Pukhtoons are happy with their archaic tribal culture. A large part of our society is content living in its tribal particularism, which people cherish as freedom..."*
>
> *"The attitude of the ordinary Pukhtoon does not at all tally with the modern world. Illiteracy and poverty are common. Most of us don't send our children to school. Female education is still disliked by a majority of Pukhtoons ...The empowerment of women is anathema. They have no rights in their society. During election s, village elders belonging to opposing parties try to reach a consensus on not allowing women folk to exercise their right to vote..."*

It is argued, the contemplation of gender identities in advertising invites the audiences to be ideal in their social roles, and the advertising images are framed in such ideal scenarios, which attract the audience purposively. The women's body images are objectified whereas the men's images are seen in muscularity.

"A picture is worth of a thousand words". The photographs other than being mute artifacts can have interpretation, but cannot speak. Using an appropriate way, photography can be a marvelous source to provide background knowledge of the topic to our students . According to Lemke (1990) Social semiotics as formal semiotics ask the people how they use signs to construct the life of the society; social semiotics is classical to correlate the study of human behavior, the clue of tradition in culture and anthropology is taken from many anthropologists and ethnographers, who have made a great addition in symbols and symbolic actions. He explained the social semiotics concept as:

> *Social semiotics is a synthesis of several modern approaches to the study of social meaning and social action. One of them is semiotics itself: the study of our social resources for communicating meanings. . . . Formal semiotics is mainly interested in the systematic study of the systems of signs themselves. Social semiotics includes formal semiotics and goes on to ask how people use signs to construct the life of a community (1990, p. 183).*

Harrison (2003) explained the three categories of the visual semiotics of an image, *the icon, the index, and the symbol*. The icon can be an image, or object, bears resemblance or similarity, which one can already be known. The index can be contained an understandable relation between the object and the relative concept. Symbol, a word is a symbol because it has no resemblance to what this stands for nor it has indexical relation *to what it signifies*.

If we deposit a view on the interdisciplinary subjects, we can have several theories on advertising and gender that has been worked over; some of them are from cultural perspectives as well. Social semiotics enlightens on the theories into social perspectives and guided towards the concerning literature review in research and theoretical framework. The literature review is started with the scientific research principles in these regards: gender portrayal in advertising, advertising, semiotics and culture, outdoor Advertising, semiotic studies in Pakistani perspectives.

An abundance of earlier serious studies on gender portrayals can be observed in the decade of 1970, and proffered several theories and analysis techniques for disposition the relationship between advertising and gender portrayal. To answer the question of gender differences by using Stuart Halls' model of *Encoding/ Decoding* is to comprehend the manners of the ideal female body in advertising; those were entangled in the on-going constructions and maintenance of gender identities. Further, she contended with the influence of culture on the audience's perception of whether the decoding perception has the same meanings as an encoding of messages possesses or has the intention to be so by using the concept of *articulation.*

In the same decade of 1970, later on, Goffman (1979) presented his work on *gender-advertisements,* the coming scholars steady their work on the bases laid down by him and began their research in their respective fields, with the time they executed the apparent role in the research arena. In this regard, Bell and Milic (2002) wrote about the significance of these procedures with semiotic analysis method by explaining that in particular, we tend to look for to demonstrate however the scale known in Erving Goffman's Gender Advertisements (1979) and connected content analysis may be designed onto the image philosophical theory classes developed by . When we analyze the compendium of Goffman, the picture emerges like, engenders were frequently depicted as Components in 'hyper-ritualization's of social scenes. That is, commercial advertisings dripped average social rituals into scenes, the common denominator of which was 'female subordination'. Goffman postulated that the subordination, in the end, implied the 'infantilization' (immaturity) of women, and said six dimensions employing, which this symbolic infantilization could be classified: *Relative size:* Relative size: the propensity for guys to be staged as large as or taller than women. Goffman also determined exceptions to this propensity that proved the rule, for if the girl turned into larger in an advertisement, she changed into generally.

Other approaches that withdrawal turned into signaled included backing down at the back of objects, masking the face to conceal an emotional reaction, and snuggling into them.

