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Mireille Ishak

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The American University in Cairo

School of Business Economics and Communication

PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN EGYPTIAN TV ADVERTISING

A Thesis Submitted to

Department of journalism and Mass Communication

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

By Mireille Raouf ishak

Bachelor of Arts Journalism and Mass Communication

Under the supervision of Dr. Kevin L. keenan

December/ 2003

# **Portrayal of Women in Egyptian TV Advertising**

**A Thesis submitted by Mireille Raouf Ishak  
To Department of Journalism and Mass Communication**

**December 2003**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
The degree of Master of Arts  
Has been approved by**

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## **Abstract**

The title of this thesis is "portrayal of Women in Egyptian TV Advertising." It is presented by Mireille Raouf Ishak, at the American University in Cairo under the supervision of Dr. Kevin L. Keenan. It analyzes the representation of women in Egyptian TV commercials broadcast on Channel 1, the major national TV channel. Since there has been very little research related to this topic published about this part of the world, the literature review relied on similar studies conducted in the United States, Britain, Italy, Kenya, Turkey and other countries.

The literature review showed that in all the studied countries men represented most of the voiceovers in ads. Whereas men were either portrayed in an occupational setting or outdoors, women were mostly portrayed at home. Women were also more likely to be associated with domestic products (products used inside the house) than men, who tended to be associated with non-domestic products. While males were more represented as authority for most of the advertised products, females were product users. There was an age gap between men and women represented in TV commercials. Women were generally younger than men.

There were some differences between studied countries with respect to the number of men and women represented in the ads. While more men than women were represented in studies conducted in the U.S. and Europe, the percentage of women represented in Turkey and Kenya was greater than that of men.

A sample of 508 TV commercials were recorded from Channel 1 of Egyptian television over two separate weeks during prime time. Results of the analysis of the ads showed that Egyptian commercials were in some aspects consistent with ads from the U.S. and Europe and in other aspects consistent with ads from Kenya (as an African developing country like Egypt) and Turkey (as a middle Eastern country like

Egypt). More women than men were represented in Egyptian TV commercials. Men represented most of the voiceovers in ads. Women were representatives for domestic products while men were mainly representatives for non-domestic products. Women were shown more at home while men were shown more in an outdoor location. Also, women were portrayed younger than men.

Overall, evidence for stereotyping women was found in Egyptian TV commercials.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

## **Introduction**

Advertising is one of the most important aspects of today's business world. It serves more than one purpose in the highly competitive world markets. On the one hand, advertising is a means through which manufacturers and business owners communicate with their clients or their prospective customers on many levels. Ads include product information, persuasion, and many times, emotional aspects. On the other hand, most of the media that exist today depend on advertising money for survival whether it is print media, radio, television, and even the internet. Thus, advertising has become an important element of any country's economy.

Advertising as we know it today passed through many stages and different revolutions to reach its current form. The advertising industry contains many elements that contribute to its success. One of these elements is the models or actors used in the ads.

Advertising is also a means of representing human behavior in any given culture. It provides a source of social learning through observation. A great deal of human behavior and perceptions are acquired through learning and observation. Being an important source of information, the media are held responsible for many of the ideas and beliefs people hold. "The acquisition of gender-appropriate behavior is a major feature of human social development. Extensive scientific and social concern is frequently focused upon the opportunities and the constraints and aspects of sex roles present to individuals" (p.101, Durkin, 1985).

One of the areas in advertising that has received research attention is how men and women are portrayed in ads. How do commercials shape people's mind and reinforce specific gender roles from repeated exposure to them? It has been demonstrated through previous research that television strongly influences both adults

and children's perception of their own and others' roles in society. " We should call attention to evidence indication that exposure to stereotyped commercials may contribute to and reinforce traditionally sex-typed behaviors" (p.505, Knill et al., 1981).

There have been different views regarding the way men and women are portrayed in TV commercials. Defenders of advertisements state that ads simply reflect the roles of men and women in society. On the other hand, critics hold the media, especially advertising, for painting stereotyped images for men and women in viewers' minds. Moreover, not only does television stereotype men and women, but also it stereotypes almost all social roles. It can't be overlooked that cultures shape to a big extent the content of advertisements. However, advertisers were not very responsive to changes that have occurred in gender roles.

Between 10 and 28% of television time is dedicated to advertisements, there has been high interest and research about the characteristics of males and females that are "sold" with the advertised product (McArthur & Resko, 1975).

"Together, television programs and commercials influence sex role values and perceived life options for viewers" (p.722, Lovdal, 1989).

Since women's movements that arose in the western world in the 1970s, gender discrimination has been gradually decreasing on the official level. However, it remains unclear to what extent television content is responding to that change (Fernham & Bitar, 1993).

The advertising business in the Middle East seems to be flourishing. Advertising agencies in the region are optimistic about the future of the business. This news is quite encouraging for private sector agencies, which depend on the demand for professional staff and quality services. The growth of the advertising industry in

the Middle East depends largely on professional training programs. There is a shortage of qualified trained professional staff. Egypt, Lebanon and Israel took the initiative and introduced schools of thought in advertising. However, the commercials ended up being mostly in the Western style. Western ideas have dominated most of print and broadcast commercials throughout the region (Amin & Fikri, 2000).

This paper is an attempt to analyze the portrayal of women as they appear in Egyptian television commercials. The study will describe the way in which women are depicted in ads through the examination of different variables that will give an insight into whether or not women are stereotyped by the way they are represented in ads as compared to men. The methodology used is content analysis using women characters in advertisements as the unit of analysis. The reason content analysis is used is that the aim is to analyze the way women are portrayed in the ads using examination of selected variables that will be operationally defined at the beginning of the study to avoid any confusion.

As the aim of the study is to examine the way in which women are represented in television ads, the value of the results lies in the ability of the study to discover the existence of gender stereotyping in Egyptian television ads, if any and to attempt to make the necessary recommendations to overcome this problem in the future if the results indicated its existence. This study is a content analysis of Egyptian TV ads for a two week period during prime time in order to examine different gender roles portrayed in these ads.

## **Literature Review**

This chapter summarizes the results of previous studies that have examined the portrayal of women in TV advertisements. Although this research is intended to analyze the portrayal of women in Egyptian TV ads, there were no previous studies published to analyze the content of TV commercials in this part of the world. Therefore, the literature that was reviewed is from similar studies that analyzed the portrayal of women in TV commercials in different parts of the world, such as the United States, Britain, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Australia, and Turkey in addition to other countries.

Some researchers have replicated previous studies to measure the differences that have occurred over time in the images on men and women in TV commercials and whether or not their portrayal was still stereotypical. Most of these studies used content analysis to analyze the images of men and women in ads. On the other hand a few studies used either experiments or surveys to measure the effect of stereotyping on consumers' views of their role identity or of the advertised product.

" It is well documented in many disciplines ( e.g., sociology, cultural anthropology, mass communication, marketing, cultural studies, semiotics) that advertising both reflects and reinforces many of the social values, norms, and stereotypes of its audiences"(p.70, Ahmed, 1998).

There was much interest in the 1970s to study the portrayal of women in television advertising and to compare it to that of men. The Dominick and Rauch study (1972) was designed to fulfill two major goals. First, to trace how women are portrayed in television ads in the US in opposed to men and second, to see the criticism presented by feminists through the content analysis (Dominick & Rauch, 1972).

This study analyzed the content of a sample of prime time TV ads in the summer of 1971 and coded the following variables: product advertised, setting, occupation of the central figure, and if the man did the on-camera selling of the product. The results showed that women were more likely than men to appear in ads for cosmetics and were seven times more represented than men in ads for personal hygiene products. On the other hand, males were far more represented in ads for auto products, such as cars and trucks. In general, about 75% of ads portraying females promoted products found in either the bathroom or the kitchen. Another major difference in the gender portrayal lies in the voiceover category, where males represented 87% of the voiceover for all ads. Whereas 56% of females were depicted as housewives, only 14% of males were portrayed as husbands. Almost seven out of ten females who were portrayed as having a job have an occupation of a "subservient nature:" they were working as stewardesses, cooks, or secretaries (Dominick & Rauch, 1972).

Moreover, Dominick and Rauch found that while a variety of 43 jobs was available to men in the coded commercials, women were restricted to only 18 different occupations. The most frequent role acted by females was found to be sex object/decoration followed by the role of housewife. There is an obvious age gape between men and women who appeared in ads. Most females (71%) were between 20-30 years old. As for men, only 43% were in this age category, while 41% were between 36-50 years of age. Almost 50% of females were portrayed dressed casually, 7% were depicted in nightgowns or "revealing clothing" and 5 % were somehow undressed. "Women lawyers, doctors, business executives, scientists, engineers, athletes, professors, and judges are conspicuously absent from commercials." As far

as television commercials are concerned, women are either depicted as housewives or "low-level employees" (p.264, Dominick & Rauch, 1972).

Another study about the portrayal of women in television advertising is that of McArthur and Resko conducted in 1975. This study depicted the portrayal of women in American TV advertising by recording the content of the three major network: ABC, CBS and NBC, for one day each in the Spring of 1971. The advertisements of the networks were coded for sex, credibility basis, role, location, arguments, rewards offered to customers, punishments or threats for not using the product advertised, and reward type (McArthur & Resko, 1975).

The results of the study showed that within the 199 ads that were coded, 57% of the central figures were males and 43% females. As for the credibility basis, 70% of males were depicted as authorities in opposed to only 14% of females appearing as authorities. As for the roles each fulfilled, most men were portrayed in independent roles, while most females were depicted in relation to others, such as children or spouse. As most females were portrayed at home, most males were either portrayed in an occupational setting or simply in an outdoor location. Males were also more likely to give an argument. There were almost no differences between males and females in the rewards they offered customers for using the product. By using the product, females were shown to obtain social approval while males obtained approval of friends or career enhancement. One of the interesting findings of this study is that there is a tendency for males to be portrayed as authorities on products used by females. For example, males were shown as authority on 86% of home products, although they were only users of 16% of this category. More than 50% of females were depicted in roles in relation to others, not independently (McArthur & Resko, 1975).

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review



The McArthur and Resko (1975) study was later on replicated and extended by many researchers who wanted to measure the changes that occurred over time in the portrayal of women in TV commercials.

Lundstrom and Sciglimpaglia (1977), studied consumers' attitudes towards sex role portrayals in TV ads. The study examined whether women's attitudes were more negative than men's towards their stereotypical portrayal in ads. The study also examined the effect of gender portrayals in ads on consumers' perceptions about the companies that conduct such advertising. The researchers mailed a structured questionnaire to a sample of 800 men and women. Women's responses in general indicated that they were offended by the way they are portrayed in ads. Most ads suggest that women do not do anything important and their place is at home. However, the authors described the attitudes as being "moderate" as women in general were not too critical. In general, "the strongest critics of contemporary role portrayals are women from higher income households" (p.76, Lundstrom & Sciglimpaglia, 1977).

O'Donnell and O'Donnell (1978) attempted to trace the change in gender stereotyping in US television ads over time. They conducted a content analysis of 367 ads. Their study revealed that 93% of all voiceovers were men. Women, on the other hand, were portrayed as representatives for 86% of domestic products (O'Donnell & O'Donnell 1978).

In their study about gender stereotyping in American TV ads, Schneider and Schneider (1979) recorded 27 hours of programming during prime time and examined the following variables: portrayed age, portrayed occupation, portrayed setting, portrayed marital status, portrayed number of children, if the character was an on-camera spokesperson. The research found that although there was an overall shift in

the ages of central figures portrayed in ads between 1971 and 1976, women were still relatively younger than men. Also, females were less likely to be portrayed as employed than males. One of the most significant findings of the study was that the portrayal of males in outdoor settings decreased while the portrayal of males in indoor settings increased from 14% to 22% (Schneider & Schneider, 1979).

Scheibe (1979) thought that the literature available about the portrayal of women in TV advertising dealt mostly with the way women are represented, and no studies considered the effects of this image on the viewers. This study analyzed the content of 6000 TV commercials in the United States between October 1975 and March 1976. A total of 21% of the ads showed women working outside the house, which is an increase compared to previous studies. The strongest relationship with the gender of the central character was found to be with the type of product advertised. Not only were women portrayed in stereotypical ways, but also men were stereotyped. Men were often shown as the "voice of authority," even for products they seldom used, such as cleaners and hygiene products (Scheibe, 1979).

In a rather different study, Whipple and Courtney (1980) compared "the progressive" portrayal and the "traditional" portrayal of men and women in television advertising to test which is more preferred among both consumers and manufacturers or advertisers. Whipple and Courtney concluded from previous studies that men constitute almost 85% of voiceovers in ads, women are mostly shown as housewives, and men usually benefit from products that women use or services that they perform (Whipple & Courtney, 1980).

