

The Impact of the Portrayal of Women in Television Commercials on Adult's Attitudes in Rawalpindi, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the study: In this study, the avowed object is the depiction of women in television commercials respectively located in Rawalpindi. Here, it specifically looks into how those portrayal dimensions significant in shaping adults' attitudes concerning gender roles, views toward empowerment, buying behavior, social acceptance of gender equality, and adherence to cultural norms.

Methodology: The study adopted a quantitative research design. A structured questionnaire was distributed and a sample of (n=221) were collected from Rawalpindi, Pakistan. SPSS software was used to analyze the data in order to see the relationship between the independent variable (women's portrayal in television commercials) and a number of dependent variables measuring adult attitudes. The study used George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory as a basis for interpreting long-term media effects.

Findings: Findings indicate that most advertisements, particularly television commercials, still tend to conform to previously hold traditional gender stereotypes. They depict women in one-dimensional roles, such as housewives, or as symbols of beauty. Such portrayals are found to affect adult attitudes, especially regarding issues like gender roles, empowerment, or societal norms. Another significant finding of this study is that progressive representation, in which women occupy top posts or are seen in technical roles, could positively change public opinion, especially among younger and more educated audiences.

Conclusion: The outcome showed direct relationship where one leads to another. Cultivation theory of media has brought out the clear demonstration whereby constant exposure to messages has greater impacts on individuals, as well as society, bearing in mind the author's roles, capabilities, and position in the social ladder. The study also advocates balanced and empowering portrayals of women so as to support gender equality and change societal attitudes to more egalitarian molds.

Keywords: TV Commercials, Women Portrayal, Public Attitude.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary media is characterized by the fact that television remains the single most powerful instrument for influencing notions that shape the public mind and societal norms in any country, more particularly developing ones. The commercials in television programming can effectively communicate a number of cultural values, social roles, and consumer behavior (Qasir et al., 2024; Yao et al., 2024). One of the most talked about and glaring dimensions of this advertising is the representation of women. How women are portrayed in television commercials does reflect the views of society but can also influence the minds of individuals consciously or subconsciously. Such influence is all the more predominant in the major urban cities such as Rawalpindi, where there is mass media exposure on a growing scale. The way women are typically portrayed in television ads tends to sway between conventional and progressive characters (Farooq, and Qandeel, 2025; Shabir et al., 2015; Shabir et al., 2017; Safdar et al., 2016). Some advertisements play on traditional gender stereotypes by showing women only as homemakers or caregivers, or even as objects of beauty; others, however, are working toward empowering the female character as one that is independent and successful, both personally and professionally. These contrasting images offer all the glamour of enticing challenges for raising critical issues about the psychological and sociocultural effects of these images on audiences, mainly adult audiences that do not just consume media but also in fact are stakeholders in creating and shaping societal values. In the context of Rawalpindi, a city marked by its diverse population, socio-economic dynamics, and evolving cultural identities, it becomes crucial to understand how adults interpret and internalize these mediated portrayals of women (Shabir et al., 2015a; Shabir et al., 2015b). The city's inhabitants, exposed to traditional and modern influences, provide an unusual test case for analysing changing gender role attitudes and expectations. This study investigates the potency of television advertisements in influencing perceptions of adults regarding women in Rawalpindi. More specifically, it investigates whether repeated exposure to some images, stereotypical or other forms, affects beliefs, attitudes, and expectations regarding women's roles in society, family, and in business. It further investigates demographic variables, such as age, gender, education, and media behaviour, that will mediate or moderate these impacts. In looking at these relationships, this study intervenes within the larger debate on media influence, gender representation, and cultural change in Pakistan. Furthermore, it is hoped that findings from this study will be beneficial to media producers, advertisers, policymakers, and educators attempting to strive for a more positive and constructive attitude toward women's representation in the media.

1.1 Problem Statement

The commercials that air on Pakistani television have significant power in changing public attitudes with regard to gender roles. Women in advertisements are likely to greatly influence perceptions among adults in cities such as Rawalpindi, where traditional and modern values coexist. Less work has been done to study how these portrayals influence adult attitudes in this context. The researcher highlights some of the troubling issues:

- **Reinforcement of Gender Stereotypes:** Women are frequently seen in biased, perhaps outdated societal roles.
- **Influence on Adults Perceptions:** Repeated engagement with such representations can continue shaping beliefs regarding women's place in the home, workplace, and society.
- **Lack of Context-Specific Research:** There is a noticeable gap between empirical studies focusing on Rawalpindi, so it is difficult to understand how these portrayals affect adult attitudes in this unique socio-cultural setup.

This study seeks to fill this gap by probing the influence of televisual representations of women on the judgment of Rawalpindi adults.

