

Portrayal of Women in Print Media: A Content Analysis of Advertisements of Kannada Dailies

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Abstract

The projection of women's image in media is quite degrading and leaves lot to be desired. Most of the information available puts women under same stereotype image which exists down the years. For decades, media representation of men and women has posed common concerns among researchers Worldwide. A wide variety of debates have been running about its negative and positive depictions. With the advertising being one of the major option that have bought advantages as well as challenges. This paper has analyses the similar context of women in advertisements in specific to Kannada daily Newspapers. For this study, the researchers examined advertisements of two leading newspapers of Kannada language namely Vijayavani and Vijaya Karnataka. The researcher collected three months Newspaper (VV and VK) and adopted content analysis method to study and to analyze the content of advertisements in the respective dailies. In spite growing gender awareness and more females in media, the mainstream print media has still been using female images and particularly the glamorous pictures of celebrities objectifying the aesthetic values of female body. It has been also observed from the study that, women mostly found in the advertisements confined to food, cosmetics and other domestic products rather automobiles and electronics.

Key words: Gender, Masculinity, Newspaper advertisement, Gendered Media, Portrayal, Stereotypes, Female images.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Media is said to be the fourth pillar of our society and how women are portrayed in media remains a debatable topic and an important area of research till date. Advertising being an important part of media is not untouched from similar debates. Portrayal of women in advertisements is an eternal part of advertising industry. Advertisement portrays women in various roles as diverse of an ordinary housewife to a completely professional career woman. Currently, there is a significant shift in the manner how women are portrayed in advertisements. Women's role has now evolved and women are often projected as empowered ones.

Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation. It strengthens the innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power and experience (Jacob, 2013). Empowerment can overall be defined as all those processes where women take control and ownership of their lives. Control and ownership requires an array of opportunities to choose among and this understanding of empowerment overlaps with the concept of human development when defined as a process of enlarging peoples' choices (Manuh, 2006).

The mass media plays a pivotal role in changing, altering, molding, shaping and reforming the thoughts of every individual and the mass thereby influencing the perception, behavior, habits and lifestyle of all. It is well known that mass media continuously feed the messages which may not cover all aspects of reality.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Geis, Brown, Jennings and Porter (1984) had conducted a study on 160 respondents from where they found that those respondents who watched commercials were more likely to be home-bound and more interested in household chores than in career growth.

Vestergaard & Schroder, (1985) claimed that content contributes to the Fulfillment of the material needs of individuals, social needs and goods purchased by individuals 38 are an indicator of their character. They further claimed that advertisement is like a public announcement to encourage the sale of goods and services.

Fairclough (1989) has commented that Media is a powerful tool, as exposure has far-reaching effects for people's lives and thought processes, particularly magazine and television advertisements.

Clatterbaugh (1997) has claimed that men end up hurting themselves in order to hold power. Needless to say, hegemonic masculinity holds influence and prestige not only over women but also over other men. For example- Hegemonic masculinity in the United States would mean that the individual is masculine, highly educated, and belongs to the highest economic class.

Elasmar et al. (1999); Signorielli & McLead, (1994) have asserted that there is immense pressure on women to have attractive, slender, youthful bodies and also to be single because of media exposure.

Morna (2002) studied the representation and portrayal of women in media. She found that women are missing in media; they are hardly interviewed or asked for opinions. They are mainly presented as homemakers and hardly portrayed as politician, newsmakers, experts or business leaders. Majority of coverage in mainstream media is about violence against women and domestic issues. Women are physically absent in sports and politics.

Prasad (2004) focused on various communication policies and their implications for empowerment of women in India. Indian media portrays negative picture of women. The broadcasting policies should be region based and on gender equity. The role of various mass media can be effectively attributed in agriculture, health, behaviour change and child care. Rural and urban women respond differently to mass media. Rural women are more inclined towards serials, cinema programs whereas urban women watch more of educative and informative programs. The insights from selected Indian states focus on the role played by mass media in the process of women empowerment. State governments are making efforts to provide equality to women and this can be judged from projects/schemes being launched at various levels. In these states, various SHGs and NGOs aim to achieve economic and social status for women.