Whipple and Courtney attempted to measure the effect of gender portrayal on advertising effectiveness. A sample of women was selected for the study as well as a sample of manufacturers and agencies. Test ads were developed by an international

# Chapter 6

## Conclusions & Limitations

advertising agency to allow comparison between gender portrayals in the same product categories. The real purpose of the study was not revealed and customers were asked to give their opinions on ads they were exposed to. Manufacturers and agencies were asked to give their professional evaluation (Whipple & Courtney, 1980). Both consumers and professionals evaluated the progressive commercials to be equally preferred or more preferred than ads with traditional gender portrayals. This indicates that with more research, "advertisers will be able to create commercials that are both effective and socially responsive" (Whipple & Courtney, 1980).

A study by Knill, Pesch, Pursey, Gilpin , and Perloff, measured that change that occurred on the portrayal of men and women in television commercials over the years. The study was designed to examine first, whether TV ads were still as stereotypical as they were in previous studies and to detect the differences between prime time and daytime ads. The results of the study indicated that males were more often portrayed as product representatives and consumers. Although there was a change in the number of females portrayed in TV commercials through the 1970s and this study, there were also a lot of consistencies in the findings (Knill, Pesch, Pursey, Gilpin , and Perloff, 1981).

According to research by Durkin (1985), women were generally underrepresented in TV commercials in terms of both number and status. On the other hand, males were more represented as dominant. (Durkin, 1985).

Another study, with local implications, was conducted to measure the effect of gender stereotyping on sex role identities for males and females. The study compared a group of American male and female university students to their Egyptian counterparts. The research basically asked students to rate on a Likert scale how feminine or masculine they think they are and measured their responses. Results

indicated that Egyptian males rated themselves to be more masculine than did American males while Egyptian females indicated that they were less masculine than did American females. Overall, “the Americans were fairly flexible and the Egyptians were rather rigid.” (p.104, Sanders, 1986).

It is not clear from this study however, why one group was more flexible than the other. These findings can be attributed to a variety of social, cultural, educational, and even religious factors. One fact remains though, gender portrayals and stereotyping can have an effect on sex role identities in different cultures. Repetitive exposure to certain roles reinforces them in the minds of males and females in a given culture. It is worth mentioning though that the intensity of this effect is linked to educational level, socio-economic level, as well as other factors that determine how much the audience is affected by what they see.

A study by Gilly (1988) on the other hand was conducted in 1988 to compare sex roles in advertising in Australia, Mexico, and the United States. The reason for comparison is to detect the effect of different cultural values on the portrayal of women in advertising. Gilly stated that the general conclusion that could be drawn from studies conducted in the 1970's is that although men and women were almost equally represented, they were portrayed differently. These differences were mainly concerned with the product types, the age of men and women, the difference in roles fulfilled by each of them, the location in which they are portrayed, and the basis of credibility (Gilly, 1988).

In the Gilly study, twelve hours of programming were recorded from each of the following cities: Los Angeles, USA; Monterrey, Mexico; and Brisbane, Australia. Gilly noted that there were fewer ads in Australia and Mexico for two reasons. First, there was less time devoted to advertisements in each hour of programming and

second, ads tended to be longer in Australia and Mexico than in the United States. There were obvious differences between the studied countries with regards to the types of products advertised. For instance, the product category with the most advertisements in the United States was the food, snack and soda category. In Mexico, the biggest percentage of ads was for personal beauty care products, while in Australia the biggest portion of ads was for restaurants and retail outlets. Also, whereas 11% of Mexican ads featured alcoholic beverages, this category was not available in either the U.S. or Australia (Gilly, 1988).

The results of this study showed that there were significant differences in the settings in which males and females were portrayed in the United States. No such differences were found in either Mexico or Australia. Males constituted most of the voiceovers in all three countries. Regarding age, women were portrayed as younger than men in all three countries. The difference was more significant in Mexican ads. Regarding the employment status, men are more likely to be shown as employed in all three countries. However, the difference between men's employment and women's employment is less significant in Australia than in Mexico or the United States. In the Mexican ads, women were portrayed as receiving help and men were shown as providing help, while in American ads women were receiving advice and men were giving advice. On the other hand, there was no significant difference in Australian ads. No differences were found among all three countries regarding the characters' marital status. In most cases there was no indication whether the characters were married or not. A small percentage was portrayed as married, but there was no clear indication of characters being single. As for occupation, neither the American nor the Mexican ads portrayed females in "professional/ high level business executive"

positions. On the contrary, women were portrayed in such positions in Australian ads (Gilly, 1988).

In terms of role, Gilly found that females in American and Mexican commercials were mostly portrayed in roles with relations to others, while in Australian commercials females were depicted independently as much as in relation to others. These results indicate that although differences exist in the three countries between the portrayal of men and women, these differences are less in Australian ads. Also, the study suggests the presence of a "link between culture and marketing appeals" (Gilly, 1988).

In a study conducted in 1988, Ferrante, Haynes and Kingsley attempted to examine the changes that occurred, if any, over time in the way women are portrayed in television ads over a period of 15 years by replicating the study conducted by Dominick and Rauch in 1972 using content analysis (Ferrante, Haynes & Kingsley, 1988).

The results of the study indicated that there had been great change in the setting in which males and females are portrayed since 1972. Women were shown more frequently in the work setting and less inside the house. On the other hand, men were shown more frequently in the business setting and more at home. There was no drastic change in the ages of men and women portrayed in ads since 1972. The results of this study were in accordance with previous studies. They highlighted more the fact that men and women are unequally treated in television advertising despite the slight changes that have occurred over time (Ferrante et al., 1988).

Another study conducted in 1988 traced the change that has occurred in the portrayal of men and women in American TV advertising over 15 years. Bretl and Cantor attempted to observe whether or not the portrayal of men and women was still

stereotypical. They summarized the findings of previous research studies into two major categories. The first set of studies concluded that women were negatively stereotyped in television ads. The second set of studies concluded that women are “gaining ground on their male counterparts and breaking out of the negative stereotypical mold” (Bretl & Cantor, 1988).

Bretl and Cantor conducted a content analysis of 397 TV ads coding such variable as occupation of the central figure, type of product advertised, setting, credibility basis of central figure, argument giving by the central figure, and the gender of the narrator. This research coded all commercials whether characters appeared or not. In comparison with the previous 15 years, their study found that men and women were more or less equally represented as central figures, (in the daytime, 47% of central figures were males and 53% females, while in the evening 54% were males and 46% females). There was no significant difference between males and females regarding occupation. This is due to the small number of central figures portrayed in occupation setting. There was almost no change however in the type of product advertised variables. Like previous studies, women were mostly portrayed in ads for domestic products. Also, the results regarding the gender of the narrator, or voiceover is in accordance with previous studies as 90% of the narrators were males. The results of this study indicated a need for a closer look on the effects of stereotypical sex roles portrayal on viewer’s attitude towards their own and the opposite sex (Bretl & Cantor, 1988).

In 1989, Fernham and Voli conducted a study on gender stereotyping in Italian television advertising during different times of the day. This study made two assumptions. First, it expected to detect substantial gender stereotyping in Italian television commercials "since Italy is a traditional country where the conventional



family of working father and housewife is popular and felt." Second, the gender stereotyping was expected to be more during the evening (p.176-177, Fernham & Voli, 1989).

This first assumption shows similarities between the Italian and the Egyptian society. In Egypt as well as in Italy, the most prevailing family structure is that of a working father and a housewife. Therefore, this structure is expected to prevail in Egyptian TV commercials as well as in Italy. The programming on "Canal 5," the most popular and watched Italian channel was recorded for three hours in the morning, three hours in the afternoon and three hours in the evening for a one-week period.

The commercials were coded for gender, mode of presentation, credibility, role, location, argument, reward type, product type, product price, background, humor, and end-comment. The results of this study showed differences in the portrayal of men and women during all times of the day for all variables in coded commercials. However, regarding the type of argument, there were only noticeable differences in the evening. Morning and afternoon ads were grouped together and compared to evening ads because males were more likely to watch TV in the evening, while in the morning and afternoon TV is mostly watched by women. The study indicated that differences between male and female presentations in ads were consistent over different time periods with only three significant differences. In general, males were more likely to be central figures than females and were used for voiceovers more than females. Males were more often depicted as authorities and in professional roles than females. Regarding the type of product, while females were mostly associated with body and home products, males were shown more in ads for food and "other" category. In addition, while most females were portrayed against a

mixed background, more males were shown against female background. Females were more product users in the evening, males were less humorous in the evening, and females were less humorous in the daytime (Fernham & Voli, 1989).

"The findings concerning humor are particularly intriguing. They confirm Harris and Stobart's (1986) report that humor is largely the preserve of the male central figure. Although females are depicted humorously, they tend not to be humorous to the same extent as males." Overall, some of the findings agreed with findings from previous studies while others did not (p.182, Fernham & Voli, 1989).

In a contemporary study to that of Fernham and Voli, Lovdal replicated the O'Donnell and O'Donnell (1978) study. This research was designed to measure the changes that occurred in the portrayal of men and women in TV commercials over time. According to Lovdal, men and women were portrayed in stereotypical manners during the 1970s. Women were mostly depicted as dependent housewives, while men were independent, authoritative professionals. This image had a substantial effect on women's views. Where stereotypes are in action on TV, women tend to emphasize more their role as homemakers. Some advertisers attempted to introduce a more modern image of women in ads. These changes, though, were described as "superficial" and only focused on appearance and a few activities. The content of two major networks was recorded daily during two hours of prime time for two weeks. The ads were coded for voiceover, products, product representatives, and setting (Lovdal, 1989).

The results of the study indicated that almost 90% of all ads used a male voiceover. Women were representatives for only 55% of domestic products, compared to 86% 10 years earlier. Men; however, were product representatives for 72% of non-domestic products compared to 78% 10 years earlier. Men were depicted

in at least three times the variety of roles and professions as women. The representation of women in TV commercials thus, does not mirror their actual role in the labor force as Courtney and Whipple (1974) concluded.

In their study Mazzella, Durkin, Cerini, and Paul. attempted to detect gender stereotyping in Australian television advertisements. Three hours of prime time television was recorded for seven days from three commercial stations. The study coded the following variables: sex, mode of presentation, age, credibility basis, role, location, argument, reward type, product type, product price, and background (Mazzella, Kevin, Emma, & Paul, 1992).

Out of the 433 central figures that were coded in the Mazzella et al. research, 74% were males and 26% were females. Ninety-one percent of voiceovers were males. Females on the other hand were more visually presented. As for age, women were generally younger than men. Whereas females were mainly product users, males were shown as authorities. Regarding the role, there was a strong link between the role and gender of the central figure. "Of the female central figures, 16% were depicted as homemakers, 17% as partners, and 13% as sex objects. Of the male central figures, only 2% were shown as homemakers, 5% as partners, and 2% as sex objects." With regards to the location variable, whereas females were mostly depicted at home, males were shown at work or in the "other" category. While men mostly presented scientific arguments, women didn't give any arguments at all. Men stressed more practical rewards, while women were more concerned with social approval. "Women were more frequently associated with body and food products than men. Males were more likely to advertise domestic products, services and other products." There was even a stronger link between the central figure and the product advertised.

While males advertised more expensive products, females were usually associated with cheap products (p.252, Mazzella et al., 1992).

The results of this study show that men and women are portrayed differently in Australian television ads. They are in accordance with previous studies and the findings are similar to studies conducted in North America and Great Britain (Mazzella et al., 1992).

Another study examined the portrayal of men and women in British television commercials. Similar to the 1989 Furnham and Voli's 1989 study of gender stereotyping in Italian TV commercials, this study examines gender stereotyping in British TV ads in different times of the day: morning, afternoon and evening. This 1993 study aimed at discovering whether TV advertisements in Britain still portrayed stereotypical images of men and women as they did 10 years earlier, and to provide a bigger picture by analyzing the output of different times of the day, and compare the findings to those of America, Italy and Australia (Furnham& Bitar, 1993).

