

EFFECTS OF ADVERTISEMENT PROJECTION OF WOMEN ON WOMEN



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Introduction

- Media & Society are interrelated and affect each other. Advertisement being a part of it plays a huge role to shape the lives of people.
- Advertisement representation of women and men is unequal. Men as shown as power symbol while women are objectified and shown in traditional way. However the advertisement industry is evolving but still the representation is not fully gender neutral or inclusive.
- A study by Shahwar (2013) finds that the women are excessively and unnecessarily portrayed in the commercials. They are used as an attractive and eye-catching element to capture the attention of viewers.
- This research tries to understand the effects of projection of women in advertisement on women and how do they want to bring change in the advertisement industry.

Objectives

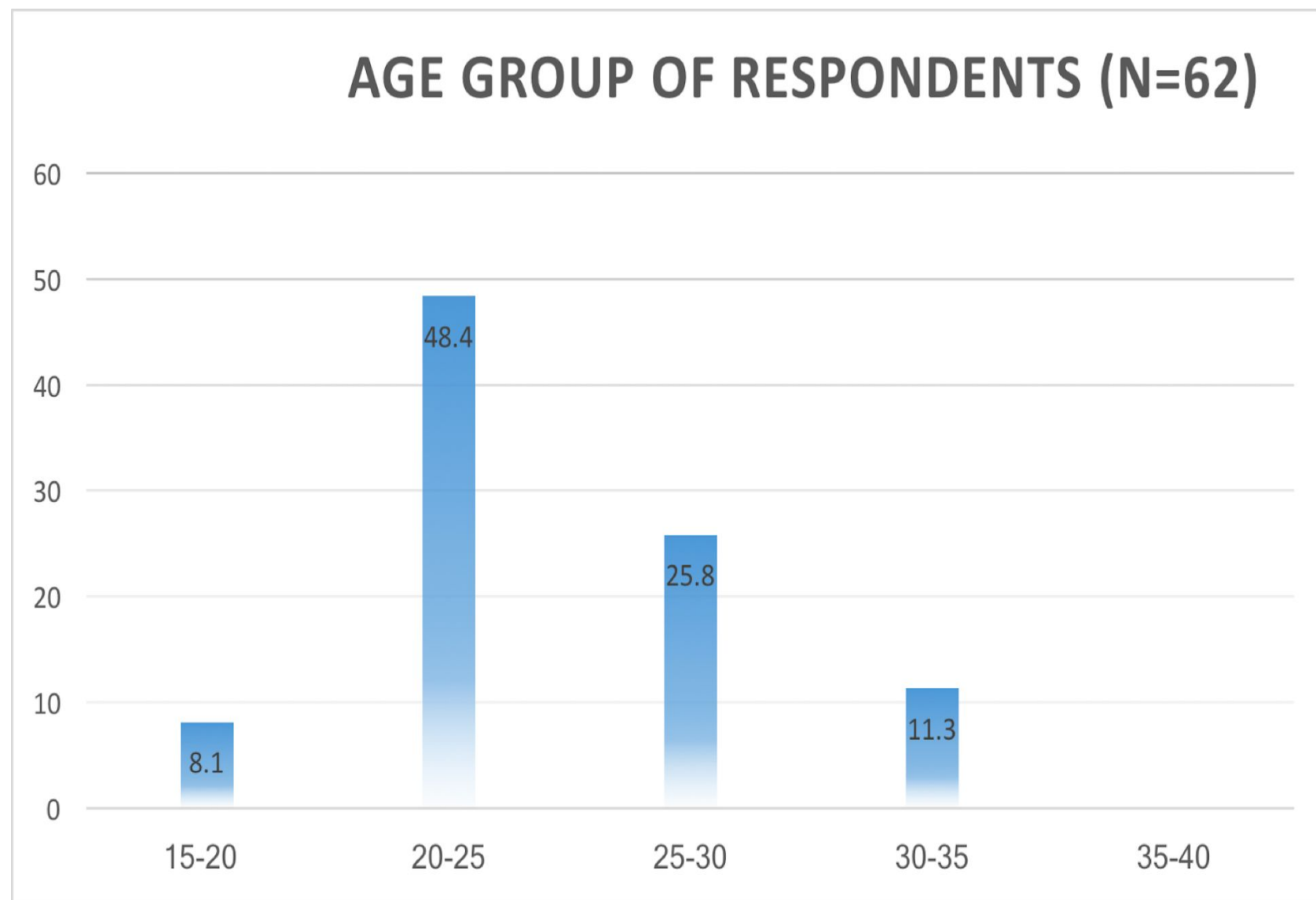
- To find how an advertisement projection of women effects women