The gender portrayal in advertising and Goffman's symbolic interactionism provide a genuine form of textual analysis. By the utility of approaches, the textual analysis of gender portrayal in advertising either builds upon or was criticized. Goffman's work was unique at the time for employing the technique now being categorized as semiotic content analysis. His analysis targeted message structures across the whole discourse of print classified ads containing gender ingredients. He revealed patterns in messages about gender that repeated constantly and always provide a photo of reality that appears congenital, and real. His work affords the bottom for textual evaluation with the tenets of semiotic content evaluation and symbolic interactionism. Several scholars in their respective fields have been conducted their studies on the defined categories of Goffman for example. Hence, gender roles researches and Goffman's original work on gender classified ads are presented right here because of the underpinnings of research on the nature of advertising portrayal of gender.

Social Semiotics

A theory is something, which relatively consists of definitions, propositions, and concepts that someone presents as a systematic interpretation of events for knowing the relationships among variables for a rank to explain and predict the situations

The review of literature suggested the roots for this research from the theoretical framework of social semiotics. The word semiotics is derived from the historical Greek phrase *semeion*, which means that *sign*. A sign includes: symptoms in normal life- road symptoms, pub symptoms, star signs and symptoms; drawings, artwork and photographs; and words, sounds, body language. Social semiotics is a form of inquiry, which it does not now offer ready-made answers. It offers thoughts for formulating questions and methods of attempting to find answers. Semiology is considered as a philosophy, a theory, a collection of concepts, and a *method of analysis*. Semiology has many aspects and has been used for several interpretations, "debates and polemics" .

The current theories of semiotics may be traced back to two main sources. The first is a Swiss linguist for whom 'semiology' became the examination of the position of symptoms as part of social life. The 2nd is Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), an American founder of semiotics, whose subject of taking a look at changed into the formal doctrine of symptoms. . De Saussure used the term 'semiology' to consult the technology, which researches the function of signs and symptoms as part of social life. Social semiotics units out to understand how representations are produced by the way of and make contributions to cultural settings, that is, to get at their social feature and the means potential inside the communicative landscape. Their textual capabilities are analyzed, that allows us to comment on social relations, power, signification, the pastimes of sign makers, the imagined audience, and the social purposes realized by *texts* .

On the other hand, Pierce's school of semiotics believes in different kinds of signs i.e., "Icon, Index, and Symbol". How these signs signify, the Icon by resemblance, the Index by cause and effects, and the Symbol by conventions (as quoted by Zeman, 1997).

De Saussure has not a detailed discussion on other modes of semiotics but "Saussure-inspired semioticians have done many times from C.S Peirce: *Icon, Index, and Symbol*. Three different types of signs have different linkages to their signifiers and "signifieds". In symbol mode the relationship between "signifiers and signified" is arbitrary (conventional). In the case of an icon, the relation is of partial resemblance (in icon and indices the signifier looks like signified). In the index, the causal relation between signifier and signified is examined, for example, "if a footstep signifies the recent presence of a person, it does so because it was made that person". As motivational signs, it is feasible to predict, their signifiers are pertinent to their signifieds. Arbitrary signs i.e., "symbols" for example, randomly assigned numbers of identification, and the colors of the map (red stands for certain and so on).

Having before the profound study of literature and the theory, it is confronted a map by the science of signs, which is supported boundlessly for the concerning research. According to the work of De Saussure the relation between a signifier and a signified can be decoded in a perspective of a society in a good manner whereas the Charles school of thought enhances this relation more. According to him what kinds of signs (icon, index, and symbols) are confronted are supported for any type of content of advertising and for the analysis. Therefore, in this research, the foundations lay down by the literature and the theoretical concept a tool for the data analysis according to the inductive categories of signifier and signified was developed.

H1: There would be significant differences in gender objects in outdoor billboard advertising of Punjab & KPK.

H2a: Female Objectification will be more explicit in outdoor advertisements of Punjab than that of KPK.

H2b: Male dominance will be more explicit in outdoor advertisements of Punjab than that of KPK.

H3: Portrayal of gender icons will be more suggestive in International ads than that of National and Local.