Narasimhan (2007) concluded that though the representation of women in media has increased but still media is dominated by patriarchal view and women are sexually harassed at work place. Women are still asked to cover 'soft' news. Network of women raising collective voice is more effective than a woman journalist dissenting. Working conditions of women working in BPOs have not been looked upon. Media neglects the coverage of gender linked socio psychological aspect of countries in conflict and focuses only on political side of hostilities. As compared to newspapers, documentaries are more apt in conveying reactions of victims to serve a social purpose. Over the years advertisements have become more westernised in style and expression.

Srivastava (2008) analysed the position of women in Bihar's media. The advertisement hoardings, logos targeted and exploited women. In television serials, the negative portrayal of women is a matter of concern as the fact remains that media influences the women most. Rape and dowry deaths were reported in a routine manner in local dailies of Bihar. There is no investigative angle and the news coverage is completely insensitive to human aspects of the story. Media highlighted and exposed various sex rackets running in Bihar but due to involvement of influential people these sensational cases were shelved. There were no follow-up of the victims ever done.

Das Ajay (2009) has pointed out that marketers are "likely" to use stereotypes as a marketing tactic for goods. He has also pointed out that men are depicted as being aggressive, decisive, brave and smart.

Banerjee Shourini & Kakade Onkargouda (2016) have reported in their study on 14 Primetime TV Advertisements that they reflect a stereotyped image in which Smelling and good looking elevates a person's standing in society. They noted that the advertisements reinforced that it is important to transmit the manliness or femininity through using body frames or by using particular items.

From the above literature review it is evident that, media is still showing gender imbalanced picture with respect to the portrayal. Stereotyped, prejudices and inappropriate presentation of women in media especially in advertisement is yet a concerned matter of subject. Hence there is a need to study and tackle the bias and underrepresentation of women in advertisements and fix it through media policies.

Need of the Study:

The present decade is a decisive time for Indian society, as the nation faces gender imbalance upon which the civilisation depends is unravelling with daring consequences. To build a sustainable future, the minds of the society need to be cultured, all issues concerning women have to be understood and responded. To live in a new global reality of empowered women in all respects, a giant leap needs to be taken by the media. The Indian media needs to react strongly to socio-cultural forms of gender prejudice. Media has the power and where-with-all to provide magic multipliers for development causes. Hence the concern of the study is how print media advertisements influence men and women in the society.

Study of Objectification of male and female in the advertisements may it be aired in television or printed in different publications is the need of hour. Whenever the term objectification comes it is not only related to women but to men too. Thus the research is an attempt to analyze the coverage of men, women in advertisements and their representation in the print media ads.

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To analyze the content of the gender stereotyped advertisements in print media
2. To know the portrayal of women in print media advertisements
3. To understand the facets of gender disparity highlighted and downplayed by the Newspaper advertisements
4. To study the coverage of women in Newspaper advertisements
5. To scrutinize women empowerment through advertisements of Kannada leading newspaper

Research Design and Methods

The study is an effort to undertaken to explore, analyze and evaluate different forms of portrayal of men and women particularly women representation that were published in the Kannada Newspaper advertisements. The qualitative research design has been adopted to analyze in-depth the content of advertisements in print media. Content analysis was chosen for the study as it is a popular research tool used to quantify the media content.

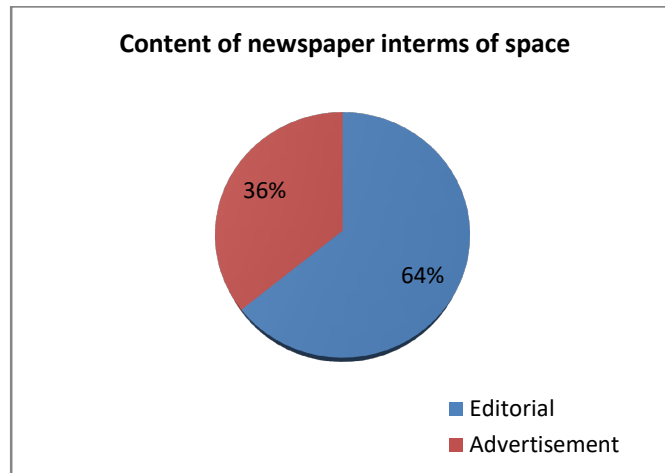
Advertisements that were published in two leading newspaper of Kannada language namely VijayaKarnataka and Vijayavani were measured and recorded manually. Systematic random sampling method has been adopted to pick up the sample. 184 Newspapers (VV-92 & VK-92) of last trimester of 2019 (October, November, December) were taken for study. Advertisements are categorized into 24 sections based on the purpose they serve, consumption and coded on the basis of pre codes devised by the print media content research folk and required modification were made in the coding for suitability of the study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Vijayavani

