

Advertisement and Dignity of Women in India: A Study of

Indian Print Advertisement Laws

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Abstract

Advertising is a very important tool of communication between marketers, consumers and the society. Advertising not only influences the buying decision but also shapes the attitudes and thought process of society. We are witnessing the age of highly competitive business environment, where creating and sustaining market for any product is a cumbersome and challenging task. The biggest challenge for manufacturer is not manufacturing but selling of goods and advertiser have to design advertisement in such a manner that it not only communicates the producers message clearly, but also converts the viewer to a potential customer. To achieve this goal firms at times compromise with the ethics. Portrayal of women and compromising with their dignity in advertisement is one such issue. Number of times women are depicted in advertisements even if it is neither necessary nor relevant. Unethical and unrealistic projection of women in advertisements is still on. Government and other bodies are trying to control these practices by enforcing strict laws, but effectiveness of laws is debatable. Awareness of advertisement laws is very low amongst people and hence it reduces their effectiveness. Catering to above mentioned need, a primary research was conducted in this paper with two fold objectives one to identify level of awareness of laws of advertisement and compromise with dignity of women. The results obtained from survey are of great importance for regulators and advertisement industry.

Keywords

dignity, unethical, commodity

1. Introduction

Advertisements are present nowadays everywhere, from toothpaste in morning to a goodnight coil in the night. Main reason for it is that advertisements have bombarded an individual with wide range of options of products to choose from. Advertisements influences both people of all the ages and also the social, cultural set up of countries where goods are advertised.

Art and advertising are two different things with each having its own aim. An artist does whatever he feels independently, he is generally not bound by any profit motive. Whereas advertisement is created artistically with an aim of selling more and making more profits. Art work is voluntary in nature and advertising is solely commercial. Customers cannot ignore advertisements but in art only selected some are interested. Therefore advertisements are created in a very creative manner and at times with unrealistic beliefs like happiness, simple life with no extra effort, even the everyday chores of life are projected as if it takes no extra effort to do them and all families are very beautiful and always happy.

Advertising world sees most of things with a powerful eye of the person or a corporate who has huge amount of money to spent. Advertisers these days just to make their message reach vast and variety of the audience portray women unethically and unrealistically. It comes to them as an easiest tool to achieve their goal and they represent women in most of cases as a substitute.

Women models are portrayed even to sell a male product, as advertisers believe by portraying beautiful women they will be able to make more sales. In reality many changes have taken place in the status of women. These days women are very active politically and socially. But this change is seldom visible in the advertisements. She is seen as model to be idealized by everybody else. It puts pressures on all the females to be excellent both inside and outside the house, never to get tired.

2. Advertising an Excellent Medium of Communication

Advertisements have made lot of progress since 1991 and have become an important component of the business these days. Advertisements are being used as a communication medium by the multinational corporations and the sponsors for making prospective customers into consumers of their goods and services. Any business house can with the help of advertising make its image and further build itself as a strong brand.

Advertising has been termed as the business strategy, with soul aim of selling. It is also termed as a commercial speech, which is given to inform customers about the product and most importantly to convince them to buy a product so that there is sale and profit. Advertising is no less than a sales pitch. Advertising reduces time taken by a consumer to make a purchase and time taken by advertiser to inform the consumer about the product. It gives an objective to the advertiser why they are advertising. As the purpose of advertising can vary, most of the times it is sale only but in many cases it's upgrading or just informing buyer about the product. It adds value to the product and brand because everything is promised by advertisers in public domain. It also reduces the distribution cost of the product and ultimately the burden on consumer is also less. Advertisers use all types of appeals in advertisements like from an informative, fun element, sexual image of women etc. to impress their potential buyers.

3. Advertisements and Women

Commodification of women in advertising brings out a paradoxical nature of woman's role as a consumer; she is the subject of transaction in which ultimately she herself becomes an object at times. Advertising does this by highlighting various parts of female body in an erotic manner to sell products which are at times male products. Female body parts in a very revealing manner are made to sell everything from cars juices, undergarments, shaving creams, television, phone, etc. Therefore it is said that in transaction of sale and goods it is the women who becomes a good herself.

Advertising presents women and their body parts in separate and disoriented manner. At times their hands, legs, lips, eyes etc all are shown separately, which gives an impression that part and person are different individual and body parts are more important than true individual, i.e., human being in image is fragmented and not coherent. Such portrayal of women in advertisements does effect their image in the society. Women feel very low in their self-esteem. It is projected by advertisements that women who are thin are only wanted in certain professions that of front desk, bar tender, etc. Women are under constant pressure to look thin.