Research Methodology

Semiotic analysis as a content analysis method was used in this study to explore the gender portrayal in advertisements in both provinces like Punjab and KPK. It is the method in which signs, symbols, and language are determined to know how they convey meaning within a specific cultural context. Furthermore this method is known as the examination of images and sounds. Signs and symbols are examined by the researcher used in advertisements to discover how gender representation and construction were planned through the messages of targeted advertisements. Purposive sampling method of non-probability sampling technique was used by this this study. The sample included local, national and international ads as well. A coding scheme that recognizes elements like signs and symbols in line with language, appearance, and gender roles was used to analyze advertisements. The coding system was adjusted to take into account the cultural context of Punjab and KPK and was based on previously conducted research on gender representation in advertising. The semiotic analysis concentrated on the advertisements' visual and aural components, including color, lighting, camera angles, music, and language. The analysis looked for associations or connotations about gender roles and identity, as well as underlying meanings and messages conveyed by the signs and symbols used in the advertisements. This analysis sheds light on how traditional gender roles and stereotypes are constructed, reinforced, and challenged by advertising.

The sample of the study was three hundred and sixty billboards of selected brands, which were showing any gender content in ads. The sample was taken from Lahore, Gujranwala, Peshawar, and Mardan cities. A coding sheet was developed as the theoretical roots of the social semiotics and the visual semiotics suggested. The coding sheet was prepared for semiotics analysis according to inductively predefined categories. Thematic analysis was performed on descriptive data of visual semiotics. Clusters, Diagrams, and charts, and chi-square tests for independence have used for further analysis. The services of two coders of the communication field (for the coding process) were taken and the preparation of the coding manual was carried out after the discussion and agreed upon. Inter-coder reliability between three coders (researcher & two coders) was calculated by using Holsti (1969) formula. It determined in coded data in terms of the agreement.

$$R = \frac{3M}{N1 + N2 + N3}$$

Where R stands for reliability, M is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree and N1, N2 and N3 refer to the total number of coding decisions by the first, second and third coder respectively. By applying this formula, intercoder reliability of content coding was obtained 0.89.

Findings & Analysis

The nature of the study is exploratory and comparative. Therefore, descriptive and non-parametric tools of statistical analysis were applied.

Table 1: *Gender Differences in Signifiers in Billboard Advertising of Punjab and KPK*

	Love & Care	**Smile and Beauty**	**Nudity and Sexy**	**Household Duties**	**Nurturing**	**Power & Dominance**	**Entertainment**	**Descriptive**	**Total**
Male	14	2	0	4	0	25	25	2	67
Female	23	44	45	9	5	3	8	7	135
Total	**37**	**46**	**45**	**13**	**5**	**28**	**33**	**9**	**202**

Table 1presents the results of cross-tabulation of multiple response analysis. It indicates there are significant differences in the attributes of male and female objects in outdoor advertising of Punjab and

KPK. Smile, beauty, nudity, and sex mostly signify the female objects. On the other hand, power, dominance, and entertainment are mostly attributed to male objects.

It reveals that the females are mostly portrayed as smiling, beautiful, nude, and sexy in outdoor advertising. On the other hand, males are mostly portrayed as powerful, dominant, and entertainers in outdoor advertising of Punjab and KPK.

Table 2: *Gender Differences in Themes of Signified in Billboard Advertising of Punjab and KPK*

		Gender of the Object		**Total**
		Male	**Female**	
Master themes of Signified	Descriptive	123	174	297
	Decorative	24	64	88
	Objectification	2	107	109
	Dominance	38	3	41
	Submissive	12	12	24
	Household	7	9	16
	Nurturing	2	33	35
	Professional	20	24	44
Total		**228**	**426**	**654**

X^2= 138.814, *df*=7, *p*=.01

Table 2 presents the results of the Chi-square analysis. It indicates there are significant differences in the portrayal of male and female objects in outdoor advertising of Punjab and KPK. Female objects are mostly signified as descriptive, decorative, and objectified in outdoor advertising. On the other hand, male objects are more signified as dominant as compared to the female objects.

It reveals that the females are mostly portrayed as descriptive, decorative, and objectified in outdoor advertising. On the other hand, males are mostly portrayed as powerful and dominant in outdoor advertising of Punjab and KPK.

It reveals there are significant differences in the outdoor advertising of different products at different levels; local, national and international.

Table 3: *Province Wise Differences in Product Advertising in Billboard Advertising of Punjab and KPK*

		Product of Advertising				**Total**
		Cellular Companies	**Food & Beverages**	**Clothing**	**Personal Care**	
Province of Ad Display	Punjab	36	124	79	112	351
	KPK	43	173	54	33	303
Total		79	297	133	145	654

X^2= 53.209, *df*=3, *p*=.01

Table 3 presents the results of the Chi-square analysis. It indicates there are significant differences in the outdoor advertising of different provinces; Punjab and KPK. In Punjab, outdoor advertising is mostly used to advertise clothing and personal care products. On the other hand, in KPK, outdoor advertising is mostly used for Cellular companies' products and food and beverage products.