1.2 Significance

This study holds importance as it intends to delve into a very important yet less-researched area in the Pakistani context: the impact of televised portrayals of women on public attitudes. In a setting like Rawalpindi, where cultural traditions lie side by side with modern media influences, it makes sense to study the influence of television commercials on adult conceiving of gender roles. The study has a potential contribution to academic literature by providing context-specific data on how media representations affect social views on women. These results can also provide a solid basis for media professionals, advertisers, and policymakers to adopt more holistic views of women's representation in televised content. Furthermore, this study goes beyond issues in gender perception and into a larger realm where all efforts are directed toward ensuring gender equality and improving prevalent stereotypes within Pakistan's media roots. The ultimate objective is to inform and influence media practice and public discourse toward a more inclusive and equitable society.

1.3 Study Gap

There is much research across the globe regarding different form of media and gender representation, but very little empirical data is available on how television commercials impact the perceptions of adults in Pakistan. The existing researches do not deal with urban places such as Rawalpindi or were conducted on adult viewers, which suggest that it has left an unattended area in understanding how such media portrayals of women impact different local scenarios. Hence, this study aims to fill in that gap.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1) How is a woman portrayed in a television commercial in Rawalpindi?
- 2) How does this representation influence adult viewers in terms of their perception and acceptance of gender roles?
- 3) Do the perceptions towards women representation in television commercials differ among male and female adults in Rawalpindi?

1.5 Independent Variable

“Portrayal of Women in Television Commercials” was the research study's independent variable referring to how women are represented in TV ads. This includes aspects such as: appearance, behaviour, role, context.

1.6 Dependent Variable

“Adult’s Attitudes” was the research study's since it relies on the understanding and perception level on the individual. There are many variables like attitudes towards the gender role, consumer purchasing behaviour, perception of women empowerment, social acceptance of gender equality, influence of cultural and societal norms.

1.7 Sub-Dependent Variable

Attitudes towards the Gender Role: The depiction of women in advertisements may therefore define how a viewer perceives gender roles, (for example, define whether they believe people should follow traditional roles or to see gender as being more flexible).

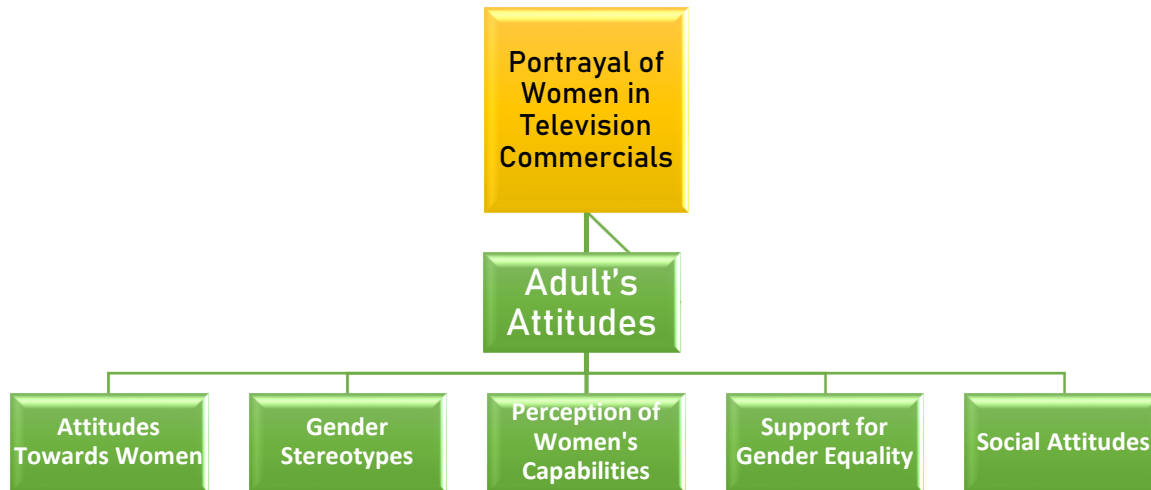
Consumer Purchasing Behaviour: When women are portrayed in a way that resonates with or appeals to the viewers-for example, empowering representations-then these women may engage more with the products advertised in these commercials or even buy them.

Perception of Women Empowerment: The manner in which women are portrayed in commercial advertising has an impact on the perception of empowerment, independence on the part of viewer.

Social Acceptance of Gender Equality: That's right; more exposure to advertisements with better gender representation could influence adult viewers' perception of generally accepting an attitude toward gender equality.