Since Britain is a conservative society, the results of the study were expected to reveal substantial gender stereotyping. Slightly like the Italian society described by Fernham and Voli (1989), the British family is mostly made up of a working father and a housewife. Results of this study showed that although men and women were still portrayed in stereotypical ways, it was less than before. Gender stereotyping in British commercials was expected to be more than in the U.S. but less than in Italy. The commercials were coded for mode of presentation, credibility, role, location, age, argument, reward type, product type, background and end comment (a final statement made at the end of the add by either an on-camera character or a voiceover to conclude the ad). There was a "striking difference" between this study and previous one with regards to the argument variable. Whereas McArthur and Resko (1975)

found 30% of females giving argument in ads, Furnham and Voli (1989) found 53% of women giving arguments, the study found only 17.6% of females giving an argument in all coded commercials, which indicates that substantial drop seems to have occurred in 1990s (Furnham& Bitar, 1993).

In their study Wee, Choong and Tambyah (1995) compared gender stereotyping in television advertising in Malaysia and Singapore. The results showed that gender portrayals in advertising are influenced by many factors, among which are the culture of the country and the target audience. The ads recorded from the first Malaysian channel reflected the conservative society of the country, where Islam is the religion of the majority. Men were mostly portrayed as being "macho" executives who perform independent roles in society, while females were portrayed as young wives who raised the children and took care of the house ( Wee, Choong & Tambyah, 1995).

"Secular societies like Australia and Sweden have a more balanced and non-traditional representation of women in their advertising." At the other end of the scale "are societies steeped in religious values like Mexico (Catholicism) and Malaysia (Islam) who would opt for a more traditional portrayal of women in the advertising media" ( Wee et al., 1995).

As the Egyptian society was described earlier as being similar to the Italian society in its family structure, the Malaysian society as described in this study is similar to the Egyptian society with regards to religion. Islam is the dominant religion in Egypt and the society is more or less male dominated.

Regarding Singapore, the ads reflected the "cosmopolitan Singaporean society." This included the portrayal of more women who are employed outside the house. "The female stereotype was more modern. She was an attractive young woman

who was concerned with looking beautiful." On the other hand there were too many males portrayed in mid-management positions. The first Malaysian Channel reflected the conservative "macho" Malaysian society. A second Malaysian channel however, took a rather moderate position between the traditional Malaysian channel and the contemporary Singaporean one (Wee et al., 1995).

Advertisers face a dilemma in how to portray men and women in their advertisements. The first option is to show men and women in ads that reflect the actual roles they perform in society. In other words, portray members of the target customers in the ads. The second option is for advertisers to "take a proactive and visionary role in defining new sex-role portrayals. Instead of merely following trends, marketers and advertisers can provide the impetus in creating new trends" (Wee et al., 1995).

A study conducted by Allan and Coltrane focused on gender displays in advertising and how it changed. Unlike previous research that have mainly focused on the portrayal of women in ads, this study looks at the depiction of both men and women. This study compared the following variables: the frequency of representation, the gender of narrator, the activity of the main character, and the product type. The two research questions that this study attempted to answer were: "1. to what degree has change occurred in the presentation of gender in television commercials between the 1950s and the 1980s? 2. Under what circumstances does the display of gender vary?" (Allan & Coltrane, 1996).

The results of this study showed that the percentage of female central figures decreased from the 1950s to the 1980s. In addition, in the 1950s about 50% of all men and women were portrayed in a job or parenting. In the 1980s however, the percentage of men was almost intact while the percentage of females on the job

decreased to be 30%. Moreover, when compared to previous studies, the variety of jobs occupied by women increased from the 1970s. In this study women were less likely to be depicted as housewives or mothers. On the other hand, the image of men in ads witnessed only minor changes (Allan & Coltrane, 1996).

Mwangi (1996) studied gender stereotyping in Kenyan television advertisements. Kenya is considered a developing country where gender portrayals usually have larger social implications as women try to overcome widespread social beliefs and cultural barriers to equality with men. Although women in Kenya contribute largely to the agricultural economy, they are still viewed as "subordinate to men." The study coded the commercials of the two main Kenyan networks for a two-month period due to the small amount of ads on Kenyan television. The ads were coded for the following variables: central character and voiceover, type of product, setting, occupation of the central figure (Mwangi, 1996).

Fifty-two percent of central figures in the Kenya study were females, while 47.7% were males as compared to Furnham and Voli's finding of only 35.7% of women central figures in Italian Television commercials. Males constituted a bigger portion of the voiceover, while women were more depicted at home. There was almost no difference in the occupations of men and women. However, women's occupations were limited to domestic, teaching, office/secretarial, and sports. Unlike Mazzella's findings of men being over represented in Australian ads, Mwangi found that males and females are equally represented in Kenyan TV ads.

On the other hand, Neto and Pinto (1998) conducted a study to examine gender stereotyping in Portuguese television advertising. It had two major aims. First, to shed the light on the content of Portuguese TV ads and second to compare the results to similar studies done in western countries such as America, Australia and

Great Britain. The content of four Portuguese stations was recorded every evening for a week during prime time. The content was evaluated according to the following criteria: mode, credibility, role, location, age, argument, reward type, product type, background, comment (Neto & Pinto, 1998).

The results indicated that 91 % of voiceovers were males. Females were more visually represented in Portugal than men. As for credibility, males were more likely to be authorities while females were more product users. Role was not independent of gender. Seventy-nine percent of dependent figures were females while males were more represented as independent. Whereas females were more often located at home, males were portrayed in an occupational setting or in the “other” category. As for age, while males were middle-aged, women were portrayed younger than men. Regarding argument, males gave factual and opinion arguments while females more likely gave no argument at all. Regarding the reward type, men highlighted pleasure while women were more likely to emphasize self-enhancement. For product type, women were associated more with food and body products, whereas men were more likely associated with sports and auto products. There was a strong association between gender and end comment. Men made most of the end comments. “The results of this study indicate that men and women appearing in this sample of Portuguese television commercials were portrayed in not independent ways. The nature of these associations were systematic and in line with traditional gender-role stereotypes. These findings reveal that Portuguese television commercials manifest very similar traditional gender role stereotypes to those found in studies made in Western countries” (p.159, Neto & Pinto, 1998).

In a rather comprehensive study, Furnham and Mak (1999) compared previous studies about gender portrayal, three from America, and one from each of the



following countries: Australia, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, and Portugal. The coding categories were reanalyzed into the following categories: role, location, age, argument, reward type, product type, background, and end comment (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

The results of the study indicated the following: regarding the mode of presentation of characters, “Results are consistent across different countries--males are often presented as voiceovers, while women are more likely to be presented visually.” Regarding credibility, in the United States 1975, McArthur and Resko found that 84% of female central figures were portrayed as product users, compared to 30% of male, while only 14% of females were presented as authority, compared to 70% of males. These numbers did not decrease in 1988, as according to Bretl and Cantor 74% of females were product users, and males were more likely to be authority figures (44%) than their female counterparts (26%). (Furnham & Mak, 1999). As for the United Kingdom, in their study in 1981 Manstead and McCulloch showed that 81.2% of females were depicted as product users, as opposed to 22.4% of males; on the other hand, 77.7% of males were portrayed as authority compared to 14.8% of females. Furnham and Skae (1997) found that both genders were almost equally represented as authority.

As for Europe, in Italy, 69.7% of females were product users and 77.6% of males were portrayed as the authority. In France and Denmark, most central figures were product users; however, females were more likely to be product users than males and males were a little bit more often portrayed as authority (37.9% in Denmark and 33.3% in France). In Portugal 77.5% of the male central characters were portrayed as authorities, while only 29% of female characters were shown as authorities. Gilly’s study of Mexican ads indicated that most central figures were shown as users of the

product being advertised; however females were more often portrayed as users by 83.7% compared to males 51.2% while males were more likely to be the authority (48.8%) than females (16.3%). The Australian study conducted by Mazzella, Durkin, Cerini, & Buralli, in 1992 showed that females were depicted more often as product users (68%), while males were often portrayed as authority (68%). The Asian study focused on data from Hong Kong, where men were portrayed as authority (76.4%), while women were usually the product users (78.5%). “Such differences were as significant in Indonesia; 73.8% of males were presented as authoritative central figures while 57.4% of females were delineated as users” (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

Regarding role, in America, Bretl and Cantor (1988) showed that women were more likely to be portrayed as dependent (53%) compared to men (27%). On the other hand, men were more likely to be portrayed as professionals (21%) than women (11%). In 1992 Craig found that males are more often portrayed as celebrities and professionals and females as interviewer/demonstrator, parent/spouse, or sex object/model. Males were less often portrayed as spouse or parent. In the United Kingdom, Manstead and McCulloch (1981) showed that males were often in independent roles (89.9%), while females frequently had dependent roles (74.1%). This stereotype decreased over 16 years, in Furnham and Skae’s study in 1997. In Europe, there was a significant difference in Italy, where females were portrayed as having dependent roles (66.7%) and males were more likely to have professional roles (48.6%). Sex-role stereotyping in France was more extreme than in Denmark: French advertisements showed 63.3% of women with dependent roles and 57.5% of men as professionals. On the other hand, in Denmark, most central figures were shown as having dependent roles and stereotyping was less strong. Eighty-two percent of women had dependent roles, while for men it was only 66.7%. In Portugal 60.3% of

males compared to only 16% of females, were portrayed as interviewer/narrator, whereas 6.4% of males compared to 50% of females were portrayed in a dependent role (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

In Mexico the study found more females with dependent roles (46.6%) compared to males (30.4%) and males appeared more often in autonomous roles (51%) than females (23.4%). In Australia, Mazzella et al. (1992) found a great difference in the roles of males and females. While both genders were represented more as autonomous central figures, men were more likely to have autonomous roles (85%), while women were more likely to have dependent roles (44%). In Asia there wasn't so much difference as women were more often portrayed in dependent roles (55.4%) than men (19.3%). Men were more likely however, to be interviewer/narrator (65.7%) than women (18.5%). In Indonesia, men were more often portrayed as interviewer/narrator (84.6%) than women (72.2%), while more women were portrayed in dependent roles (16.7%) than men (0%) (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

With reference to location, Bretl and Cantor's study on the United States in 1988 revealed that males were substantially more often presented outdoors (53%), while females were more frequently presented at home (61%). In 1992 Craig found an evident effect of the time of day regarding this aspect. There were no gender differences in the evening but during the day women were more likely than men to be portrayed indoors (kitchen, bathroom, other room), while men were likely to be portrayed in outdoor or work settings. In the United Kingdom, Manstead and McCulloch discovered in 1981 a substantial difference in location between male and female central figures. While females were more likely to be shown at home (38%) than males (7.3%). Males tended to be portrayed in various locations other than the home (83.6%) more often than females (52.2%). However, in 1997 Furnham and Skae

did not find such significant difference in portrayal of location (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

In Europe, Furnham and Voli's study in 1989 revealed that in Italy females were shown more at home (34.8%) than males (22.4%), while males were slightly more often shown in occupational settings (18.7%) than females (15.1%). On the other hand, neither Denmark nor France showed a noticeable difference in gender portrayals with regards to locations. In Portugal Neto and Pinto found in 1998 significant differences, with more females (35%) being portrayed in the home than males (12.7%) and more males being portrayed in occupational settings (37.7%) than females (22.0%). In Mexico, like Denmark and France there was no significant difference in gender portrayals across locations. In Asia, Furnham et al. (1999) found that In Hong Kong women were more likely to be portrayed at home (36.9%) than men (21.4%), while men were more often shown in occupational settings (9.3%) than women (6.2%). The Indonesian study revealed more stereotyping, as women were more likely shown in home settings (48.1%) than men (10.8%), while men were more often associated with "leisure settings" (83.1%) than women (48.1%) (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

As for gender differences in age, in the United States none of the studies made a clear classification of the age of the central figures. In the United Kingdom, Furnham and Skae (1997) showed that most central characters were middle-aged; however, women were still more likely to be younger than men. In Europe, French advertisements showed significant gender differences in age. Females were generally younger than males. Danish commercials were less stereotyped as 59.4% of female were young, while 57.5% of males were middle-aged. In Portugal 56% of females

were young, while only 13.7% of the male figures were coded as young. In Mexico, Gilly (1988) found that 70.8% of females were young, compared to 20.6% of males.