It reveals there are significant differences in the outdoor advertising of different provinces; Punjab and KPK in the term of product advertising.

Table 4: *Differences in Signified Themes about Product Advertising in Billboard Advertising of Punjab and KPK*

	Product of Advertising				**Total**
	Cellular Companies	**Food & Beverages**	**Clothing**	**Personal Care**	
Descriptive	36	142	53	66	297
Decorative	10	39	28	11	88
Objectification	14	36	32	27	109
Dominance	9	23	2	7	41
Submissive	1	18	0	5	24
Household	2	4	0	10	16
Nurturing	1	25	1	8	35
Professional	6	10	17	11	44
Total	**79**	**297**	**133**	**145**	**654**

X^2= 81.484, *df*=21, *p*=.01

Table 12 presents the results of the Chi-square analysis. It indicates there are significant differences in signified themes of advertising of different products. In the advertisement of cellular companies, the most descriptive theme is used. In the advertisement of food and beverages, a mostly descriptive, decorative, and objectification theme is used. Clothing and personal care product advertisements also used themes of descriptive, decorative, and objectification more as compare to the other themes.

It reveals there are significant differences in the outdoor advertising of different products about the portrayal of gender objects.

Table 5: *Signifiers Differences in Product Advertising in Billboards of Punjab and KPK*

	Cumulative Signifier[a]								**Total**
	Love & Care	**Smile and Beauty**	**Nudity and Sexy**	**Household Duties**	**Nurturing**	**Power & Dominance**	**Entertainment**	**Descriptive**	
Cellular Companies	1	6	4	0	0	8	6	1	24
Food & Beverages	27	18	17	5	3	15	18	2	95
Clothing	1	9	18	2	1	1	4	2	37
Total	29	33	39	7	4	24	28	5	156

Table 5 presents the results of the cross-tabulation analysis of multiple response analysis. It indicates there are significant differences in the signifiers of different product advertisements. In cellular company's advertisements, power and dominance signifier is used more as compared to the other signifiers. In food and beverage advertisements, love, care, smile, beauty, entertainment, nudity, and sex elements are more attributed to the gender objects. In clothing ads, nudity and sex elements are more attributed to the gender objects.

It reveals there are significant differences in the signifiers of gender objects in outdoor advertising of different products.

Table 6: *Differences in Signifiers at Different Level of Advertising in Billboards of Punjab and KPK*

	Cumulative Signifier[a]								**Total**
	Love & Care	**Smile and Beauty**	**Nudity and Sexy**	**Household Duties**	**Nurturing**	**Power & Dominance**	**Entertainment**	**Descriptive**	
Local	0	3	2	0	0	3	2	0	10
National	8	21	19	4	1	7	8	5	68
Multinational	29	22	24	9	4	18	23	4	124
Total	**37**	**46**	**45**	**13**	**5**	**28**	**33**	**9**	**202**

Table 6 presents the results of the Chi-square analysis. It indicates there are significant differences in signifiers related to gender portrayal in different levels of advertising. Love and care attribute is found more in Multinational Advertising. Smile and beauty attributes are more present in National and Multinational advertising. Nudity and sex are also found more in national and multinational advertising. It reveals there are significant differences in gender portrayal in outdoor advertising at different levels; local, national and international.

Discussion

The study offered insightful information about how gender is portrayed in outdoor advertising in Punjab and KPK, two Pakistani provinces. The results show that compared to men, women are more commonly represented in outdoor advertising and are frequently presented as decorative elements, commodities for sex, and attractive pictures. On the other hand, men are portrayed as being in charge and authoritative. These results are in line with earlier studies that show gender norms and stereotypes are frequently portrayed in commercials. The study also shows that international companies, especially those in the food and beverage sector, control the Pakistani outdoor advertising market. This result is in line with earlier studies that show elites are often the ones in charge of advertising. It is important to remember that outdoor advertising varies from place to place and city to city, suggesting that cultural context may also have an impact on how women are portrayed in these types of advertisements. In general, the study highlights how important it is for outdoor advertising to feature more inclusive and diverse representation, particularly when it comes to gender representation. It is critical for marketers to consider how their messaging affects the larger community and to work toward more moral and socially conscious advertising methods. By doing this, they can help create a society that is just and equitable, where everyone is respected and valued for who they are.