Cultural and Societal Norms Influence: The portrayal of women in commercials can either challenge or reinforce the cultural norms present in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

Figure 1: *Research Model*



2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

Smith and Johnson (2017) conducted research titled “*The impact of gender stereotypes in advertising on consumer behaviour*”. The study aimed to explore how the portrayal of women in television commercials influences consumer behaviour and attitudes towards gender roles. and the objective of the study is to examine if the depiction of women in commercials reinforces traditional or progressive gender roles. A mixed-method approach was employed, combining both content analysis of television commercials and a survey of consumers' attitudes. In the conclusion the study found that commercials portraying women in traditional roles negatively influenced the viewers' perceptions of gender equality.

Yao et al. (2024) conducted research to investigate the investigation, initiated to determine the effect of female representation in television commercials, deals as well with the body image of women residing in urban areas. The investigation explores how advertising plays a role in shaping the body image and esteem of women. The research employs the Quantitative analysis approach through a survey conducted on 300 adult women: the body image perceptions of the participants were analysed pre- and post-commercial exposure. In conclusion, advertising the slim, idealized women brought out lowered body satisfaction in the respondents.

Bartsch et al. (2000) the study aimed was to examine the role of gender stereotypes in television commercials and their impact on societal attitudes toward women. The aim of the study was to find out the extent to which gender stereotypes function in television commercials and their consequences on viewer attitudes. The method used an analysis of 500 TV commercials that were aired in Rawalpindi for a period of three months, followed by a survey on the attitudes of viewers. To conclude, the study found that gender stereotypes were very much present within commercials, often depicting women in domestic

or passive roles. These stereotypes, in turn, negatively affected viewer perceptions of women's roles in society.

Shah and Farooq (2020) conducted research titled “*Women in television commercials: A study of societal implications in Pakistan*”. The study was concentrated on the understanding of the influence the presentation of women in TV commercials has on their roles in the family and society in Pakistan. The research was concerned with the comprehension of whether the advertisements support the stereotypic image or opposes it towards women in Pakistan. The methodological approach within this study is qualitative interviews with 50 adult women in Rawalpindi to evaluate their perceptions on women in TV commercials. Ultimately, it was revealed that adverts presenting women as fundamentally housewives and caretakers resonated more with participants, thus endorsing traditional gender roles.

Middleton & Turnbull (2021) conducted research to investigate the extent to which the visual and verbal depiction of women in television advertisements impacts viewers' gender attitudes. The aim of the study is to examine how visual and verbal components of advertisements shape perceptions of gender. This was through a laboratory experiment where participants were shown commercial videos and then assessed using questionnaires regarding their gender attitudes. Thus, it was concluded that both visual and verbal elements in commercials significantly governed the viewers' perception regarding the gender role.

Mahmood and Khan (2021) conducted research titled “*The effect of gender representation in advertisements on male attitudes*”. The current study aimed to examine the effect of female representation in television commercials on self-perception and behaviour among male viewers. The purpose is to understand how different presentations of women, for example, empowered and stereotypical, affect male viewers' attitudes about women in real life. The experimental study involved a survey with 200 male participants who were administered commercial exposure in an experimental setting. One conclusion therefore is that male viewers exposed to empowered female commercials held relatively more progressive attitudes toward gender egalitarianism than those exposed to stereotypical portrayals.

Ghani (2024) conducted research stated that in the present study, the focus was to determine how the representation of women within television commercials impacts consumer purchasing decisions in Pakistan. The purpose here is to study the relationship between gender portrayal in advertisements and consumer purchase behaviour. A quantitative survey was conducted among 150 adults living in Rawalpindi, during which respondents commented on their attitude toward commercials and purchasing decisions. There was a conclusion drawn that commercials with women shown in traditional roles had higher levels of engagement but did not significantly affect actual purchasing behaviour.

Qasim and Shams (2018) conducted research titled “*Empowering women in advertisements: A study on gender equality in Pakistan*”. In this study, female empowerment in television commercials was examined in relation to attitudes towards gender equality in Pakistan. The aim here was to explore how empowered representations of women can change some societal attitudes toward gender equality. A content analysis was done for 100 advertisements, and a follow-up survey was carried out with 300 subjects from Rawalpindi. Ultimately, the results indicated that advertisements portraying empowered women improved gender-equal attitudes in audiences, especially the younger audience.

Siddiqi and Bashir (2015) conducted research titled “*Empowering women in advertisements: A study on gender equality in Pakistan*”. The study aimed at examining the representation of women within television commercials and the connection between this representation and the perception of gender roles in the Pakistani context. This was done to ascertain how television advertisements are reflective of or countering traditional notions of gender in a Pakistani context. The study used a mixed-method design, including some content analysis of TV ads as well as in-depth interviews with 50 participants. In the end, the study concluded that, to a major extent, television commercials reinforced traditional norms of gender, with women being shown primarily in domestic or subordinate roles.