Table 1. Content of Vijayavani daily

Sl No	Content	Space Sq.cm	%	Item	%
1	Editorial	1266494	64.15	8241	63.96
2	Advertisement	707870.8	35.85	4644	36.04
	Total	1974364.8	100.00	12885	100.00



The Table 1 deals with the content of Vijayavani Newspaper. Editorial content covers maximum space contributing 1266494 Sq.cm (64.15%) and advertisements occupied next position 707870.8 Sq.cm (35.85%) space in Vijayavani. From the above table it is observed that editorial content covers more space compared to advertisement content in the Vijayavani daily Newspaper.

Looking at the number of items covered in Vijayavani newspaper, editorial comprising 8241 items where as advertisements are published in 4644 numbers. Together Vijayavani published 12885 items.

Table 2. Category wise break-up of advertisements of Vijayavani daily

(N=4644)

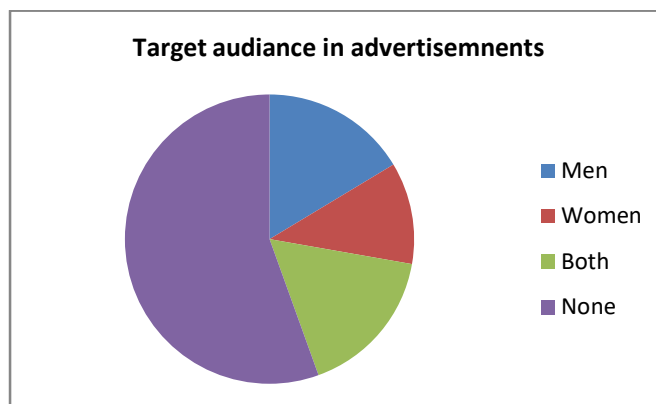
SI No	Category	Item	%	Ranking
1.	Classified	1584	34.11	1 st
2.	Government	1230	26.49	2 nd
3.	Health	405	8.72	3 rd
4.	Celebration	273	5.88	4 th
5.	Services	246	5.30	5 th
6.	Automobile	207	4.46	6 th
7.	Others	96	2.07	7 th
8.	Educational Institution	90	1.94	8 th
9.	Cosmetics/Beauty/jewellery	62	1.33	9 th
10.	Food	60	1.29	10 th
11.	Household	58	1.24	11 th
12.	Clothing/shoes	56	1.20	12 th
13.	Construction	52	1.11	13 th
14.	E-Commerce	42	0.90	14 th
15.	Personal Hygiene	35	0.75	15 th
16.	Agriculture	33	0.71	16 th
17.	Home decor	31	0.66	17 th
18.	Stationary	24	0.52	18 th
19.	Electronic	21	0.45	19 th
20.	Electrical	18	0.39	20 th
21.	Finance	12	0.26	21 st
22.	Baby Products	9	0.19	22 nd
23.	Surrogate	0	0	
	Total	4644	100.00	

The above Table 2 deals with the category wise break up of advertisements published in Vijayavani Kannada daily Newspaper. It is identified from the above table that Classified advertisements published were the majority Contributing 34.11 percent (N=1584), followed by government advertisements 26.49 percent (N=1230), Health accounted for considerable 8.72 percent (N=405), Celebration had 5.88 percent (N=273), Services 5.30 percent (N=246), being the top five categories with respect to number of items covered. Baby Products 0.19 percent (N=9), Finance 0.26 percent (N=12) being the bottom two categories.