Stereotypical portrayal of women where they are shown as a homemaker there is nothing wrong in it, but the manner in which they presented, that even after washing utensils or doing other household

chores they are happy and satisfied which may not be the case always. It is simply glorification of beauty. Even the career oriented women are shown with the chief concern to look beautiful so that she is able to maintain her position always in her workplace. Advertisements also to some extent give the message that Indians are crazy for white and fair skin and that is the only key to success of getting a best guy and to succeed in profession.

Advertisements also enforce the importance of patriarchal set up, even though it is extension of nothing else but values of society, they prove it by portraying that women generally take small decisions like soaps, dish wash, etc., but the major decisions of investments, car etc are taken by males only.

In advertisements these days female models are used to sell masculine products which they don't use themselves. Also in feminine products women are used to sell products with certain perfect body types which are completely unachievable. Personal image of women and the product has no relevance, end result is only the commodification of women where their bodies are used as a toy to sell products. These are difficult to tolerate at times as they violate rights granted by the constitution.

N.K.Neb says, "*Real victory of woman lies in mending their focus not by making fun of their bodies but by respecting the physical, emotional and spiritual exigencies within a decorum and also by making their counterparts, i.e., men the sanctity of body is beyond petty considerations of domestic household jobs and commodification*".

4. Women Have Inherent Right to Dignity

Dignity is a roman thought with word *dignitas* meaning "status". It means in roman literature that honor and respect should be accorded to those who are worth it. It is also related to the status, reputation one has in society and the special privileges one is given, but dignity is a virtue which cannot be compared to any other thing in terms of value.

Rosen, has described dignity by studying its historical perspectives in four dimensions like religion, philosophy, aesthetics and literature, a) dignity as a conferred "rank or status", b) dignity as the "intrinsic value" of the human being, c) dignity as "self possessed behavior", d) dignity as a particular right to respectful treatment.

As per German philosopher Kant human beings are special, different and better from other creatures and this is because they have an intrinsic worth called "Dignity", and this is what makes them different from the rest and priceless, non-quantifiable and different from animals. Animals are there just for the serving human purposes and have no duties. Human beings hurt animals so that they are not hurt by animals in return. But it is also a fact a person who is cruel to animals will for sure become cruel to humans as well. Humans cannot be used by them to achieve any goals.

Dignity is not any constitutional right, or any privilege granted by any state. Dignity has a direct relationship with the judicial and the legal system and dignity cannot be maintained till it has legal support. Therefore it becomes very important that with the help of legal system the rules should be imposed and framed in such a manner that dignity is maintained. Law and dignity have to move together and cannot be isolated from each other. To respect and protect all citizens and their dignity is duty of all the states.

Meaning and definition of dignity keeps on changing with changing times, and as and when a concept comes up it should be reviewed. Because of the absence of clear definition of the term dignity conflicts arise in the implementation of the term dignity and various constitutional rights.

Dignity cannot be interchanged for anybody and anything, everybody has individual and their own dignity, also because dignity cannot be quantified. It has no price attached to it.

Dignity of women is the most sacrificed in advertisements when the implementation of laws is not strict and in the context of patriarchal dominated society. Dignity is natural, inherent and inalienable component of human life. For a meaningful life it is a very basic essential for every human being and women specifically it is even more sensitive issue as for them it not just physical pain that they have it is mental pressure also what they resist. It should be remembered that dignity is a universal concept and is not selective, it is not just a public right. Women should be treated as ends and not just as means to achieve advertisers profitable end and should be allowed to choose their own life.

5. Objectives of Study

The research paper aims to achieve following objectives:

1. To study most preferred appeal of advertisements amongst respondents;
2. To identify level of awareness of Laws and statutory bodies to protect dignity of women in advertisements;
3. To understand how women are portrayed in advertisements;
4. To analyze how much advertisers compromise with dignity of women in advertisements.
- 5.

6. Research Methodology

A primary descriptive research was conducted for the purpose. Necessary statistical measures and tools have been applied needed for inference.

7. Limitations of Study

1. The area of study was limited to Delhi and the NCR region only;
2. To collect the information a sample of population was selected to fill the questionnaire; therefore entire population could not be covered for the study;
3. Only the print medium advertisements were taken into consideration for data analysis;
4. Number of respondents for both males and females are not equal.
5. Due to time constraint personal interview method could not be undertaken and questionnaire method was adopted

8. Print Advertisements Laws of India

In India there is no single regulatory body which looks into advertisement cases. Depending on the case different legal machineries are involved. The power to regulate an advertisement vests with The Courts, Central and State Governments Tribunals, Police, etc.

In India Constitution is supreme, be it president or any citizen nobody is above law. The primary objective of Constitution is to provide equality, social, economic and political justice to one and all the citizens of the nation. As per Indian Constitution all citizens don't just have right to live but to live with complete dignity under all circumstances. The Indian constitution not only grants equality to women but has also made special provisions for ensuring equality.