Pal & Rashmi (2025) investigated the details on the portrayal of women through advertisement and how they affect the perceptions of adult viewers towards equality in Pakistani society. In fact, the study measured the impacts made by television commercials-in this case-on the perceptions of the public on matters of gender equality. The survey, which was quantitative, included 200 adults as respondents followed by an analysis of 50 TV commercials glorifying women. Commercials portraying women as equals to men led to more positive attitudes towards gender equality at the end of the study.

Sandhu (2018) the aim of the study was to investigate the impact of portrayals of women in commercials on the gender attitudes of young adults in urban Pakistan. Its objective was to examine how women's portrayal in the media shapes ideas and behaviour among young adults regarding gender. The experimental study involved 100 participants exposing them to different commercials and surveying them for attitude afterward. The findings reveal that advertisements with women in progressive roles led to more open attitudes toward gender roles by young adults.

Ali and Raza (2020) conducted research titled “*Gender stereotypes in South Asian advertisements: A case study of Pakistani television*”. The objective of the study was to assess the contribution of television advertising to the formation of gender-specific attitudes in a South Asian context. The objective is to understand the contribution of advertising to the reinforcement or transformation of gender roles in South Asian countries with focus on Pakistan. A study used a qualitative approach entailing focus group discussions and content analysis of TV commercials. The conclusion was that, in Pakistan, television commercials reinforce gender stereotypes in that women are mostly represented stereotypically and traditionally.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Cultivation theory, as articulated by George Gerbner in 1976, proposes that a consistent exposure to media over a long period helps to form unreal aspects of viewers' perceptions. Gerbner proposed that, given the stature of television as the main storytelling media, it cultivates the attitudes and beliefs of particularly heavy viewers so that their perception is mostly congruent with the patterns of messages presented on the screen. Accordingly, the theory matches well with the current research theme “The Impact of the Portrayal of Women in Television Commercials on Adult’s Attitudes in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.” Cultivation theory aids in understanding how prolonged exposure to certain portrayals of women in television commercials may gradually lead to the creation of attitudes among audiences regarding gender roles, social expectations, and perceptions of women's capabilities. In a cultural setting like Rawalpindi, where media consumption is significant and is at times manipulated for public opinion, those portrayals in commercials may adopt either an old-fashioned or modernistic view, depending on the manners in which women are represented. Therefore, cultivation theory indeed provides ground for understanding the psychological and sociological effects of televised portrayals on attitudes within adults and strengthens the main assumption that media representations do not just reflect societal values but help crystallize them by means of shaping those values in time.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In this study design, quantitative research is applied to explore the effects of portrayal of women in television commercials on attitudes of adults in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The main objective is to examine whether and how representations of women on television affect the social perceptions and gender-related attitudes of the adult population. When the data has been gathered, researcher had evaluated it with statistical software to identify the relationships between representation of women on TV commercial and adults’ perception and attitudes.

3.2 Population

The population of the research study was Rawalpindi, a city located in Pakistan. This locality was marked by a rich mix of demographics, including people from different socioeconomic statuses. By emphasizing this particular area, the study seeks to gather an extensive array of viewpoints regarding the representations of women on television affect the social perceptions and gender-related attitudes of the adult population.

3.3 Sample Frame

For the sample population, the researcher concentrated on the general populace of Rawalpindi, aged 18 and above. The choice to target the general populace of Rawalpindi was made due to its convenient accessibility for the researcher. The researcher specifically aimed at particular age groups with at least a matriculation level of education in the city to collect their perspectives on the impact of the portrayal of women in television commercials on adult's attitudes.

3.4 Sample Size and Technique

Data was collected from (n=221) participants in the research study's as a sample. The researcher employed a probability sampling technique more precisely, a basic random sampling method to choose those subjects. The results were more trustworthy and reflective of the larger community because this strategy had made sure that the selection procedure was equitable and that everyone had an equal chance to be included in the study.

3.5 Data Collection

In order to obtain information, the researcher employed a survey. There were three sections to the self-designed questionnaire. Three options were presented to responders in the first section, which gathered demographic data. The dependent variable, which he measured using a Likert scale, was examined in the third section after the independent factors were the subject of the second. In response researcher received 221 responses. Researcher were able to clearly and methodically comprehend how the portrayal of women in television commercials impacts on adult's attitudes.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique

The researcher entered the gathered data into SPSS for data analysis, and then used a variety of statistical methods to analyse the study's findings. As a result, he was able to thoroughly examine the connections between the independent and dependent variables and gain a thorough grasp of how the portrayal of women in television commercials impacts on adult's attitudes.

4. RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Information

Sr. #	Questions	Options	f	%
1	Gender	Male	67	30.3
		Female	154	69.7
2	Age group	18 - 22	78	35.3
		23 - 27	97	43.9
		28 - 32	18	8.1
		32 and above	28	12.7
3	Education Level	Matriculation or below	12	5.4
		Intermediate	46	20.8
		Bachelor's Degree	106	48.0
		Master's Degree or above	57	25.8
4	Time spent on watching television	1 hour	152	68.8

	daily	2 – 3 hours	42	19.0
		3 – 4 hours	17	7.7
		More than 4 hours	10	4.5
5	How often do you watch television commercials?	Frequently	45	20.4
		Occasionally	54	24.4
		Rarely	80	36.2
		Never	42	19.0

The table 1 shows the demographic profile based on a survey of 221 respondents. Most of the participants were female (69.7%) and aged between 23 and 27 years (43.9%). The sample consisted mostly of respondents with at least a bachelor's degree, with 48% obtaining a bachelor's degree and 25.8% an advanced degree. Regarding television viewing, 68.8% of the respondents revealed that they watch TV for about an hour per day, and in this regard, 36.2% claimed that they rarely watched TV commercials, whereas only 20.4% stated that they frequently watched commercials.

Table 2: Representation of Women in Television Commercials

Sr. #	Questions	Options	f	%	S.D.	M
1	Most television commercials in Pakistan portray women in stereotypical roles such as homemakers, caregivers, or beauty-focused individuals.	Strongly Disagree	17	7.7	1.060	3.51
		Disagree	16	7.2		
		Neutral	55	24.9		
		Agree	104	47.1		
		Strongly Agree	29	13.1		
2	Women are often shown in TV commercials as dependent on men or needing male approval.	Strongly Disagree	20	9.0	1.080	3.15
		Disagree	38	17.2		
		Neutral	67	30.3		
		Agree	80	36.2		
		Strongly Agree	16	7.2		
3	In many commercials, women are used primarily to attract attention rather than to represent product functionality or knowledge.	Strongly Disagree	8	3.6	1.074	3.73
		Disagree	23	10.4		
		Neutral	48	21.7		
		Agree	84	38.0		
		Strongly Agree	58	26.2		
4	Commercials rarely feature women in authoritative, leadership, or technical roles.	Strongly Disagree	12	5.4	0.991	3.32
		Disagree	30	13.6		
		Neutral	72	32.6		
		Agree	89	40.3		
		Strongly Agree	18	8.1		
5	I think that the way women are portrayed in commercials affects men's attitudes towards women.	Strongly Disagree	11	5.0	1.001	3.57
		Disagree	21	9.5		
		Neutral	50	22.6		
		Agree	110	49.8		
		Strongly Agree	29	13.1		
6	The portrayal of women in TV advertisements has not evolved significantly in the last few years.	Strongly Disagree	9	4.1	0.959	3.28
		Disagree	36	16.3		
		Neutral	77	34.8		
		Agree	83	37.6		
		Strongly Agree	16	7.2		

The table 2 indicates that most respondents perceive the portrayal of women in Pakistani ads to be stereotypical: For example, about 47.1% of respondents agreed that women represent themselves in traditional roles, and 36.2% agreed that they are dependent on men. Also, 64.2% of the population agreed or strongly agreed that women are not represented as persons of expertise but rather to capture attention.

Around 48.4% lacked women's representation in leadership or technical roles, and 62.9% believed that these portrayals do influence men's attitudes toward women. Finally, it is interesting to note that 44.8% mentioned there has been no change over time in representations of women.

Table 3: Adult's Attitudes

Sr.	Questions	Options	f	%	S.D.	M
<i>Attitudes Towards the Gender Role</i>						
1	I believe that the way women are portrayed in commercials influences how society expects women to behave.	Strongly Disagree	15	6.8	1.036	3.30
		Disagree	33	14.9		
		Neutral	61	27.6		
		Agree	95	43.0		
		Strongly Agree	17	7.7		
2	Seeing women in non-traditional roles (e.g., leaders, professionals) in commercials positively impacts my view of women's capabilities.	Strongly Disagree	12	5.4	1.007	3.50
		Disagree	25	11.3		
		Neutral	48	21.7		
		Agree	113	51.1		
		Strongly Agree	23	10.4		
3	Commercials that portray women primarily for their physical appearance affect how I perceive women in real life.	Strongly Disagree	13	5.9	1.039	3.27
		Disagree	37	16.7		
		Neutral	69	31.2		
		Agree	81	36.7		
		Strongly Agree	21	9.5		
<i>Consumer Purchasing Behaviour</i>						
1	I am more likely to buy a product if the advertisement features an attractive female model.	Strongly Disagree	41	18.6	1.191	2.68
		Disagree	66	29.9		
		Neutral	51	23.1		
		Agree	49	22.2		
		Strongly Agree	14	6.3		
2	The way women are presented in commercials influences my perception of the product's quality.	Strongly Disagree	29	13.1	1.143	2.89
		Disagree	58	26.2		
		Neutral	54	24.4		
		Agree	68	30.8		
		Strongly Agree	12	5.4		
3	I avoid purchasing products that portray women in a stereotypical or objectifying manner.	Strongly Disagree	16	7.2	1.004	3.10
		Disagree	42	19.0		
		Neutral	78	35.3		
		Agree	74	33.5		
		Strongly Agree	11	5.0		
<i>Perception of Women Empowerment</i>						
1	I believe television commercials can play a significant role in promoting women empowerment.	Strongly Disagree	20	9.0	1.130	3.46
		Disagree	21	9.5		
		Neutral	50	22.6		
		Agree	98	44.3		
		Strongly Agree	32	14.5		
2	TV commercials that show women in leadership roles positively influence my perception of gender equality.	Strongly Disagree	11	5.0	0.961	3.47
		Disagree	18	8.1		
		Neutral	72	32.6		
		Agree	97	43.9		
		Strongly Agree	23	10.4		
3	I think the current portrayal of	Strongly Disagree	4	1.8	0.870	3.61