Research Methodology

- Survey Area - Virtual Survey
- Research Methodology - Mixed Method (Exploratory and Descriptive)
- Data collection Method - Online Survey Questionnaire Method using Structured Questionnaire
- Research Design - Quantitative & Qualitative Research Design
- Nature of data - Primary Data (Individual based without third party interference)
- Data Analysis Technique - Statistical Analysis using MS Excel
- Sample Design - Non - Probability Convenience Sampling
- Sample Size- 62 unit

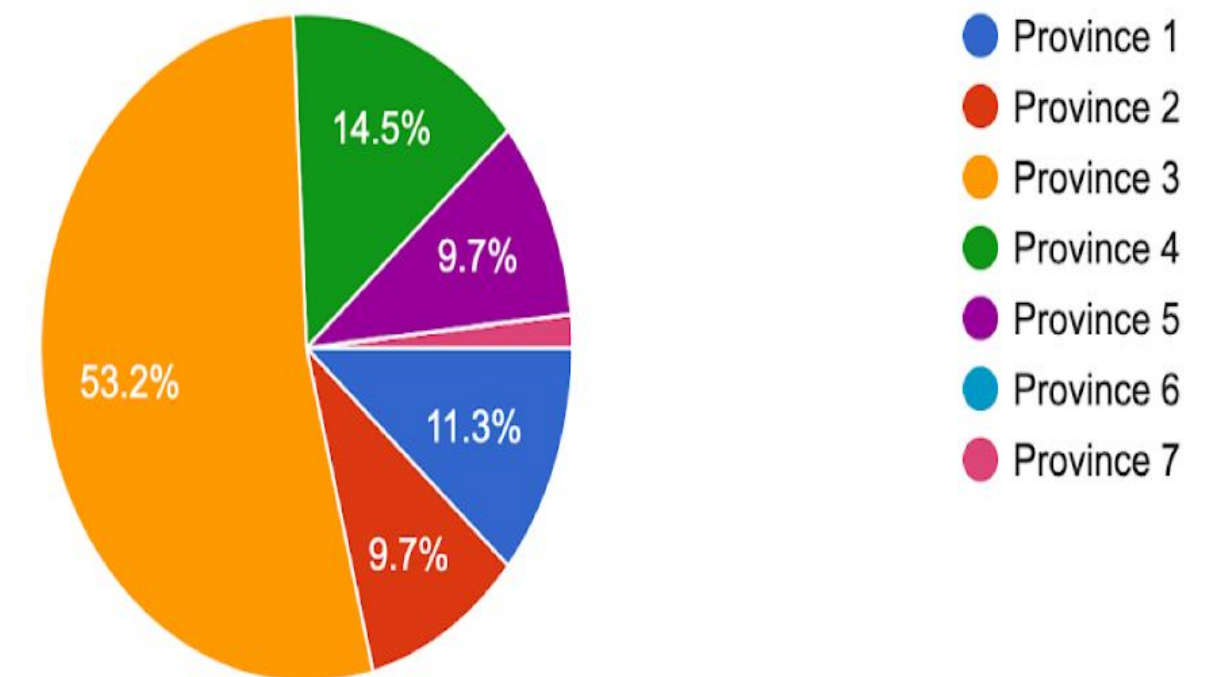
Socio-demographic Information

- 48.4% belonged to age group of 20-25 years
- 53.2% of respondents were from Province 3 'Bagmati'



Age of Respondents in %

Province of origin
62 responses



Province of Origin

Practice of Respondents towards Media/Advertisement Products

	Age Group in Years					n=62
	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	Total
	N (%)	N(%)	N(%)	N (%)	N (%)	N(%)
Purchased any product after watching an advertisement through media						
Yes	3 (4.80%)	23 (37.10)	12 (19.40%)	5(8.10%)	3(4.80%)	46(74.20%)
No	2 (1.60%)	5 (8.10%)	2 (3.20%)	1 (1.60%)	1 (1.60%)	10 (16.10%)
Maybe	1 (1.60%)	2(3.20%	2(3.20%)	1(1.60%)	0	6 (9.70%)
Reading /buying women magazines						
Yes	3 (4.80%)	12 (19.40%)	9(14.50%)	4(6.50%)	2(3.20%)	30 (48.40%)
No	2 (3.20%)	14(22.60%)	7(11.30%)	1(1.60%)	1(1.60%)	25(40.30%)
Maybe	0	4 (6.50%)	0	2(3.20%)	1(1.60%)	7(11.30%)
Watched advertisements on cosmetics, clothes, plastic surgeries, beauty tutorial						
Yes	5(8.10%)	27(43.50%)	16(25.80%)	4(6.50%)	3(4.80%)	55(88.70%)
No	0	0	0	1(1.60%)	0	1(1.60%)
Maybe	0	3(4.80%)	0	2 (3.20%)	1(1.60%)	6(9.70%)

Table 1: Age-specific practice of women towards media and advertisement products

Perception/Feelings towards portrayal of women in media

Unrealistic Bar

“Magazines usually cover public figures like models, Actors, Singers and those who have achieved a status on their own in life like young entrepreneurs, Social activists, leaders etc. It feels good to know about those sorts of people and their way to success but it is unavoidable that the media presents everything in a fascinating manner that can be quite impractical for an average living person to connect with her own life story.”