In Australia, most female central characters appeared to be younger (62%), while most male central figures tended to be middle-aged (51%). In Asia there were noticeable differences in Hong Kong and Indonesia. Females were more often young (56.9 and 74.1%, respectively), while male central figures were mostly middle-aged (77.1 and 61.5%, respectively) (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

Regarding argument, in the United States the difference between males and female arguments existed only in McArthur and Resko's study in 1975 and almost disappeared in Bretl and Cantor's study in 1988. In the United Kingdom, Manstead and McCulloch (1981) found females significantly more likely not to argue (63.4%) than males (19.8%). Like in the United States, time had an effect on this aspect as in 1997, no differences were found between arguments made by the two genders. In Italy in 1989, females were associated with no argument (53%), while males were often associated with factual arguments (43.9%). In France and Denmark, most advertisements did not give either factual or opinion arguments. In Portugal, Neto and Pinto found in 1998 that the number of males who gave factual arguments was almost double that of females. In Australia most central figures tended to give opinions with males being more associated with factual arguments. In Hong Kong no gender differences were found between types of argument given by each. In Indonesian; however, commercials showed more females giving opinions (74.1%) and more males giving factual arguments (52.3%) (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

As for reward type, in the United Kingdom, Manstead and McCulloch (1981) found substantial differences in that males were often associated with practical rewards while females were associated with rewards of self-enhancement. In 1997

there was still a difference, but it was less. In Italy results indicated that females were associated with socially approved rewards while males were associated with self-enhancing rewards. In Denmark, “males were more often portrayed with pleasurable rewards (50.6%), while females were frequently associated with self-enhancing rewards (42.2%).” In Portugal more males were associated with pleasurable reward types while more females were associated with self-enhancing reward types. In Australia Mazzella et al. (1992) found significant results with females often shown with socially approved and self-enhancing rewards and males associated with practical rewards. The same results apply to Hong Kong and Indonesia with slightly different percentages (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

Regarding product type, McArthur and Resko (1975) found that in the United States females appeared in advertisements for domestic products (76.1%). Bretl and Cantor (1988) showed that while females mostly advertise domestic products, males were appeared in ads for products used outside the house. Results from the United Kingdom in 1997 suggested that women were often portrayed with body products as opposed to men (10.5%). The same conclusion was found in the Italian study as well as the French study. In the Portuguese study few males (7.8%) advertised body products, while few females advertised auto/sport products (5.0% vs. 20.6% for males). In Australia, “female central figures were more likely to be shown with food products (42%) compared with male central figures (28%), and females were also more often depicted with body products (17%) than males (10%).” In Hong Kong the study indicated that more females were shown in ads for body and home products. However, males advertised more food products (30.7%) than female central figures (27.7%). The same conclusions were reached from the Indonesian study (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

Regarding the background setting, in the United Kingdom Furnham and Skae (1997) didn't find any noticeable difference between males and females with respect to background setting. In Italy, Furnham and Voli (1989) demonstrated that males were more likely to be shown against a female background (25.2%) (i.e., home) than were females (10.6%), and more likely than women to be shown against a male background (i.e., work) (13.1 vs. 9.1%). Also, females were more likely shown with a background of children (9.1%) compared to males (2.8%). Furnham and Mak (1999) showed a substantial difference in France, where males were more often portrayed against a female background (16.1%) as opposed to females (5.1%). Females were also more likely to be seen with children. No significant differences were found in Denmark. There were however significant differences in Portugal. In Australia, no significant differences were found between men and women. In Hong Kong more females were shown against female backgrounds also, they were shown more often with children. On the other hand, males were often shown against a male background and a mixed background. No significant differences were found in the Indonesian study (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

As for end comment, in the United Kingdom Furnham and Skae (1997) indicated that males were still more likely to make an end comment (82%) compared to females (60.4%). In Italy, the study showed that males were three times more likely than females to make an end comment. The same applies to Denmark. Commercials in France tended not to have an end comment, so results were not significant. Results from the Portuguese content analysis showed more males making the end comment if it existed in the ad. Results in Hong Kong were highly significant; men frequently made an end comment (63.6%) as opposed to women (36.9%). In Indonesia, results

were not significant. females were as likely to give an end comment as males (Furnham & Mak, 1999).

In general, this comparative study revealed that male central figures are more likely to be voice-overs in ads while females are more visually represented. Males tend to be more in authority positions than females. Moreover, while females are more often depicted in dependent roles, males are portrayed as professionals. Females, who are more likely to be younger than males in most ads, are generally portrayed inside the house while males are portrayed in outdoors or in an occupational setting. Males also make end comments more frequently than females.

In his study about the portrayal of women in print advertisements, Ahmed (1998) concluded from previous research that "although considerable changes have taken place within American society in terms of gender roles following the women's liberation movement, the images of the sexes in advertising are not keeping pace with the social change." Prior to Ahmed's study, previous studies compared the portrayal of women in western industrialized countries or between western and eastern industrialized countries. This study compared the portrayal of women in American print ads and Indian print ads (p.68, Ahmed, 1998).

Ahmed's study tested two hypotheses. The first one assumed that a bigger portion of the Indian ads contained stereotypical images of women and the second one assumed that a larger percentage of American ads portrayed women as sex objects. The study used content analysis for news magazines and business magazines in the United States and India between January 1993 and December 1994. Advertisements were divided into three categories based on the type of product advertised: durable goods, non-durable goods, and services using the full-page ad as its unit of analysis.



The results showed big differences in the portrayal of women in ads in both countries. Both hypotheses proved correct (Ahmed, 1998).

As a neighboring country to Egypt, Turkey is an interesting place to look for gender stereotyping in TV commercials. Milner and Collins (1998) analyzed Turkish TV commercials to detect gender stereotyping. This study links the gender differences not only to the natures of individuals, but also to cultures of nations. Turkey is a country that shares different things with different countries and cultures. For example, it shares borders with Middle Eastern countries and Russia, while sharing Islamic religion with the Middle East, and democracy with European countries. "In Turkish society, women's status is clearly secondary to that of men. This ordering of roles is consistent with that observed throughout the world in general and the Mideast in particular." In the Turkish society, there is a disagreement between men and women regarding assigned gender roles. While men prefer that women stay at home and only fulfill their role as housewives, women seem to want to share the workspace with their male counterparts (p.7, Milner & Collins, 1998).

Modeled on the Gilly (1988) study, the output of Turkish TV was recorded for 12 hours on a Tuesday and three hours on a Wednesday. The recording resulted in 62 commercials to be coded. This is considered a small number when compare to 275 commercials from the U.S., 204 from Mexico and 138 from Australia that were analyzed by Gilly (1988). Sixty-nine percent of central figures in Turkish commercials were females, as compared to the U.S., Mexico and Australia where men and women were almost equally represented in TV commercials. Although six of the product categories used by Gilly were not present in Turkish ads, three categories were especially created to analyze Turkish ads. These categories were insurance, lotteries and newspapers and magazines. Regarding the marital status, analysis

showed that Turkish females were more likely to be portrayed married while Turkish males were less likely to be portrayed married (Milner & Collins, 1998).

One of the reasons given for the small number of ads on Turkish TV compared to the United States, Mexico and Australia is that the Turkish station broadcasts nationwide, making advertising spots relatively expensive for small and medium businesses. Unlike most countries that were studied before, the male to female characters ratio in ads is 30% to 70%. Thus it is clear that more women are depicted in Turkish ads (Milner & Collins, 1998).

After reviewing the literature, most studies agree that in general, men are portrayed as older, independent authorities in business setting or outdoor locations, while women are typically presented in dependent roles and mostly at home. Although many changes have occurred in women's role in society since the 1970's, their representation in TV ads, as well as the stereotypes, didn't change proportionately. "One caution is that coding commercials is becoming more complicated because commercials are becoming more complicated. For example, many commercials now have multiple characters, making it difficult to code the product representative" (p.740, Bartsch et al.,2000).

In general, studies that were conducted regarding the portrayals of men and women in television advertising over the past three decades have indicated differences in the types of products advertised by men and women an age difference between them, where women are generally younger than men, as well as differences in social status and the setting of the ad. It may be that "women consumers respond more positively to female role portrayals which are consistent with their own gender-role orientation" (Furnham & Farragher, 2000).

Whereas men are portrayed as professionals or executives, and authority figures, women are most probably portrayed as unemployed, or working in traditional female occupations. Moreover, women are portrayed at home while men are portrayed in an occupational setting or outdoor (Furnham & Farragher, 2000).

This study conducted by Furnham and Farragher was designed to examine the assumption that there will be more sex-role stereotyping in British TV ads than in New Zealand TV ads. The study used content analysis of ads on British and New Zealand stations during nine hours (9:00-12:00 morning; 14:00-17:00 afternoon; and 19:00-22:00 evening) over seven consecutive days (Furnham & Farragher, 2000).

The results were evaluated according to 12 criteria: mode of presentation, age, credibility basis, role, location, argument, reward type, product type, product price, background, end comments, and humor. The results indicated that men are portrayed differently in TV ads in Britain and New Zealand. On British ads, males and females were found to be almost equally represented visually. As for the voice-over, men are dominant by 69%. In New Zealand, men are dominant in both, visual representation (57%) and voice-over (81%) (Furnham & Farragher, 2000).

In a similar study, Bartsch, Burnett, Diller and Rankin-Williams conducted a content analysis of 757 television commercials in the Spring of 1998 on the four major US networks, ABC, CBS, FOX, and NBC to view the trends in gender representations. The commercials were coded according to the following criteria: gender of the voiceover, gender of the main product representative, and whether the product was considered domestic or non-domestic (Bartsch et al., 2000).

The study found that the percentage of women being product representatives (59%) exceeded that of men (41%). Men were more used for voiceover for both domestic and non-domestic product, although the percentage was higher for non-

domestic products. (Bartsch et al., 2000). The results showed an overall unequal gender representation with females being overrepresented as products representatives for domestic products and men for non-domestic products. Compared to previous studies, there was an increase of gender bias except for the voiceover. In previous studies only (10%) of the voiceover was performed by women, whereas the percentage increased in this study to (30%) (Bartsch et al., 2000).

Milner and Collins (2000) classified nations as being either masculine societies or feminine societies. They defined special traits for each society. Whereas masculine countries highlighted achievements, material success and assertiveness, feminine societies focused more on modesty, quality of life, and caring for the weak. Moreover, masculine countries highlight strict differences between the roles of men and women in society. Feminine countries have no such limiting borders. Also, masculine countries tend to adopt some notions such as "men are men, and women are women" (Milner & Collins, 2000). This notion is a prevailing one in the Egyptian society, which we can therefore tentatively categorize as a masculine country.

While some societies strive to enlarge social differences between men and women, others try to minimize those gender differences in different aspects of life. Milner and Collins assumed that sex-role differences between men and women tend to be found more in masculine countries than in feminine countries. The major aim of this study was to "show that sex-role portrayal can be an artifact of the cultures that frame the phenomena being studied" (Milner & Collins, 2000).

A total of 1170 TV commercials were coded from Sweden, Russia, Japan and the United States. The ads were coded for product type, product user, voiceover, setting, sex, age, marital status, employment, occupation, spokesperson, credibility, help, advice, role, activity, and frustration. There were fewer ads in Sweden and

Russia than in Japan and the US. The most important finding of this study is the link between a country's gender and the portrayal of men and women in the country's TV commercials. In general, in "masculine" countries there were more gender differences than in feminine countries. There were differences between males and females in five out of ten variables measured in the U.S. and Japan. On the other hand, in Russia and Sweden there were gender differences in only three out of the ten variables. Regarding employment, there were differences among genders in the U.S., Japan, and Sweden. No differences were found in Russia. There were no differences in the categories of help or advice in any of the countries (Milner & Collins, 2000).

Regarding the Arab world, a study was conducted to compare the content of magazine ads in the Arab world to that in the United States. The Arab world as classified by the study is made up of twelve Middle East countries, which are Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, U.A.E., and Yemen in addition to ten African countries including Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Egypt as well as others. This study bases differences between ads in the U.S. and those in the Arab world on cultural and economic factors. The main reason behind this is that in most Arab countries the value system and the social norms are derived from the Islamic religion. On the other hand, the American beliefs are mainly based on the Christian religion. Therefore, ads in both regions are expected to be different because advertisers would tend to make their ads in accordance with the prevailing belief system (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000).

The study predicted that the use of comparative ads would be less in the Arab world than in the United States. Also, the content of ads was expected to be briefer in the Arab world as speech in the Arab world is considered better when it is succinct. Moreover, ads in the Arab world would contain less price information as stating the

price is considered too direct and maybe unacceptable by Arab cultures. On the other hand, in the U.S. advertising would tend to be more direct and ; therefore price information would be available in the ads (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000).

Different ads from American and Pan-Arab magazines were analyzed including Rose Al Youssef , Nisf Dunia, and Hawaa from Egypt. All full page ads were coded. Results found that there were more men and women portrayed in American ads than Arabic ads. Seventy-five percent of the American ads showed men and women in comparison to 45% of Arabic ads. Only 5.5% of Arabic ads resorted to comparison while 26% of American ads used this approach. Sixty-three percent of Arabic ads were considered "informative," compared to 88% of American ads. Informative ads were defined as having at least two "information cues." In Arabic ads women were found to be present only when they were related to the advertised product, such as cosmetics or household products. Also, rarely was the price of the advertised product mentioned in the ads published in Arabic magazines, except for a few renowned brands (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000).