	women in most commercials does not reflect true women empowerment.	Disagree	17	7.7		
		Neutral	68	30.8		
		Agree	104	47.1		
		Strongly Agree	28	12.7		
<i>Social Acceptance of Gender Equality</i>						
1	Television commercials that portray women as equal to men help promote gender equality in society.	Strongly Disagree	15	6.8		
		Disagree	26	11.8		
		Neutral	51	23.1	1.016	3.40
		Agree	113	51.1		
		Strongly Agree	16	7.2		
2	I support the idea that men and women should have equal roles both at home and in the workplace.	Strongly Disagree	10	4.5		
		Disagree	21	9.5		
		Neutral	42	19.0	1.074	3.73
		Agree	94	42.5		
		Strongly Agree	54	24.4		
3	Portrayals of women in commercials influence how society views women's rights and capabilities.	Strongly Disagree	11	5.0		
		Disagree	24	10.9		
		Neutral	58	26.2	1.003	3.49
		Agree	102	46.2		
		Strongly Agree	26	11.8		
<i>Cultural and Societal Norms Influence</i>						
1	Television commercials often reflect the traditional cultural values and gender expectations of Pakistani society.	Strongly Disagree	17	7.7		
		Disagree	31	14.0		
		Neutral	55	24.9	1.052	3.31
		Agree	102	46.2		
		Strongly Agree	16	7.2		
2	The portrayal of women in TV advertisements helps shape societal norms regarding women's roles.	Strongly Disagree	9	4.1		
		Disagree	40	18.1		
		Neutral	63	28.5	0.994	3.31
		Agree	91	41.2		
		Strongly Agree	18	8.1		
3	I believe repeated exposure to certain portrayals of women in media can gradually change societal expectations of women.	Strongly Disagree	9	4.1		
		Disagree	23	10.4		
		Neutral	56	25.3	0.961	3.52
		Agree	109	49.3		
		Strongly Agree	24	10.9		

The dependant variable table entitled "Adult Attitudes" examines how viewers conceptualize and internalize gender roles, consumer behaviour, women empowerment, equality, and societal norm influences through TV commercials. The most surprising thing was that 43% of the total audience believed that ads' scribbles of women should shape expectations about roles in society, while 51.1% of them said positive effects viewing woman in nontraditional roles on their views toward women. The 36.7% were agreeing that the purpose of women as symbols in advertisement feeds the impact of perceptions associated with them in real life. About 29.9% of consumers do not agree on the purchasing influence because of model representation, while 30.8% agree that portrayal has a quality influence on the product. Most interestingly, 33.5% affirmed that they do not purchase goods or services advertised as objectifying women. On the empowerment aspect, advertisement for empowerment is believed by 44.3%, and the current ad portrayals did not reflect real empowerment according to 47.1%. On gender equality, 51.1% concurred that equal representation is for promoting gender equality, while 42.5% agree on promoting such equality in homes and the workplace. In sum, 46.2% agreed that commercials reflect traditional gender roles; on the contrary, 49.3% believed that repetition of portrayals may slowly change

societal expectations. Such results show that commercials can actively shape adult attitudes toward gender roles and societal norms.