From the obtained data it can be opinioned that classified advertisements occupied the prime position in the table and shows that the Vijayavani has published significant number of classified ads. Government, health, celebration and services also came up with maximum coverage. Astonishingly, Baby products and Finance covers very minimal item in the respective daily. No surrogate ads and advertorial found in Vijayavani.

Table 3. Products and Services and the target audience (VV)

SI No	Gender	Space Sq.cm	%	Item	%
1	Men	115955.5	16.38	634	13.65
2	Women	80386.75	11.36	273	5.88
3	Both	118489.8	16.74	390	8.40
4	None	393038.7	55.52	3347	72.07
	Total	707870.8	100.00	4644	100.00



From the Table 3 it can be seen that a great majority of advertisements in the Vijayavani daily published with no presence of either men or women covering the space 393038.7 Sq.cm (55.52%), followed by mixed population of both men and women contributing 118489.8 Sq.cm (16.74%), Men 115955.5 Sq.cm (16.38%), women in the ads accounts least 80386.75 Sq.cm (11.36%) by the Vijayavani daily.

With respect to items targeting the audience, there were no men or women present in 72.07 percent (N=3347) of advertisements. Men folk targeted in 13.65 percent (N=634) of ads, where as women contributing 5.88 percent (N=273). Presence of both men and women constitutes 8.40 percent (N= 390).

Observation drawn from the table that, advertisements published by the Vijayavani completely directed at mixed population comprising both men and women. When sexes were studied separately, it is quite evident that male population had grabbed more ads in Vijayavani than woman folk.

Table 4. Women coverage in different categorical advertisements of Vijayavani daily

SI No	Category	Item	%
1.	Celebration	63	23.08
2.	Health	60	21.98
3.	Cosmetics/Beauty/jeweler	33	12.09
4.	Stationary	19	6.59
5.	Services	17	6.59
6.	Personal Hygiene	12	4.40
7.	Classified	12	4.40
8.	Household	10	3.66
9.	Baby Products	9	3.30
10.	Educational Institution	8	2.93
11.	Automobile	6	2.20
12.	Electronic	6	2.20
13.	Food	4	1.47
14.	Clothing/shoes	3	1.10
15.	Home décor	3	1.10
16.	E-Commerce	3	1.10
17.	Others	3	1.10
18.	Finance	2	0.73
19.	Electrical	0	0.00
20.	Construction	0	0.00
21.	Government	0	0.00
22.	Agriculture	0	0
23.	Surrogate	0	0

	Total	273	100
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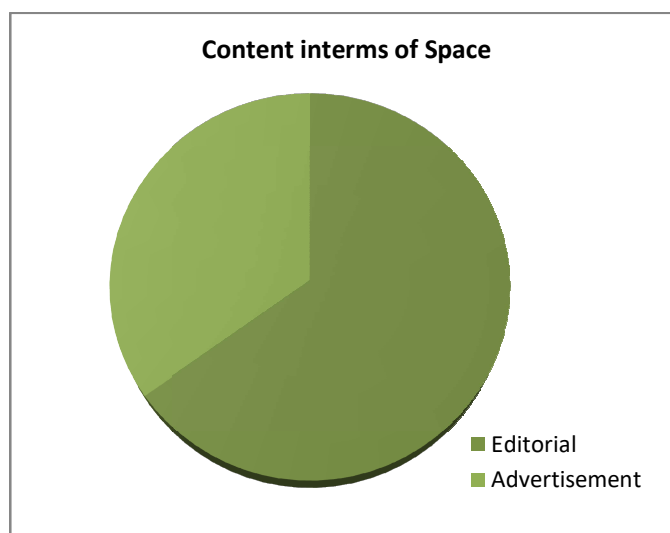
Table 4 shows that Celebration advertisements are mostly aimed at women with 23.08 percent (N=63), followed by Health products 21.98 percent (N=60), Cosmetics/Beauty/jeweler advertisements 12.09 percent (N=33). Clothing/shoe, home decors, e-commerce 1.10 percent (N=3) and Finance 0.73 percent (N=2) were found rear two categories in VV.