Conclusion

The intention of the under hand investigation was to equipoise of the outdoor billboards advertising (OBA) of the two culturally different provinces of Pakistan by which it had to detect, how the two different civilizations influence on the advertising content viz, how the men and women are portrayed in the ads and what roles are turn over to them. In the pertaining investigation of both provinces, there has been hen in many facets of the subject that fulfill the objectives of the study.

In this investigation, it is revealed, there is an element of similarity exist in many extents between the roles of men and women in both sides of advertisement that is determined by this: in the both provinces the men were portrayed in power and authority roles whereas the women were portrayed in submissive and nurturing roles. Although, the dominant pattern of gender portrayal in advertisements of KPK is similar to that of the Punjab, however, it slightly differs from the Punjab; in KPK males are also portrayed as submissive. Furthermore, the findings indicate that female models are portrayed more as compare to the male models in outdoor advertising of both provinces. Hence, it is concluded that in outdoor

advertising of Pakistan, females are objectified and they are mostly used for their glamour and beauty patterns. On the contrary of females, the males are portrayed as dominant and in power patterns.

In other facets the review of brands is included in which the brands are categorized as local, national, and international/ multinational. In these brands the international/ multinational category was found at the top of the list in gender portrayal and in quantity of ads. The multinational brands contained more objectification and power pattern content other than national and local brands.

The outcome of the study is beneficent from the view point of the common person; he / she can possess a real judgment about the characters portrayed in the ads viz in the real life the human characters are seen different, as it is understood in the ads of dressing the models have ideal looking beauty but in reality it is not possible by the dressing. Likewise, when you deliberate on other said products, you will get apparent that you do not dominant by using any cellular network but this is just a situation which is used to attract clients. Same like other, the food and drink ads and the personal care products ads are shown just for attracting the clients and for this purpose the reliance of attractive models is taken. But in reality a common user of the products does not look like these models after using the products then an apparent argument before is that the selling appeals through portrayal of gender are more used than the real virtues for the products.

The other point of view containing in this study is about the Government's policies concerning the rules and regulations for the OBA. There are no rules and regulating body regarding the gender portrayal that is needed. In this study, the endeavor to understand the very same matter has done that if there are no steps were taken from the Government, then in the non-existence of these steps, the diversity of cultures influence the gender portrayal then in the non-existence of these steps, the diversity of cultures influence the gender portrayal but by the study, it has approved, the diversity of culture has no significant difference other than a slight difference in the portrayal of gender in Outdoor advertising, as it is obvious because of the ads of multinational's data shows a large number of their existence hence it is reinforced for the policies making in the future.

Recommendations

The current study which was conducted on the basis of two provinces' data and by this purpose the 360 billboards were taken for the analysis has some suggestions over thinking the gender sensitization, policy making, improvement and the development of the society, hence, the following recommendations are provided.

1) There is no concerning body of government to formulate and monitor the gender portrayal in outdoor advertising in Pakistan. There should be a body of regulation under the Government prerogative that should work for legislation and monitoring gender issues in outdoor advertising.
2) NGOs and gender rights activists have the liability as they perform their duties for the betterment of society, and they should perform their role in this regard to create awareness about gender equality and equity among the advertisers and the public as well.
3) Females' body images and glamour should be minimized in outdoor advertising by putting the check and balance over the activities of advertising in outdoor perspective.
4) There should be the suggestive code of conduct for advertisers about gender sensitization. For this purpose, researchers and academicians should be engaged.
5) Civil society and cultural organizations should provide training and awareness sessions to advertisers and other members like designers and composers about the sensitivity of the issue. For this purpose, the services of the experts in the field of media and the researchers should be taken.

Acknowledgements

None.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declared NO conflict of interest.

Funding Source

The authors received NO funding to conduct this study.

ORCID iDs

Tariq Habib [1] https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8508-5847
Sajid Hussain [2] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4296-3625

References

Anjum, M., Zia, S. M., & Raza, H. (2014). Cultural Dimensions of Pakistan: A Comparison of Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provinces. *International Journal of Management Sciences, 4*(6), 261-276.

Arshad, M. (2015). Exploring Chronicle of Advertisement: A Case of Pakistan. *Available at SSRN 2707969*.