"Sex-role stereotyping in advertising is of even greater concern and controversy because of the effect advertising has on molding attitudes. Individual attitudes are learned partly from advertising as people are inundated by it everyday. By reflecting narrowly defined roles for women, advertising is believed to reinforce the notion that such roles are "proper", "best" or "natural". When these roles are repeated constantly without change, they become stereotyped.... If there are no other influences to counter the effects of advertising, people would restrict their aspirations to those stereotyped roles" (Wee et al, 1995).

This previous notion is supported by research about social learning theory. According to this theory, "much learning takes place through observing the behavior

of others." This can include the behavior of friends, family, peers, or that watched on TV. This implies that not only do TV commercials stereotype males and females, but also they assign certain roles to them and spread the beliefs that these are the only acceptable roles. "Much human learning takes place through watching other people model various behavior" (Severin & Tankard).

Research about TV commercials and their effect of social learning holds that not only do children learn sex roles through reward and punishment, but also through observation. "by watching members of their own sex and then copying or modeling that behavior, children can discover how they are supposed to behave and feel. Children learn a great deal from television about sex-typed behaviors, because it provides them with a wealth of models readily available for observation" (p.323, Smith, 1994).

In addition, television characters are attractive to children. Because they are most probably good looking and influential. Due to the heavy TV watching by children, they are more exposed to models shown on TV than to their own parents or friends. Research has shown that children tend to imitate the behavior of models of their own sex more than those of the opposite sex. Men and women respond to ads differently. Research found that females may tend to use products targeted to males, but males are unlikely to use or buy products they consider "feminine." This has led to the "predominance of male models in advertising." This may explain why in most of the previously mentioned studies most of the central figures are males. Products used or advertised by males will attract both male and females consumers, while males will not be attracted to products targeted at females alone (Smith, 1994).

The literature review reveals that there was more interest in studying the portrayal of women in TV commercials in the period of the 1970s, followed by the

1980s, then fewer studies in the 1990s. only a few studies were located that were conducted in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although change has occurred over time in the way women are represented in TV ads, the results from various studies are more or less consistent. Women were generally portrayed as dependent, at home, and are often associated with domestic products. On the other hand, men constituted the majority of voiceover in various ads and were portrayed independent and authority. In addition, a link was found between gender representation and culture as differences were found across different cultures in the way society looks at men and women and assigns different roles to them based on each country's beliefs, norms, and prevailing traditions. This is reflected in comparative studies conducted between countries in different regions with different cultures.

### **Egyptian Considerations**

Egypt is a Middle Eastern developing country and is; therefore different that countries covered in the previous studies in the review of literature. Egypt is an Arab Republic with a "democratic socialist system based on the alliance of the working people and derived from the country's historical heritage and the spirit of Islam." Egyptian people are part of the Arab Nation. Islam is the state religion and Arabic is the official language. As for the gender status, "the state ensures the equality of men and women in both political and social rights" (1492, The Europa World Year Book, 2003).

Press freedom as well as the freedom of all publications along with the freedom of opinion are all "safeguards." Broadcasting on both radio and television is the responsibility of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU), which is state owned (The Europa World Year Book, 2003).



"The Egyptian media play a leading role in the Middle East. Egypt hosts the region's largest news agency, and the main papers, widely read throughout the region, are important in forming regional opinions." (1040, Amin & Fikry, 2003).

Egypt's dominance is a result of historical, geographic and demographic factors." As a result of this dominance, the Egyptian dialect has become popular and well understood all over the Arab world. "There are eight Egyptian state channels that cover the different Egyptian regions. There are approximately 6,850,000 TV sets and 19,400,000 radio sets that pick up seven Egyptian public radio stations" (Amin & Fikry, 2003).

As for the women's movements in Egypt and the Arab world, Arabic Women press was pioneered in the late nineteenth century. The writers called for education, unveiling, and modifications in personal laws of marriage and divorce. Since the dawn of female press, women's rights were an important topic of discussion. Many Syrian women writers migrated from Syria to Egypt and helped bring in new ideas to the Egyptian female press (Boron, 1994).

Prior to 1919, feminism in Egypt only discussed expanding women's role inside the house as women's role was viewed as that of housewives. "since women's primary role was as wife and mother, the best way to improve her situation was to educate her for a domestic vocation." (p.18, Boron, 1994). Women's political rights in Egypt were not discussed before the 1920s.

Regarding the advertising industry in the Middle East, it is dominated by public sector and private agencies such as "Al Ahram, AL Akhbar and Tarek Nour advertising in Egypt, Tahama, Impact/BBDO and Promo Seven in Saudi Arabia, Intermarkets and Publi-Graphics in the United Arab Emirates and Americana in Kuwait." Although there were some efforts in Egypt, Lebanon and Israel to

nationalize TV commercials according to local cultures, ads still mostly turn out in the "Western style" (2, Amin & Fikr, 2000).

It is worth mentioning that advertisements in Egypt are subject to censorship. Before an ad is aired on television, it has to pass through the state censorship.

Little research has been published about advertising in this part of the world. There was a need to study advertising in Egypt. This paper focuses on Egyptian TV commercials and how women are portrayed in these commercials. As a developing, Middle Eastern country, the Egyptian society is a traditional one with a family structure of a working father and a housewife. Therefore, it is expected that the Egyptian society would stereotype women and these stereotypes are expected to be reflected in TV commercials. The status of women in the Egyptian society has witnessed considerable changes over the past few decades and it was therefore, necessary to examine whether advertisers have kept up with these social changes in their portrayal of women. Using content analysis, a sample of Egyptian TV commercials were examined in the following study in order to determine how women are portrayed and detect the similarities and differences from other countries.

# Chapter 3

## Methodology

## **Methodology**

For the purpose of this study, a content analysis of Egyptian television commercials was conducted using the structure from previous research by Dominick and Rauch (1972). Recording was conducted for two weeks (October 14 – 20 and November 25 – December 1, 2001) during prime time, from 7-11 PM from Channel 1. The selection of Channel 1 was based on the fact that it is the major television station in Egypt viewed by the largest audience, an approach used in previous studies of gender portrayals in other countries such as Gilly (1988), Furnham and Voli (1989), and Furnham and Bitar (1993).

The final sample was a total of 52 hours containing 508 commercials, out of which there were 182 unique ads and several duplications. Ads were coded and analyzed, without removing the duplications. Each advertisement was coded upon a series of variables. The variables were divided into two broad categories: ad-related variables and character-related variables. Only adult characters were coded. Structured coding sheets were developed to code each ad on a separate sheet. A key sheet was constructed to tabulate the results after coding.

Ad-related variables included six variables, each divided into sub categories. the first variable was the product category. It included: food, drink ready made; food, drink need preparation; personal and beauty care; automobiles and accessories; restaurants & stores; drugs & medicine; household appliances + TV; public service; alcohol; pet food; household cleaning; telephone services; detergents; clothing; toys/ kids; construction/ construction materials; finance, real estate & insurance; and other. For most analyses these 16 categories were collapsed into two main ones: *domestic* and *non-domestic* products. *Domestic* products are those used inside the house, while *non-domestic* products include all the rest. The reason for choosing the product

category variable is that the study wanted to measure whether or not there are gender differences in the types of products advertised. From the literature review, it is obvious that advertisements for some products have been dominated by males while others by females. Findings of previous studies such as O'Donnell and O'Donnell (1978) and Lovdal (1989) in the United States, Gilly (1988) in Australia, Mexico and the United States and Bartsch (2000) in the United States have indicated that women are most often associated with domestic products. Therefore, it was necessary to discover if the same findings regarding product category would apply to Egypt.

The second variable was language used in the ad. The choices were *Arabic*, where only words of the Arabic language are heard in the ad and no other language is spoken, *English*, where the spoken language used in the entire ad is English, *Both*, where the ad makes use of both Arabic and English spoken words in any kind of mix and regardless of how many or how few words of either languages is used, or *neither*, where the ad is not entirely in Arabic, not entirely in English, and not a mixture of Arabic and English. It could be Arabic and another language other than English or any other mixture of languages. The language variable was not coded in any of the previous studies reviewed in the literature. It was developed for the purpose of this research in order to measure whether or not there are gender differences in the use of language.

The third ad-related variable was the ad format. This included Demonstration; Problem & solution; Music & song; Spokesperson; Dialogue; Vignette; Narrative; and Other. *Demonstration* ads are used in the case of "brands whose benefits result from some tangible function" (313, O'Guinn, Allen, Semenik, 2000). *Problem & solution* ads the advertised brand "is introduced as a savior in a difficult situation" (313, O'Guinn et al., 2000). Music & song ads "show a product in action accompanied by

music and only visual overlays of the copy" (313, O'Guinn et al., 2000). The *spokesperson* format is "the delivery of a message by a spokesperson" (313, O'Guinn et al., 2000). The *dialogue* ad refers to the advertised product through "a dialogue between two or more people" (313, O'Guinn et al., 2000). The *vignette* ad format "uses a sequence of related advertisements as a device to maintain viewer interest" (313, O'Guinn et al., 2000). The narrative ad "tells a story, like a vignette, but the mood of the ad is highly personal, emotional, and involving" (313, O'Guinn et al., 2000). The *other* category includes all ads that do not fall into any of the previous categories.

The fourth variable was whether or not there were children shown in the ad. This variable was coded as *yes*, if there are children shown in the ad, or *no*, if no children were shown in the ad. This variable was developed in order to find out if there is a relation between gender and child-care, i.e. to show if females are shown in parental roles more than males or if the presence of children is linked more to the presence of females.

The fifth variable was concerned with the setting. It included the following sub-categories: *Store/ restaurant*, if the location where the ad is shot is any kind of store or restaurant. *Workplace/ occupation* setting, if the ad is located in an office or in a company. *Outdoor (urban)* is when the ad is shot in an outdoor location in the city not in the countryside, i.e. in the streets, gardens not in an indoor setting. *Outdoor (rural)* is when the ad is shot in an outdoor setting in the countryside, i.e. in the fields, not indoors. *Residence/ kitchen*, if the location of the ad is inside the kitchen in a house. *Residence/ bathroom* is when the location of the ad is inside the bathroom in a house. *Residence/ dining room* is when the location of the ad is in the dining room of a house. *Residence/ bedroom* is when the location of the ad is inside

the bedroom in a house. *Residence/ other*, if the ad is shot anywhere inside a house other than the kitchen, bathroom, dining room, bedroom. Other is when the ad is shot anywhere other than the previous categories, or if it is not possible to tell the setting in which the ad is, i.e. in a studio. These were also collapsed into two categories of *home* setting and *other location* setting for several analyses.

Previous studies have demonstrated that women are most commonly depicted inside the house, while males are portrayed in outdoor settings. This was found in the studies of McArthur and Resko (1975) in the United States, Fernham and Voli (1989) on Italian television commercials as well as other similar studies. The Egyptian society is made mainly of traditional families of working father and housewife. Therefore, it is necessary to measure to what extent will females be portrayed in the house location. In other words, the study wanted to show how gender is linked to location.

The sixth and last ad-related variable measured whether the voiceover was for male or female, or none. The voiceover is when a voice is heard without seeing the character speaking on-camera. In case of more than one voiceover, the primary one was defined as the one who talks for a longer time. *Male* voiceover is when the main voiceover is a man speaking. *Female* voiceover is when the main voiceover is a woman speaking. *None* means there is no voiceover in the ad. All previous studies conducted to measure gender stereotyping in television commercials all over the world have agreed that most ads use male voiceover. Previous research found from 56 to 90 percent of all voiceover in ads are males. This was proven by O'Donnell and O'Donnell (1978), Whipple and Courtney (1980), Bretl and Cantor (1988), Lovdal, (1989), Mazzella et al (1992), and others. In his study Bartsch (2000) found a slight increase in women performing voiceover (30%) from previous studies. However,

most voiceovers in ads were still males. The increased use of male voiceovers in ads is often justified by the fact that the male voice is considered the voice of authority and more convincing to consumers than female voice. This is why most advertisers have used male voices to sell their products.

The second set of variables was character-related variables, which were gender, age, marital status, employment status, occupation, attire conservatism, dress code, subservience, credibility/ role, primary character. The gender was *male* or *female*. The age categories were *18 – 34*, *35 – 50*, and *over 50*. According to previous studies, in most cases, women were usually portrayed younger than men. Therefore, it is necessary to find out whether the same results would turn out to be true in Egypt or not.