From the above table it is evident that celebration ads are aiming at women in its advertisements considering women are the primary consumers of such products. Next to it health ads given importance to women, followed by Cosmetics/Beauty/jeweler products. She had been minimal covered in ads related to clothing/shoes and e-commerce ads in Vijayavani daily. It is quite surprising that she had less coverage in home décor ads. Women are nil in agriculture, construction, Electrical and government ads published in Vijayavani.

Vijaya Karnataka

Table 5. Content of Vijaya Karnataka daily

SI No	Content	Space Sq.cm	%	Item	%
1	Editorial	1098951	65.05	7587	67.89
2	Advertisement	590518.8	34.95	3588	32.11
	Total	1689469.80	100.00	11175	100.00



The Table 5 deals with the content of Vijaya Karnataka Newspaper. Editorial content covers maximum space contributing 1098951 Sq.cm (65.05%) and advertisements occupied next position 590518.8 Sq.cm (34.95%) space in Vijaya Karnataka. From the above table it is observed that editorial content covers more space compared to advertisement content in the Vijaya Karnataka Kannada daily.

Looking at the number of items covered in Vijaya Karnataka newspaper, editorial comprising 7587 items where as advertisements are published in 3588 numbers. Together Vijaya Karnataka published 11175 items.

Table 6. Category wise break-up of advertisements of Vijaya Karnataka daily

(N=3588)

SI No	Category	Item	%	Ranking
1	Government	1290	35.95	1 st
2	Classified	1188	33.11	2 nd
3	Health	264	7.36	3 rd
4	Celebration	168	4.68	4 th
5	Automobile	132	3.67	5 th

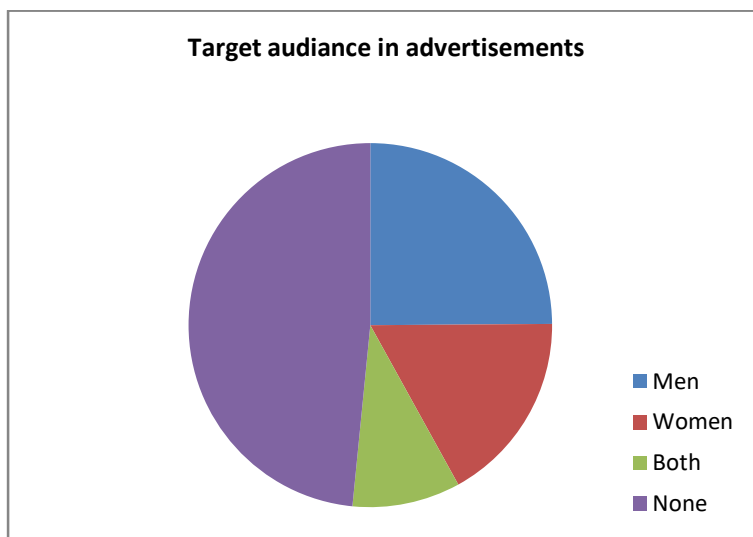
6	Food	108	3.0	6 th
7	Services	80	2.23	7 th
8	Educational Institution	54	1.51	8 th
9	Cosmetics/Beauty/jeweler	52	1.44	9 th
10	Stationary	50	1.39	10 th
11	Household	34	0.94	11 th
12	Construction	32	0.89	12 th
13	Electronic	24	0.67	13 th
14	Clothing/shoes	19	0.52	14 th
15	Others	17	0.47	15 th
16	Baby Products	16	0.44	16 th
17	Electrical	14	0.39	17 th
18	Personal Hygiene	13	0.35	18 th
19	E-Ccommerce	11	0.30	19 th
20	Finance	10	0.28	20 th
21	Agriculture	6	0.17	21 st
22	Home decor	4	0.10	22 nd
23	Advertorial	2	0.05	23 rd
24	Surrogate	0	0	
	Total	3588	100.00	

The Table 6 deals with the category wise break up of advertisements published in Vijaya Karnataka Kannada daily. It is identified from the above table that government advertisements published were the majority covering 35.95 percent (N=1290), followed by classified covering 33.11 percent (N=1188), Health 7.36 percent (N=264), Celebration 4.68 percent (N=168), Automobile 3.67 percent (N=132) being the top five categories with respect to items covered. Advertorial 0.05 percent (N=2), Home décor 0.10 percent (N=4) being the bottom two categories.