Table 4: *Correlation among the variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M	SD
Representation of Women in Television Commercials	1							20.5520	4.14655
Attitudes Towards the Gender Role	.571**	1						10.0679	2.30018
Consumer Purchasing Behaviour	.268**	.359**	1					8.6697	2.58921
Perception of Women Empowerment	.431**	.507**	.273**	1				10.5339	2.25932
Social Acceptance of Gender Equality	.361**	.581**	.280**	.575**	1			10.6199	2.46067
Cultural and Societal Norms Influence	.378**	.500**	.256**	.521**	.598**	1		10.1493	2.44398
Overall Adult Attitude	.535**	.785**	.597**	.762**	.813**	.771**	1	50.0407	8.95662

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation table indicated that there were statistically significant and strong relationships between the key study variables. The positive correlation was noted among the representation of women in television commercials, the perception of female empowerment, consumer purchasing behavior, and social acceptance of gender equality, which have significant values at the 0.01 level. It is important to note that the highest correlation was on social acceptance of gender equality ($r = .813$), societal and cultural norms influence ($r = .771$), and gender role attitudes ($r = .785$) with overall adult attitude. These findings indicate a notion that the media representation of adults does not determine the attitudes of people, but instead, by other factors associated with socio-culture and the perception of gender equality and women empowerment.

Table 5: *One-Sample Test*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Age	30.306	220	.000	1.982	1.85	2.11
Education Level	52.911	220	.000	2.941	2.83	3.05
Spent on watching television daily	26.714	220	.000	1.480	1.37	1.59
Watch television commercials	36.994	220	.000	2.538	2.40	2.67
Overall Adult Attitude	83.057	220	.000	50.04072	48.8533	51.2281

The results of the one-sample t-test also supported the importance of the most significant demographic and attitudinal variables. The statistically significant differences of the test value were found in terms of age ($t = 30.306$, $p = .000$), education level ($t = 52.911$, $p = .000$), the number of hours per day watching television ($t = 26.714$, $p = .000$), and frequency of watching television commercials ($t = 36.994$, $p = .000$). The t-value of overall adult attitude ($t = 83.057$, $p = .000$) is very high, which demonstrates a good consistency in the perceptions and it may mean that there are well-developed attitudes of adult respondents that depend on the content of the media and social norms.

Table 6: One way ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	243.982	1	243.982	3.070	.081
Within Groups	17404.652	219	79.473		
Total	17648.633	220			

The one-way ANOVA was used to investigate the difference between the groups in terms of the overall adult attitudes and showed no statistically significant difference between the chosen demographic rates ($F = 3.070$, $p = .081$). This means that there is no significant difference in the way adults perceive the use of women in advertisements as it varies based on the grouping variable (probably age or education). Thus, the differences in the attitudes look more associated with psychological and perceptual aspects than with demographic differences.

Table 7: ANOVA^a

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5055.556	1	5055.556	87.919	.000 ^b
	Residual	12593.078	219	57.503		
	Total	17648.633	220			

a. Dependent Variable: Overall Adult Attitude

b. Predictors: (Constant), Representation of Women in Television Commercials

Table 8: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	26.281	2.585		10.168	.000
	Independent Variabl	1.156	.123	.535	9.376	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overall Adult Attitude

The regression analysis has determined that the proportion of women in the television commercials is a strong predictor of the attitude of the adults. The statistical significance of the model was significant ($F = 87.919$, $p = .000$), which means that the explanatory power of the model was high. The nonstandardized coefficient ($B = 1.156$, $p = .000$) indicates that a one-unit change in the process of portraying women leads to an increase in the overall adult attitude by 1.156 units. The standardized coefficient ($b = .535$) indicates that the effect size is moderate to strong, which validates the fact that the representation of women in the media has a direct impact on the perception of adults in terms of gender roles, empowerment, and gender equality.

5. DISCUSSION

This research delves into how women are presented in television commercials and how this influences adult in Rawalpindi in Pakistan, thereby contributing significantly towards an understanding of the media material specifically advertisements affecting perceptions on gender roles, consumer behaviour, empowerment, and societal norms.

These findings confirm that a large majority of respondents were of the opinion that television commercials reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. The data show that 47.1% of subjects agreed that women in commercials are often put in stereotypical roles, such as homemakers or beauty-and-fashion-oriented individuals. Previous literature has repeatedly shown that the media tends to propagate a narrow and often regressive portrayal of women (Furnham & Mak, 1999). Such representations are believed to

influence the audience's more extensive expectations of gender behaviour since a greater than 50% response agreed that portrayals shape society's expectations of women.

Definitely! The studies have started to show that people are becoming much more conscious about how they can make use of the media as an empowering platform. Among the sampled respondents, nearly 44.3% remarked that advertorials on television can support women empowerment, while 47.1% had the opinion that portrayals were actually not reflecting empowerment. This contradiction eventually exhibits the prevailing tension between progressive representation and stereotypical sentiments fixed in Pakistani media—a reflection of findings between Zia and Syedah (2015) where they highlight the media as a double-edged sword with respect to gender norms.