Regarding the marital status, characters were coded as either *married*, where it is clearly stated or shown in the ad that the character is married, or *not married*, where it is clearly stated or shown in the ad that the character is not married, or *not identified*, when it is not possible to know from the ad whether or not the character was married. As for the character's employment status, characters were identified as either *employed at work*, where the character is depicted in his or her workplace, or *employed not at work*, where it is stated in the ad that the character has a job, but he or she is not shown on the job, or *no identification of employment*, where it is not shown or stated in the ad whether or not the character is employed. In the previous studies, women were generally depicted as unemployed. The employment status was measured in the Egyptian commercials in order to be able to compare the portrayed employment status of Egyptian females to other parts of the world.

Characters in the ads were also coded for their occupation in order to determine whether or not females are limited to certain occupations. This variable



included *professional/ top executive, entertainer/ professional athlete, mid business level, nonprofessional/ white collar, blue collar/ labor, homemaker, other, and not determined.*

According to previous gender portrayal studies, the categories for basis of credibility are *product user* defined as "character depicted primarily as a user for the advertised product," *Authority* defined as "character depicted primarily as a source of information about the product," and *other* defined as "neither user nor authority" (Furnham & Bitar, 1993). Findings from previous studies indicated that females were mainly portrayed as product users while males are generally product authority, even on products used primarily by females.

As for the subservience variable, it was developed for the purpose of this study and was divided into three categories. *Serving others* defined as "a character being depicted in service of others," *being served* defined as "a character depicted receiving service from others," and *neither*, which is the case of characters not meeting any of the two previous criteria.

All the commercials were coded independently by two Arabic speaking female coders. The process involved many playbacks to ensure each ad was coded properly. Intra-coder reliability was tested and it exceeded .97 in all the cases. The inter-coder reliability for the study was .92 for the categories that were not collapsed, and between .86 and 1.00 for the rest of the variables. In cases of disagreements between coders, the final coding was done by a non-native Arabic male.

By examining and analyzing the previous variables, the study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

- 1- Do Egyptian TV commercials include more women characters?
- 2- Are women generally portrayed younger than men?

- 3- Are women more associated with domestic products?
- 4- Are women portrayed at home more often?
- 5- Is the presence of children in the ad linked to female characters more than male characters?
- 6- Are women generally portrayed serving men?

# Chapter 4

## Results & Analysis

## Results

This chapter examines the results of the study and summarizes findings to be used to compare Egypt with other parts of the world in terms of gender portrayals in TV advertising. After analyzing the data, the results indicated that out of the total of 508 recorded commercials, there were 379 (75%) that included adult characters. Several commercials showed more than one character, reaching a total of 716 characters that were coded. Of all the coded characters 430 (60%) were males and 286 (40%) were females. A chi-square test indicated that the difference in total number of men and women is significant ( $\chi^2 = 29.0$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This answers the first research question that inquires about whether there will be more male characters or more female characters in Egyptian TV commercials.

The first set of variables was the ad-related variables. Regarding the product category variable, Table 1 summarizes the finding of the percentage of ads in each of the coded categories. Results show that the category with most ads is the “food/drink needs preparation” category with 20.1% of advertisements falling into it. The second most frequent category is that of “food/drink ready made with 19.7% of products. There were no ads at all in either the “alcohol” category or the “pet food” category. The least product category with ads though was the “drugs/medicine” with only 2 ads, representing 0.4% of the total coded commercials. Table 1 shows the summary of the results for product category.

Regarding the advertisement format, the most commonly used format was found to be the “demonstration” ad with 121 (23.8%) of the total ads falling into this category. The format least frequently used was “dialogue” with only 11 (2.2%) of the ads in this category.

As for whether or not there were children present in the ad, 184 (36%) ads included children, while there were no children present in the rest 324 (63.8%) of the TV ads. Table 2 summarizes the presence of children.

Table 1  
Summary of type of product variable

Product type	Frequency	Percentage
Food, drink need preparation	102	20.1
Food, drink ready made	100	19.7
Personal and beauty care	51	10
Household appliances + TV	48	9.4
Public service	40	7.9
Telephone services	34	6.7
Detergents	32	6.3
Other	32	6.3
Finance, Real estate & insurance	19	3.7
Restaurants & stores	18	3.5
Household cleaning	16	3.1
Construction/ construction material	5	1
Automobiles and accessories	3	0.6
Clothing	3	0.6
Toys/ Kids	3	0.6
Drugs & medicine	2	0.4
Alcohol	0	0
Pet food	0	0
Total	508	100

Table 2  
Summary of presence of children variable

Children present	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	184	36.2
No	324	63.8
Total	508	100

As for the language variable, out of the total 508 ads, 500 (98.4%) were completely in Arabic, 1 (0.2%) in English, 6 (1.2%) in both languages and 1 (0.2%) fell into the “other” category.

The primary setting of the commercials was coded and the results indicated that the most of the ads fell into the “other” category with 163 (32.1%) of the ads. This category was followed by “outdoor urban” and “residence/other” equally with 69 (13.6%) ads falling into each of them. The least common category was the “residence/bedroom” with only 4 ads (0.8%) of all commercials taking place in the bedroom. Table 3 illustrates the results for different categories regarding the commercial setting.

Table 3  
Summary of commercial setting variable

Primary setting	Frequency	Percentage
Other	163	32.1
Outdoor (urban)	69	13.6
Residence/ other	69	13.6
Outdoor (rural)	58	11.4
Residence/ kitchen	55	10.8
Store/ restaurant	37	7.3
Workplace/ occupation setting	19	3.7
Residence/ bathroom	17	3.3
Residence/ dining room	17	3.3
Residence/ bedroom	4	0.8
Total	508	100

Regarding the voiceover variable, out of the total of 508 commercials, 377 commercials (74.2%) used male voiceover, 57 (11.2%) used female voiceover and 74 (14.6%) did not use any voiceover. A chi-square test showed the results to be

significant ( $\chi^2 = 235.9$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 437$ ,  $p < .001$ ) Table 4 summarizes the findings regarding the voiceover variable.

Table 4  
Summary of voiceover variable

Primary voiceover	Frequency	Percentage
Male	377	74.2
Female	57	11.2
None	74	14.6
Total	508	100

As for the character related variables, as previously mentioned, the female characters outnumbered the male characters. There were 430 females and 286 males (60% females and 40% males).

Male and female characters were compared on many variables including age, product type, credibility basis, setting, presence of children, and subservience. Regarding age, there were 166 (58%) males between the age of 13-34, 88 (31%) males in the age category of 35-50 and 32 (11%) over 50 years of age. As for female characters, 337 (78%) were between 18-34, 76 (18%) between 35-50 and 17 (4%) over 50 years. It is obvious from these results that females are generally portrayed as younger than males in Egyptian TV commercials. Also, more males than females fall into the "over 50" years of age category than females, which implies that males are more older males portrayed in ads. A chi-square test showed that these results are significant ( $\chi^2 = 36.1$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This answers the second research question of whether women were generally portrayed younger than men. Table 5 summarizes the results of the age variable for males and females.

As for the type of product, it was collapsed into two categories of domestic and non-domestic products, in line with previous studies, where domestic products

were defined as those “products used in the home” (Bartsch et al., 2000). Non-domestic products include all the rest of the products. According to this classification, 187 (65%) males were found to be associated with domestic products in comparison to 337 (78%) females associated with domestic products. On the other hand, 99 (35%) males were depicted in ads for non-domestic products in comparison to 108 (25%) females. A chi-square demonstrated that the difference is statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 7.5$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Although more males are associated with non-domestic products than females and although more females are associated with domestic products than males, both males and females are more associated with domestic products than with non-domestic products. This is due to the fact that the greatest percentage of ads is that for food/drinks ready or need preparation, which are both considered domestic products. Therefore, it is expected that the overall portrayal of both men and women is more associated with products used inside the house than with non-domestic products. Table 6 summarizes the gender differences with regards to the type of product.

Table 5  
Summary of Age variable

Age	Male frequency	Male percentage	Female frequency	Female percentage
18-34	166	58	337	78
35-50	88	31	76	18
>50	32	11	17	4

Table 6  
Summary of Product Type variable

Product Type	Male frequency	Male percentage	Female frequency	Female percentage
Domestic	187	65	322	75
Non-domestic	99	35	108	25



Regarding the basis for credibility variable, each character was coded as being either product user, authority, or neither. Out of the total characters, 160 (60%) males were shown as product users in opposed to 310 (72%) females. On the other hand, 46 (16%) men were shown as authority on advertised products in comparison to 23 (5%) women shown as authority. Both men and women were almost equally shown as neither product user nor authority (28% of males and 23% of females). A chi-square analysis showed that the difference is statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 29.4$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p < .001$ ) Table 7 illustrates the difference between men and women in the credibility basis variable.

The setting variable was collapsed into two categories, of “at home setting” and “other setting.” Results indicated that there was no significant difference between males and females regarding the setting variable. Out of all the coded characters, 101 (35%) males were depicted in an at home location while 161 (37%) females were depicted at home. This suggests that females may be slightly over represented at home more than males. The difference is not significant though. As for the other location, 185 (65%) males were portrayed in other locations in comparison to 269 (63%) females. This means that there is no great difference between males and females in the setting in which the ad is presented. A chi-square test showed that the difference is not statistically significant. ( $\chi^2 = 0.3$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p > .05$ ) This answers the fourth research question, which inquires if women are more portrayed at home. Table 8 summarizes the difference of setting between men and women in the coded commercials.

Regarding the presence of children, results revealed that females were shown with children present more than males. One hundred and ten (39%) male characters were shown with children present in the commercial compared to 183 (43%) female

characters. On the other hand, 176 (61%) males were shown in the ads without children and 247 (57%) females were portrayed without children in all coded commercials. The difference was not statistically significant. ( $\chi^2 = 1.2$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p > .27$ ). In answer to the fifth research question, there is no evidence of a strong link between gender of characters and the presence of children. Table 9 summarizes the findings of the presence of children variable.

Table 7  
Summary of credibility basis variable

Credibility basis	Male frequency	Male percentage	Female frequency	Female percentage
User	160	56	310	72
Authority	46	16	23	5
Neither	80	28	97	23

Table 8  
Summary of setting variable by Gender

Setting	Male frequency	Male percentage	Female frequency	Female percentage
At home	101	35	161	37
Other location	185	65	269	63

Table 9  
Summary of presence of children variable

Presence of Children	Male frequency	Male percentage	Female frequency	Female percentage
Child present	110	39	183	43
No child present	176	61	147	57

The subservience variable was coded to show if there are any gender differences with respect to giving or receiving services. The categories included were, either serving others, being served, or neither. The results indicated significant

differences between male and female characters regarding service. More females (21%) were shown serving others than males (5%). On the other hand, males were more likely (11%) than females (2%) to fit into the category of being served. The majority of characters, though, were neither serving others, nor being served (84% of males and 77% of females). This indicates that although most characters are neither serving others nor being served, men are mostly served and women are more likely to serve others. A chi-square test showed that the difference was statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 55.7$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $N = 716$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These findings answer the sixth research question affirmatively. Table 10 summarizes difference between the results of men and women regarding the subservience variable.

Table 10  
Summary of Subservience variable

Subservience	Male frequency	Male percentage	Female frequency	Female percentage
Serving others	14	5	91	21
Being served	31	11	9	2
Neither	241	84	330	77

# Chapter 5

## Discussion

## Discussion

This chapter examines the results and analysis of the study and compares the findings of Egyptian TV commercials to those of other countries in order to know the similarities and differences between Egypt and the rest of the world with regards to how women are portrayed in TV commercials.

First, the results indicated that 60% of the total characters depicted in Egyptian TV commercials are women and 40% are men. This finding contradicts what several previous studies in the U.S. and European countries have shown. From the review of previous literature of similar studies, it was found that males are generally over represented in ads than females. In their study about the portrayal of women in American TV advertisements McArthur and Resko (1975), found that 57% of the central figures were males and 43% were females. Similarly, Bretl and Cantor (1988) found that men were over represented in the U.S. TV commercials during both daytime and evening time (in the daytime, 47% of central figures were males and 53% females, while in the evening 54% were males and 46% females). Also, Fernham and Voli's study (1989) about the portrayal of women in Italian TV commercials showed that in general men were more represented in ads than women. The same results were later found by Mazzella et al. (1992) where 74% of all coded characters were males and only 26% females in Australian TV commercials. Smith (1994) attributed the over representation of men in TV commercials to the fact that women might use products that are considered masculine or that are advertised by men. Men on the other hand would be reluctant to use product that are considered feminine. Therefore, it would be considered safer for advertisers to use men in their ads so their products would appeal to both men and women, overruling the risk of males categorizing the advertised product as being feminine and not using it.