Belknap, P., & Leonard, W. M. (1991). A conceptual replication and extension of Erving Goffman's study of gender advertisements. *Sex Roles, 25*(3), 103-118.

Bell, P., & Milic, M. (2002). Goffman's gender advertisements revisited: Combining content analysis with semiotic analysis. *Visual communication, 1*(2), 203-222.

Bilal, A. (2018). The Art of Handmade Movie Hoardings in Pakistan. *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society, 31*(2).

Blackstone, A. (2003). Human Ecology: An Encyclopedia of Children, Families, Communities, and Environments: ABC-CLIO: Santa Barbara.

Chisholm, S. (2014). Gender and Advertising: How Gender Shapes Meaning. *Controversies in Contemporary Advertising*, 89-111.

De Saussure, F. (2011). *Course in general linguistics*: Columbia University Press.

Faiz, R., Awan, S. H., Asad, H., & Anam, H. (2017). Customers' Attitude towards Digital and Outdoor Marketing. *Pakistan Journal of social Sciences (PJSS), 37*(1).

Garcia-Cardona, W. (2002). Chapter Seven: Can You Picture It? Semiotic Representations of Social Class in Photographs. *Counterpoints, 176*, 87-99.

Goffman, E. (1979). *Gender advertisements*: Macmillan International Higher Education.

Gurevitch, M., Bennett, T., Curran, J., & Woollacott, J. (1982). *Culture, society and the media*: Methuen London.

Harrison, C. (2003). Visual social semiotics: Understanding how still images make meaning. *Technical communication, 50*(1), 46-60.

Hussain, M., & Munir, D. (2018). SEEING IS BELIEVING: AUDIENCE PERCEPTION ABOUT FOOD ADVERTISEMENTS ON BILLBOARD. *Global Media Journal: Pakistan Edition, 11*(1).

Jewitt, C., & Henriksen, B. (2016). 6. Social Semiotic Multimodality *Handbuch Sprache im multimodalen Kontext* (pp. 145-164): De Gruyter.

Kang, M.-E. (1997). The portrayal of women's images in magazine advertisements: Goffman's gender analysis revisited. *Sex Roles, 37*(11), 979-996.

Khan, K., Hussainy, S. K., Khan, A., & Khan, H. (2016). Billboard Advertising and Customer Attention: A Pakistani Perspective. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 6*(3), 504.

Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2020). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*: Routledge.

Lemke, J. L. (1990). *Talking science: Language, learning, and values*: ERIC.

Liaquat, S., Qaisrani, A., & Khokhar, E. N. (2016). Freedom of Expression in Pakistan: A myth or a reality.

Lieven, A. (2012). *Pakistan: A hard country*: PublicAffairs.

Mahn, C. (2017). Literary folk: Writing popular culture in colonial Punjab, 1885–1905 *Interventions*: Manchester University Press.

O'Toole, A. M. (2016). Portrayals of gender in the media: A content analysis approach to identifying gender oppression and legitimation of patriarchy in magazine advertisements.

Qadeer, M. (2006). *Pakistan-social and cultural transformations in a Muslim Nation*: Routledge.

Rammah, S. (2006). West Punjabi Poetry: From Ustad Daman to Najm Hosain Syed. *JPS, 13*(1&2), 216.

Rehman, A., Jingdong, L., & Hussain, I. (2015). The province-wise literacy rate in Pakistan and its impact on the economy. *Pacific Science Review B: Humanities and Social Sciences, 1*(3), 140-144.

Shabir, G., Ghous, S., Safdar, G. (2017). Violation of Consumer Rights by Electronic Media Through Advertisements. *New Media and Mass Communication, 57*, 35-39.

Shabir, G., Safdar, G., Hussain, T., Imran, M., Seyal, A.M. (2015). Media Ethics: Choosing the Right Way to Serve. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 5*(3), 80-85.

Shah, S. A. M., & Amjad, S. (2011). Cultural diversity in Pakistan: national vs provincial. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 2*(2), 331-331.

Shields, V. R. (1994). *The constructing, maintaining and negotiating of gender identities in the process of decoding gender advertisements.* The Ohio State University.

Tungate, M. (2007). *Adland: a global history of advertising*: Kogan Page Publishers.

Van Leeuwen, T. (2005). *Introducing social semiotics*: Psychology Press.

Zeman, J. J. (1977). Peirce's theory of signs. *A perfusion of signs*, 22-39.