Of great interest to the analysis was that there was a gendered factor in the differences perceived. This means that male and female respondents may be very different in their internalization of the portrayals. While the majority of both genders agreed on the influence of media on gender role attitudes, women were indeed more critical of objectifying portrayals and even more supportive of equal representation which agrees with research by Eisend (2010) as a result of which, gender would influence interpretation of media and psychological effects therein.

By consumer behaviour, the outcome was further complicated—while 30.8% of the participants stated that the portrayal of women influences how they perceive product quality, 33.5% refrain from the purchase of products that feature objectifying or stereotypical women. The idea, therefore, suggests developing an increasingly critical media literacy among viewers, which seems to indicate a move towards ethical consumerism—an emerging trend also discussed by Jemal & Melese (2025).

Theoretical findings support these outcomes in Gerbner's Cultivation Theory. By consistent exposure to that portrayal, viewers would develop perception and expectation in accordance with the state of the televised contents (Gerbner et al., 2002). The belief of 49.3% of respondents that society, by repetitious exposure to media, might slowly alter its values supports the core tenet of the theory stated.

The data furthermore highlighted that media do function as an enforceable challenge to societal norms. While 46.2 percent of respondents believed advertisements reflect entrenched notions of gender values, another similar percentage believed advertisements have the potential to alter such norms. This gives credence to Goffman (1979), who stated that advertising reflects and shapes the culture. The duality becomes more pronounced in Rawalpindi, where the juxtaposition of the traditional with the modern sits uneasily with each other.

These research questions have been fully addressed in this study. Women are stereotypically portrayed in those media, which strongly influences the adults—women or men—in forming their perceptions on gender roles, empowerment, and societal norms. More importantly, there is a recognized disparity in how men and women perceive and process these portrayals. This lends support to the study's focus on demographic variables serving as moderators.

5.1 Theoretical Implication

This study contributes in a significant manner to media and gender scholarship by putting Cultivation Theory to a much localized, contextual environment Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The central thesis of the study confirms the central premise of the theory that prolonged and repetitive exposure to media content can, to an extent, distort audiences' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about social reality. In this case, constant portrayal of women in stereotypical roles has been shown to alter the attitudes of adult viewers toward women, in terms of gender roles, empowerment, and societal expectations. Thus, the study reinforces the argument that media does not reflect but rather constructs and perpetuates societal norms. Further, this study extends Gerbner's cultivation framework by demonstrating how messages are understood within a socio-cultural context where remnants of traditional culture coexist with new influences. The study also affirms that such interpretations are not homogenous but instead are moderated by factors like gender, age, and education. Through grounding cultivation theory in the South Asian media environment, this

research improves the cross-cultural validity of the theory for regions outside the West and makes evident its pertinence in other non-Western contexts. It opens up prospects for further theoretical inquiries as to how burgeoning media literacy and critical consumer awareness would be interplay or contest the cultivation process in such quickly transforming societies.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study has discussed at length that the portrayal of women in commercials on television would bear upon the attitudes of adults in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Using the cultivation theory of analysis, it has shown that repeated visual representation in a gendered media has a significant impact on how an individual or society perceives the roles, abilities, and social standing of women. These findings prove that most of the time, women are shown in clichéd and traditional roles, which does not only continue the previous gender norms but also curtails public imagination against the female-gendered agency and empowerment.

To such extent that a decent portion of respondents noted the restrictive and often objectifying portrayals of women in commercials, there was also major cognizance of their potential for effecting change through media. Most of the respondents agreed that nontraditional representations such as women in positions of authority and technical specialties would positively influence public attitudes and thus more favourable perceptions of gender. Results, therefore, discuss both limitations persistent and new opportunities evolving in the Pakistani advertising scenario. Add some claims regarding the impact of women as portrayed in television commercials but develop a theory. The outcome has studied a direct relationship where one leads to another. Cultivation theory of media has brought out the clear demonstration whereby constant exposure to messages has greater impacts on individuals, as well as society, bearing in mind the author's roles, capabilities, and position in the social ladder.

While most respondents were significantly aware of depicting women in advertisements as limiting and sometimes objectification, they also recognized that media could enact this kind of change. Most participants were inclined to agree with the belief that untraditional representations-such as women in leadership or technical roles-could be brought about to define as proving positive in transforming public perceptions and creating more egalitarian views of gender. These results highlight limitations permanent and also new opportunities budding in the very familiar ad scene of Pakistan.

In the end, there are implications for media people, advertisers, policymakers, and educators. By advocating for progressive and realistic portrayals of women, stakeholders will contribute to the process of dismantling gender stereotypes and promoting social equity. As Pakistan traverses its path of tradition vs modernity, the media, especially the avenue of television commercials, plays a central role in forging public consciousness and gender-inclusive narratives.

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