On the other hand, Milner and Collins (1998) found that 69% of central figures in Turkish TV commercials were females, which means that, like Egyptian commercials, Turkish commercials tend to over represent women. As previously mentioned, Turkey and Egypt share the proximity in the geographic location as well as the fact that Islam is the prevailing religion in both countries, making more common ground between Egypt and Turkey than between Egypt and any of the other studied countries. In addition, historically speaking, Egypt was a part of the Ottoman empire based in Turkey for a long period of Egypt's modern history, making it natural for both countries to share some common values.

Mwangi (1996) found that in Kenyan ads 52.6% of central figures were females, while 47.7% were males. Although the difference is not very significant, still, more males were portrayed as central figures in Kenyan TV commercials, like in Egypt. Kenya and Egypt share in common their both being African nations. This common ground may influence the way both societies look at women and consequently the way women are represented in ads.

Modern advertising in Egypt has generally been criticized for the use of women as sex objects. Thus, this might explain the over representation of female models in ads. Females are used in ads to play on consumers' sex appeals and to advertise both male and female products. The portrayal of a young pretty female model might attract male as well as female consumers to buy the product. Women consumers will want to be like the model portrayed in the ad and men would want to be able to attract females like the model portrayed in the ad. This concept is culturally different than the one previously discussed by Smith (1994) regarding masculine products and feminine products.

Moreover, according to the Egyptian culture, it is not acceptable for a man who is not considered part of the family to gain access to another's man's house to meet with his wife and daughters. On the other hand, females can gain easier access. Therefore, a female model in ads is more welcomed on TV than her male counterpart. In addition, "public service" ads came in fifth place within the type of products advertised on TV with 7.9% of all ads being public service. The biggest portion of public service ads is dedicated to birth control and family planning. These ads are generally target women in the countryside, where it is more acceptable to take advice from another woman. Therefore, it is obvious that cultural beliefs within the society play a major role in people's understanding and acceptability of the content and the messages of TV commercials.

Regarding the type of product advertised, it is no surprise that there are no ads in the categories of "alcohol" and "pet food." First, as an Islamic country ruled according to Islamic law (sharia'a) the consumption of alcohol is not encouraged as it is against Islamic beliefs. Ads for alcoholic beverages are available in the Egyptian print media, but not on TV or radio.

Second, regarding pet food, there is no pet food that is manufactured in Egypt. All pet food available is imported from foreign countries. Advertising on TV for foreign goods is more expensive than that of locally manufactured products. Therefore, it would be expensive for pet food to advertise on TV, especially in that the demand for such products is not expected to be high enough to cover the cost of TV ads. Egyptian consumers are not very familiar with pet food. Usually pets raised in the houses are fed leftovers and rarely do their owners bother to go shopping for pet food, except for a slight high class of people who are generally familiar with such products through traveling to foreign countries, where such products are popular. In

addition, since Egypt is a developing country a substantial portion of the population living below the poverty line. Thus pet food would be considered a luxury only affordable by the high socio-economic classes and might be considered offensive for people who are not able to afford their daily bread to see ads for pet food.

On the other hand, the largest percentage of ads was for “food/drink” categories with 39.8% of total ads dedicated to food/drink either ready made or need preparation. This shows that a high emphasis is placed on food and beverage from the side of advertisers. There is more than one possible reason for this. First, the Egyptian market is one with high consumption percentages. Food and beverages is an important part of Egyptians’ daily lives. Second, most of the occasions and feasts are linked to special types of food and drinks. Celebrations are generally linked to cooking and eating a variety of foods. For example, during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, there is high consumption of special kinds of food and beverage highly associated with this month. Also, during the Barium feast, there are special traditions linked to the slaughtering of sheep and cooking them in special ways. This in addition to many other religious and national feasts is directly linked to the consumption of food. Therefore it is normal to find the biggest category of ads to be food/drink.

Another interesting variable is the ad setting. Most ads fell into the “other” category, meaning they were neither shot inside the house nor in a specified outdoor location. Moreover a substantial percentage (10.8%) fell into the “residence/kitchen” category, which is normal and expected since the greatest percentage of ads promoted food and drinks. It is also not a surprise that the smallest category for the setting variable is the “residence/bedroom” as this place is considered very private and it is not encouraged by the Egyptian culture to feature people in such a private location.



The results of the study indicated that out of the total of 508 recorded ads, 377 (74.2%) used male voiceover, 57 (11.2%) used female voiceover and 74 (14.6%) did not use any voiceover. This result is in line with the findings of previous studies, where it was shown that the “voiceover” category is male dominated. In their study of American TV commercials, Dominick and Rauch, (1972) found that males represent 87% of the voiceover for all ads. Same thing with the O’Donnell and O’Donnell study (1978), which found that 93% of all voiceover in ads on U.S. television is male voiceover. Whipple and Courtney (1980) also confirmed these findings with males constituting 85 % of the voiceovers for all ads. Gilly (1988) found that males dominated the voiceover variable in all three countries examined by the study: the U.S., Mexico and Australia. The same results applied to Fernham and Voli (1989) in their study of Italian TV commercials. Lovdal (1998) found that U.S. commercials still counted mainly on men for 90% of the voiceover in commercials. Mwangi (1996) also found male voiceover more dominant in Kenyan TV commercials.

This implies that there is consistency between different countries and different cultures over time about the voiceover variable. It shows that advertisers seem to believe that a male voice is more trustworthy and more capable of selling products than female a voice. According to previous studies male voiceovers are even used to sell female products and when the central figure in the ad is a female. Advertisers; therefore consider male voice more authoritative and more convincing. The results from this Egyptian study; however, show a slightly lower percentage of male voiceovers than most previous studies from other countries. This may be due to the fact that the Egyptian study is more recent. The difference over time might have been in favor of female voiceovers. It is no surprise however that in Egypt more males are used for voiceovers as Egypt is a male dominated society where the traditional family

of working father and housewife is popular. Women are not expected to be experts on products. They are mainly users and; therefore needs some kind of male authority or assertion about the advertised product, even if they are female products.

The analysis focused on some character related variables allows further measure of the difference in traits between males and females represented in Egyptian TV commercials. The first character related variable was age. According to the results, there were 166 (58%) males between the age of 18-34, 88 (31%) males in the age category of 35-50 and 32 (11%) over 50 years of age. As for female characters, 337 (78%) were between 18-34, 76 (18%) between 35-50 and 17 (4%) over 50 years. This implies that females are generally portrayed as younger than males and there are more men than women in the older age brackets. These findings are in line with findings from previous studies. Dominick and Rauch (1972) found that 71% of females portrayed in American TV commercials were ages 20-30 years compared to 43% of males. On the other hand, 41% of males were between 36-50. Gilly (1988) found that women were relatively younger than men in all three countries, the U.S., Mexico, and Australia. However, the age difference in Mexico was more significant. This was also confirmed by Ferrante et al. (1988) in the United States, Mazzella et al. in Australia (1992), and Neto and Pinto (1998) in Portugal.

This suggests that there is a general trend across countries and over time to portray young female models and older males in ads. One possible explanation for this trend is the use of females as sex objects. They are expected to be young and beautiful in order to attract viewers. On the other hand, men are viewed as authority and are therefore portrayed as older than women in order to give the impression that they are wiser and more authoritative, even when it comes to female products. This reinforces the stereotyped image of the young female model that is generally used in

TV commercials to attract viewers using sex appeals. Also, it reinforces the stereotyped image of males as being older, wiser characters in the ad who provide females with advice.

Another important variable measured in the type of product and its association with the gender of the character portrayed in ads. As previously mentioned, the type of product variable was collapsed into two categories of domestic (products used inside the home) and non-domestic products (includes all other products). The results indicated that 187 (65%) males were found to be associated with domestic products in comparison to 322 (75%) females associated with domestic products. On the other hand, 99 (35%) males were depicted in ads for non-domestic products in comparison to 108 (25%) females. This indicates two things. First, more females than males are associated with domestic products, while a larger percentage males than females are associated with non-domestic products. Second, both males and females however are more associated with domestic than with non-domestic products.

Regarding the first finding, it supports findings of previous studies from other countries. For example, O'Donnell and O'Donnell (1978) found that women were portrayed as representatives for 86% of domestic products in U.S. TV commercials. Also, Bretl and Cantor (1988) found that women were more associated with advertisements for domestic products than men. Lovdal (1989) confirmed these results by stating that women were representatives for 55% of domestic products. Men were product representatives for 72% of non-domestic products. Bartsch, (2000) also found that women were overrepresented in American TV commercials for domestic products while men were overrepresented in ads for non-domestic products. Therefore, thus the Egyptian results are in line with results of different studies from

other parts of the world regarding the association of the type of product with the gender.

Regarding the second finding, it indicates that both males and females are more associated with ads for domestic products than ads for non-domestic products. This finding confirms the previous results, which indicates that the biggest percentage of Egyptian TV commercials is for food/drinks. Therefore, there are more ads for domestic products on Egyptian TV than for non-domestic products.

Another variable with significant gender differences is the "basis for credibility". Results indicated that 160 (60%) males were shown as product users as opposed to 310 (72%) females. On the other hand, 46 (16%) men were shown as authority on advertised products in comparison to 23 (5%) women shown as authority. Both men and women were almost equally shown as neither product user nor authority (28% of males and 23% of females). This confirms previous findings from other studies. McArthur and Resko (1975) found that 70% of males were depicted as authority as compared to only 14% of females appearing as authority in American TV commercials. Scheibe (1979) noted that males often represented authority even on products they seldom use. Furnham and Voli (1989) also confirmed the same results about Italian television ads. According to Bretl and Cantor (1988) 74% of females were product users, and males were more likely to be authoritative figures (44%) than their female counterparts (26%). As for the United Kingdom, Manstead and McCulloch (1981) showed that 81.2% females were depicted as product users, in opposed to 22.4% of males; on the other hand, 77.7% of males were portrayed as authority, compared to 14.8% of females. Furnham (1999) noted found that in France and Denmark females were more likely to be product users than males and males were more often portrayed as authority. In Portugal 77.5% of the male

central characters were portrayed as authorities, while only 29% of female characters were shown as authorities. In Hong Kong, men were portrayed as authority (76.4%), while women were usually the product users (78.5%). Thus results from Egyptian commercials are in line with findings of previous studies. It is obvious that it is a general trend across different cultures to portray men as authority figures, even on products primarily used by women. In addition, women are generally portrayed as product users. Advertisers seem convinced that although females might be good product users, they still need male authority on product they use as if female characters alone are incomplete or incompetent to advise or sell products on their own. Although Egyptian TV commercials were found to portray more female characters than male characters, unlike some other countries, males still represented the voice of authority more than females.

Regarding the setting of the ad, 101 (35%) males were depicted in an at home location while 161 (37%) females were depicted at home. This implies that females may be slightly over represented at home. The difference is not significant though. As for the other location, 185 (65%) males were portrayed in other location in comparison to 269 (63%) females. The difference was not statistically significant. Compared to results of previous studies, McArthur and Resko, (1975) found that women were generally portrayed at home while men were more portrayed either in an occupational setting or in an outdoor location. Mazzella et al., (1992) found that whereas females were mostly depicted at home, males were shown at work or in the "other" category. Mwangi (1996) found that in Kenyan TV commercials women were depicted at home more than men. Neto (1998) found that whereas females were more often shown at home, males were portrayed in the occupational setting or in the "other" category in Portuguese TV commercials.

In Europe, Furnham and Voli's study in 1989 revealed that in Italy females were shown more at home (34.8%) than males (22.4%), while males were slightly more often to be shown in occupational settings (18.7%) than females (15.1%). In Asia, Furnham et al. (1999) found that in Hong Kong women were more likely to be portrayed at home (36.9%) than men (21.4%), while men were more often shown in occupational settings (9.3%) than women (6.2%). The Indonesian study by Furnham and Mak (1999) depicted more stereotyping, as women were more likely shown in home settings (48.1%) than men (10.8%), while men were more often associated with "leisure settings" (83.1%) than women (48.1%). In their study of gender stereotyping in British TV commercials, Furnham and Farragher (2000) found that women were portrayed at home while men are portrayed in an occupational setting or outdoor.