From the derived data it can be examined that government advertisements occupied the prime position in the table and shows that the Vijaya Karnataka has published significant number of govt. ads. Classifieds, health, Celebration and Automobile ads also came up with maximum coverage. However, advertorial and Home décors covers very minimal item in the respective daily. No surrogate ads found in Vijaya Karnataka.

Table 7. Products and Services and the target audience (VK)

SI No	Gender	Space Sq.cm	%	Item	%
1	Men	146951.7	24.89	424	11.82
2	Women	100913	17.09	261	7.27
3	Both	56613	9.59	242	6.74
4	None	286041.3	48.44	2661	74.16
	Total	590518.8	100.00	3588	100.00



From the Table 7 it can be seen that a great majority of advertisements in the Vijaya Karnataka daily published ads with no presence of either men or women covering the space 286041.3 Sq.cm (48.44%), followed by men 146951.7Sq.cm (24.89%), Women 100913 Sq.cm (17.09%), presence of both men and women in the ad being least covered ad 56613 Sq.cm (9.59%) by the Vijaya Karnataka.

With respect to items targeting the audience, there were no men or women present in 74.16 percent (N=2661) of advertisements. Men are being targeted in 11.82 percent (N=424) of ads, where as women contributing 7.27 percent (N=261). Presence of both men and women constitutes 6.74 percent (N= 242).

Observation drawn from the table that, advertisements published by the Vijaya Karnataka covers maximum space where in no presence of men and women is found. Vijaya Karnataka mostly targeted at male population when sexes were examined independently. It is quite evident that male population grabbed more ads in Vijaya Karnataka than woman.

Table 8. Women coverage in different categorical advertisements of Vijaya Karnataka daily

Sl No	Category	Item	%
1.	Health	47	18.00
2.	Government	43	16.47
3.	Cosmetics/Beauty/jeweler	28	10.72
4.	Celebration	26	9.95
5.	Household	25	9.58
6.	Stationary	23	8.81
7.	Classified	18	6.90
8.	Baby Products	15	5.75
9.	Food	8	3.06
10.	Personal Hygiene	7	2.68
11.	Educational Institution	5	1.91
12.	Services	4	1.53
13.	Clothing/shoes	3	1.15
14.	Electronic	3	1.15
15.	Finance	2	0.77
16.	E-Commerce	2	0.77
17.	Others	2	0.77
18.	Agriculture	0	0.00
19.	Automobile	0	0.00
20.	Advertorial	0	0.00
21.	Construction	0	0.00
22.	Electrical	0	0.00
23.	Home decor	0	0.00
24.	Surrogate	0	0.00
	Total	261	100.00

Table 8 shows that women have been seen mostly in health ads 18 percent (N=47), followed by government 16.47 percent (N=43), Cosmetics/Beauty/jewelry advertisements contribute 10.72 percent (N=28). Finance and E-Commerce 0.77 percent (N=2), Clothing/shoe and electronics 1.15 percent (N=3) were observed bottom two categories in VK.

From the above table it is clear that health products are focusing women in its advertisements, followed by government ads. However she is again pushed immediately to Cosmetics/Beauty/jewelry ads considering women are the primary consumers of such products. Women have been minimal covered in ads related to finance, e-commerce, electronics and clothing/shoes in Vijaya Karnataka daily. Women presence is nil in agriculture, automobile, advertorial and surrogate ads in VK.

IV. CONCLUSION:

The study had clearly demonstrated that Vijaya Karnataka and Vijayavani newspaper published advertisements on cosmetics/beauty/jewel, household, health directly targeting the women while male folk found in advertisements of automobile, electronics and others. This distinguish indicated, male is depicted as muscular and powerful while female is represented in a passive sense as sexy, decorative, and aesthetic manner.

In this research it is evident that women is less found in ads of clothing/shoes, agriculture, finance, electronics and automobile which distinctly show that women is made to play the role of provocative while man had played a role of masculinity and dominance. In the long run this difference in the portrayal of men and women leads to gender inequality.

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