Objectification

“I mostly find the magazines portraying women as an object concerned about looks, makeup and fashion. The models are mostly of a certain stereotypical body type which doesn't connect with people like me. It sets a standard for women to look a certain way. Women of different body type, backgrounds, professions, skin color and ethnicity should be included so that most people can relate.”

Motivation & Empowerment

“I feel empowered and pumped up to work better.”

“Yes, every time I feel inspired and also get influenced when I read something great done by women in magazines.”

Lack of Connectedness

“Feels like it's not that much beneficial for normal women around. I don't see any connection between some women in magazines and normal women.”

“I don't feel empowered by them despite their large involvement in social causes or any causes because it's more about themselves and their organization and them giving cliché advice for other women aspirants instead of helping out genuinely in terms of resources, funds and using their privilege to uplift others.”

Perception of media's idea of beauty

n=62

	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often
Importance of beauty Appearance <i>(Does beauty/ appearance matter to you?)</i>	0	16.1%	35.5%	33.9%	14.5%
Media role on shaping Idea of beauty/appearance <i>(Have advertisements/ media shaped the idea of beauty and appearances to you?)</i>	9.7%	11.3%	30.6%	29%	19.4%
Advertisement on representing real lives <i>(Do you think advertisements are true to what their products represent in real lives?)</i>	12.9%	54.8%	19.4%	11.3%	1.6%

Table 2: Perception of Women on media's idea of beauty

Experiences of Psychological Impact OF advertisement/media among women

Sense of Comparison & Insecurity

“I have stretch marks on my legs and looking at flawless beauty on social media I have never worn shorts as I feel I shouldn't because I don't have flawless legs and also the skin where I see clear, beautiful without any scars I have stayed in home and cancelled all my plans because of my skin. Honestly, I had mental health issues because of skin.”

“I always feel insecure about my height when I see all the model in advertisement are tall.”

“For example whenever I see tiktok I see girls who are very pretty who maintains their body well which makes me feel insecure and in the same hand I'm too lazy to work out to have a perfect body like them. And the other one is whenever I see girls having perfect facial structure I would think of doing plastic surgery too.”

Low Self-esteem and Body Image

“I am brownish, little chubby, fairness creams, beauty shapers compelled me to think I am low.”

“I have a tan skin my mom buys fair and lovely for me.”

“Lately, I have been more concerned about my skin and acnes. It really lowers self-confidence and I have tried a lot of remedies watching television and you tube not even realizing about their marketing strategies.”

“There's one face slimming device to make your face look small. As I have big face, I feel insecure that it's not what beautiful face looks like.”

Kind of Representation Women want to see in Media

“It would be great if instead of models it could be normal women amidst us are represented in advertisements. It could be the same woman we see on the streets when we buy groceries, women who look like our mothers or sisters or us. Although it's easy to say that advertisements are not projecting the ground reality when the same thing gets replayed again and again the viewer's discretion gets invariably affected. Thus to build a generation of confident young women who are not intimidated by their appearance and believe in their personality and talent, it's necessary that we change the media representation of women and Men.”

“Medias should represent those stories from the real field which are influential in their society either it is a small story of school going girl child at home, a step against chaupadi, a success story of women from Jumla, Humla where there is lack of facilities but not of abilities.”

“Men and women shown with equal respect. Women are not only for entertainment purpose in ads they are also equal as a man. If women who are proving that they can also hold a high position and stand up for themselves then many women can connect and do the same. Women should not be objectified, women in power and social activist should be included in ads to encourage female to be independent and self-confident.”

“Women should be presented the way they naturally look instead of making them look like 'perfect beauty'. The way the media tries to make them look more fair, slim, it lowers the self-confidence of people thinking they are not beautiful enough.”

Conclusion

- Current advertisements representation of women has hampered/ affected the self confidence and self esteem of more than one third of women.
- 69% of women felt that the media definitely shapes the beauty and appearance standard for people in the society.
- Some portrayals of women are overtly sexist and objectifies women, especially in the house cleaning products/ cooking advertisements.
- Advertisements should be gender balanced and should not encourage gender role stereotyping.
- More accountable and responsible advertisements from media and media personalities