It is obvious that almost all reviewed studies agree that women are depicted at home more than men and that men are generally either portrayed in an occupational setting in an other outdoor location. This finding was not a surprise in the Egyptian commercials as the Egyptian society is mostly made of traditional families of working father and housewife. There is a prevailing stereotypical image of women in Egypt that it is the woman's place in the house to cook, clean and take care of her husband and children. Therefore, it is expected that Egyptian TV commercials would reflect this image and reinforce it. Although there have been changes in the structure of the Egyptian workforce, and although men and women have equal rights regarding employment and other rights, advertisers are not keeping up with these changes in the society's structure. They still portray the old stereotypical image of women as housewives. Even in the few ads that portray women in outdoor locations, women are generally portrayed either in the street or shopping at a store or supermarket. Women are hardly ever portrayed in an occupational setting.

Regarding the presence of children, results revealed that females were shown with children present more than males. Out of all coded characters, 39% of males were shown with children present in the commercial compared to 43% of female characters. On the other hand, 61% of males were shown in the ads without children and 57% of females were portrayed without children in all coded commercials. A chi-square test revealed the fact that this difference is not statistically significant. Thus, this difference between male and female characters regarding the presence of children is likely due to chance or sample selection. Therefore, there is no gender difference with regards to the presence of children variable.

Previous studies from other parts of the world have found stronger relationships between the presence of children and the gender of the central figure. In the United Kingdom Furnham and Skae (1997) demonstrated that males were more likely to be shown against a female background while females were more likely shown with a background of children. Fernham et al. (1999) found that in France females were also more likely to be seen with children in TV commercials and in Hong Kong, females were also shown more often with children. Thus Egypt's findings regarding gender's relation to the presence of children are not as strong as findings from other countries. It was expected; however that the Egyptian findings would tend to be more stereotypical and females were expected more to be found with children in the ads as the Egyptian society sees that the primary role of women is to stay home and take care of the children. A possible reason for the statistically insignificant difference between men and women in Egyptian TV commercials with regards to the presence of children is the fact that the major unit of the Egyptian society is the family made of a father, a mother and their children. Therefore, family values are strongly highlighted in television series, programs and commercials as

well. Moreover, fathers take pride in having kids as there is a widespread notion in the Egyptian society, especially in rural areas that children are considered wealth.

Therefore, fathers are equally shown with kids as mothers. For Egyptian fathers who live in villages or who are from lower socio-economic classes children are a source of income as they work and help provide for their families. Also, they support their parents when they reach old age. Therefore, as far as the Egyptian society is concerned, fathers and mothers take pride in having children and being around them and this is reflected in Egyptian TV commercials.

Regarding the subservience variable, the results indicated significant differences between male and female characters regarding service. More females (21%) were shown serving others than males (5%). On the other hand, males (11%) were more likely than females (2%) to fit into the category of being served. The majority of characters, though, were neither serving others, nor being served (84% of males and 77% of females). Thus, in case of service, females are generally serving males. This image of females being at males' service reinforces the stereotyped image of females being subordinate to males in the Egyptian society.

As mentioned before, the most important role Egyptian women play is that of a housewife and mother. They not only are they expected to do different types of house work and take care of the children, but also, they are expected to serve their husband whenever they are at home. The Egyptian family is hardly based on equal gender roles. Men's roles usually ends outside the house. (i.e. Egyptian men are expected to work and provide for their families). They hardly play any other role inside the house. Thus, all the tasks inside the house fall on the woman's shoulders, even if she is employed. This image is highlighted and reflected in Egyptian TV commercials as they mirror this existing fact in society.



Dominick and Rauch (1972), found that seven out of ten females who were portrayed as working in American TV commercials have an occupation of a "subservient nature." They were working as stewardesses, cooks, or secretaries. Thus, the image of woman serving man exists in other cultures as well. However it is not a surprise that this image is more popular and felt in the Egyptian society as it is a traditional, male dominated society.

From the analyzed results it is obvious that gender portrayal in Egyptian TV commercials is in line with trends from the U.S. and Europe when comparing variables such as the primary character's voiceover, age, setting, and type of product. However, the Egyptian findings differ from those of the U.S. and Europe and tend to lean more towards findings from Turkey and Kenya regarding the ratio of males to females represented in the ads. Whereas results from the U.S. and Europe indicate that males are generally overrepresented in TV commercials, Turkish, Kenyan, and Egyptian ads portray more females than males. This implies that while some stereotyped images of woman are somewhat universal, others differ across different cultures.

Overall, some of the findings of this study reflect values that exist and are felt in the Egyptian society, while others exaggerate in their stereotyped portrayal of gender roles. Egyptian TV commercials do not portray the modern working woman. Although women are over represented and may fulfill similar roles to those of men, their borders are limited with male authority.

## **Conclusions and Limitations**

Overall, this study has helped shed some light on advertising in a part of the world where published research in this area has been limited. The study showed evidence of stereotyping women in Egyptian TV commercials. Women were mostly portrayed at home. However, the question is, is this representation reflective of the real life situation of women in the Egyptian society? If it is, should advertisers merely mirror an existing fact even if it is not a positive one? i.e. is it right that advertisers reinforce a ready existing facts by repeated representation of those facts? Or, should advertisers present images of a more ideal society, regardless of ready existing reality, in order to encourage viewers to reach those ideals? It is a question of whether to be pro-active and take action towards modernizing society, or simply be reactive and present what already exists, risking to reinforce it in viewers' and new generations' minds?

Females were also found to be more often associated with domestic products while males more associated with non-domestic products. This is only a normal conclusion based on the previous finding of women being more represented at home. Since advertisers seem to hold that a woman's normal place is the house, she is expected to be associated with domestic products used inside the house. Since males are more often shown in outdoor locations or occupational settings they are expected to be associated with non-domestic products. This is also a stereotyped image of females that might not be reflective of real life as we can see by mere observation women in the work force. Women's presence in different locations is almost equal to that of men. Women are not restricted to staying at home in modern Egyptian life.

The majority of the ads studied used a male voiceover, while females were more visually represented. This indicates that although more females are represented

in Egyptian TV commercials than males, males still represent the voice of authority in most cases . Most ads use male voiceovers in addition to males being more represented as authority while females are product users. This shows a possible superiority of men over women. Whereas women are greater in number, males' roles are still more important and superior to those of females. Compared to the reality of the situation in Egyptian society, this appears to be relatively true. The Egyptian society is still male dominated despite the fact that there are women in a variety of employments in the workforce. When it comes to social values and relationships, males still have the upper hand.

Unlike what was expected, there was no statistical significance relating the presence of children in the commercial to the gender of the central figure. This may be due to the fact that family values are important in Egyptian society. Both men and women take pride in the fact of having children. A common belief between people, especially in rural areas, is that children are wealth. Therefore, fathers and mothers are almost equally represented with children.

On the other hand there was a link between gender and age where women were generally portrayed younger than men. This may be linked to the use of females as sex objects. Like in most previous studies from different parts of the world, female models portrayed in Egyptian TV commercials are young and beautiful to attract audience of both sexes. Also, male models in Egyptian TV ads were older to reinforce the male authority, superiority and wisdom.

Since advertising usually reflects the society's values, it is possible through this study to have an insight into the values and belief system of the Egyptian society. However, it was noticeable through the study that the images of men and women portrayed in Egyptian TV commercials are more traditional than realistic. This

indicates that although there has been social change in the Egyptian society, television commercials have not kept up with this change. For example, although there are many females in the Egyptian workforce, this is not reflected in the ads as females are mostly portrayed at home. Thus, TV commercials in Egypt, as well as in the rest of the world, stereotype women and portray them in certain limited roles. As portrayed in the ads, women are secondary to men and do not contribute greatly to society. This image is still a prevailing one in much of the Egyptian society, so it is not a total surprise that it is reflected in the TV commercials. Since a great part of social learning, especially for children, is through television, advertisers need to evaluate images of men and women appearing in commercials because children learn their and others' roles partially through television.

We should also take into consideration the gap that exists in Egyptian society between different socio-economic classes. Although some of the stereotyped images portrayed in ads might apply to lower socio-economic classes or to residents of the rural areas, they do not always apply to high socio-economic classes and residents of urban areas. This difference in classes might not have been very obvious in previous studies in other countries. It is to be considered when evaluating the Egyptian society because differences exist between different classes of Egyptian society and affect almost all aspects of life. Another fact to be considered is the high illiteracy rate, especially for females, in rural areas. This contributes to the highly stereotyped roles of women in these areas, which is consequently reflected in Egyptian TV commercials.

Television has its own representation of men and women. The question is to what extent do these representations reflect of the real world. While some representations might be realistic, others are obviously not proportionate to real life

roles of women like occupation and age for example. Women in TV commercials are limited to certain occupations, most of which are of subservient nature. This is not applicable to the real world. Although women doctors, lawyers, and professors were non-existent in TV commercials, they do exist in the Egyptian work force in real life. In addition, there is an age gap between men and women portrayed in commercials, which does not exist in real life. In ads there are more young women than men and more middle-aged men than women. This distribution is obviously not reflective of real life.

If we look at the results from the point of view of groups from feminist movements, it will be obvious that some of their criticisms are valid. In general, the images of women portrayed in Egyptian TV commercials are in line with traditional stereotyping of females. The modern or working woman is rarely shown in ads. The question of whether or not people's behavior is shaped by what they see in ads still remains. Defenders of advertising hold that ads are not directly responsible for the creation of certain attitudes towards gender-roles.

From childhood to adolescence, stereotyped images of males and females in advertising may be reinforced in children's minds during prime-time programs that kids usually watch. The result is a set of limiting messages that often tell girls and boys alike that female appearance is central, that boys can do and achieve things girls are incapable of doing, and that boys add more value to society than girls. The persuasive power of advertising has an impact on children and teenagers, especially on defining themselves and their relationships to others. The gender roles girls and boys learn from media depictions can help shape their perceptions of themselves, and each other, for a lifetime.

Instead of just sticking to traditional gender roles in ads, advertisers should work on expanding the images of men and women to include new progressive roles that will last in viewers' minds. According to Shiebe (1979), viewers are more likely to remember commercials that portray new roles for males and females rather than ads that stereotype them. "By broadening advertising approaches to include all people who may want to use the product, the advertiser may be able to widen existing markets without destroying old ones" (P. 26, Sheibe, 1979).

The portrayal of modern images of men and women in ads may be more acceptable to viewers and thus, more beneficial to advertisers. If advertisers strive to be creative and introduce their products using new ideas, they should also take into consideration the importance of at least portraying men and women as they exist in society instead of sticking to old traditional images.

Like previous studies, the findings of this study suggest that "advertising should now be exploring more modern approaches to the portrayal of men and women as they demonstrate products and benefits of these products to television audience" (P.58, Whipple & Courtney, 1980). Advertisers should exert effort to show more progressive images of men and women as recent studies have shown that "repeated viewing of non-traditional commercials may help reverse traditional sex-role norms" (P.505, Knill et al., 1981).

Some of the limitations that faced this study include the fact that the sample of analyzed commercials was recorded only in the evening during prime time. Ads that are broadcast in the evening may take a certain approach that is not applicable to all commercials broadcast during the rest of the day. Thus, the time of the day effect might have affected the results of the study and limited the possibility of generalizing the results.

Another possible limitation is the use of only Channel 1 of Egyptian television for the recording and the selection of the sample of commercials, as it is the major national channel. This might have affected the sample of commercials and different results might have appeared if the recording included other channels. However, for the purpose of this study it was not possible to extend the recording to include commercials from other channels. Due to the limited scope of the study it is not possible to compare every behavior portrayed in the commercials to its real life or draw conclusions to whether or not it really exists in society.

In conclusion, changes need to be made in the way women are represented in Egyptian TV commercials in order to match their roles in real life. Even more, TV is encouraged to present a more progressive role of females in order to promote the image of the modern woman who is equal to man in as many aspects of life as possible in order to reinforce this image in the minds of young generations who obtain a great deal of social learning through television. In addition, feminist organizations and NGOs in Egypt need to pay closer attention at the way women are represented in Egyptian TV in general and in advertisements in specific and be critical of the images that harm or degrade women.

Further research needs to be conducted in this area in order to measure the degree of female stereotyping in commercials. Advertisers should take into consideration results of these studies when creating commercials in order to avoid future stereotyping of women. Also, research needs to consider the effect of TV commercials gender role stereotyping on attitudes towards gender roles in real life. Although advertising alone does not bear the responsibility for the creation of gender stereotypes, images of girls and women in TV ads can likely perpetuate these stereotypes. However, it is difficult to know the direct effect of TV commercials on

audience as it is hard to isolate all other factors and know that the measured results are due to TV commercials.



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