It is believed that if regulatory framework is strong, deviation from law is not possible and everybody has to function within law. Advertising industry has been expanding over the years and to achieve their profitable targets they are compromising with dignity of women in advertisements at times. Therefore it is necessary to set certain limitations, within which this industry should function. The legal checks in the form of laws that have been formed ensure smooth functioning for the advertising industry and

benefits consumers as they are protected from misleading advertisements and women dignity and culture of country is also maintained. Some laws regulating print advertisements in India are:-

9. Article 21

Article 21 is considered to be Magna Carta of human lives, their dignity and liberty. It is termed as heart and real evolution of Indian legal framework and of Indian constitution. Article 21 of Constitution of India states “No person shall be deprived of his life or of personal liberty except according to procedure as established by law”.

It means every human being has right to live and live with dignity, and not have existence similar to that of animals. It also means that every citizen has right to livelihood, good hygienic conditions, good standard of living. This right is stated in the, directive principles of state policy as well. The concept can be well understood with some case laws.

In *Maneka Gandhi Vs. Union of India*, it was ruled that right to live does not mean mere physical existence on this earth but it means to lead a dignified meaningful human life. In *Bandhua Mukti Morcha Vs. Union of India*, it was clearly stated by court that it is fundamental right of every citizen to lead an exploitation free dignified life and it is duty of state to ensure that. This means every woman is an individual human being and has right to lead a dignified free life. In another landmark case, *Chandra Raja Kumar Vs. Police Commissioner Hyderabad*, it has been held holding of beauty contest is repugnant to dignity or decency of women and offends Article 21 of the Constitution only if the same is grossly indecent, scurrilous, obscene or intended for blackmailing. The government is empowered to prohibit the contest as objectionable performance under Section 3 of the *Andhra Pradesh Objectionable Performances Prohibition Act, 1956*.

There have been many international declarations like CEDAW, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, etc. which also recognize, that for women or any other human being dignity and life are inseparable.

10. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986

This act punishes indecent representation of women, which means “the depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman; her form or body or any other part thereof in such a manner as to have the effect of being indecent, or derogatory to, or denigrating women, or is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals.”. The Act forbids depiction of women in an indecent or derogatory manner in mass media. Section 3 of the act states that, no person shall publish, or cause to be published, or arrange or take part in the publication or exhibition of, any advertisement which contains indecent representation of women in any form. Section 6 of the Act discusses about the penalty for those who are in contravention of section 3 to a fine of two thousand rupees to ten thousand rupees and in case of second default conviction of six months to five years and a fine of rupees ten thousand to five lakh rupees.

Definition of indecent also changes with changing societal norms and situations. When tennis star Boris Becker published in German Magazine “*STERN*” a nude image of himself and his fiancée, but covered her breasts with his hand, it was appealed that it violates the moral principles of decency in India. A two judge bench of Supreme Court of India ruled that there is no violation of Section 4 of IRWA and Section 292 of IPC, The photograph and the article should be seen and appreciated in the light of the message it wants to convey and not just term it as obscene. The objective behind the

advertisement was that a fair skin man can also love and marry a dark skinned female i.e. love is beyond color of skin and is above human hatred and secondly it is spreading a message to eradicate evil of racism. Also in *Ajay Goswami vs Union of India (2007) 1 SCC 143*. On examining the section 292 of IPC and Section 3, 4, 6 of IRWA it was held that freedom of expression cannot be suppressed, unless there is a situation where such a freedom is harming the interest of the society. It proves that not everything that looks indecent is not always indecent.

As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) up to 2014, a total of 895, 453, 141, 362 and 47 cases were reported in the country under Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 during last five year, i.e., 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively.

National Commission for Women has suggested an amendment in addition to self-regulation by citizens and advertisers it is recommended to government that act should also include digital media like internet, mobile phones etc. Also definition of 'advertisement' should include any notice, circular, label, wrapper or other document, laser, light, sound, electronic media, plus it was also proposed by commission that should be stricter implementation of law as there hardly any convictions under the law.

11. The Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860

Section 292 of the Indian Penal Code reads as, Sale, etc., of obscene books, etc.—(1) For the purposes of sub-section (2), a book, pamphlet, paper, writing, drawing, painting, representation, figure or any other object, shall be deemed to be obscene if it is lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest or if its effect, or (where it comprises two or more distinct items) the effect of any one of its items is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it.

Section 293, Indian Penal Code, reads as “Whoever sells, lets to hire, distributes, exhibits or circulates to any person under the age of twenty years any such obscene object as is referred to in the last preceding section, or offers or attempts so to do, shall be punished on first conviction with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees, and in the event of a second or subsequent conviction, with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and also with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees”.

The sections 292 and 293 of IPC, prohibit publication of any obscene matter, it can also include lotteries, misuse of national symbols and inducing animosity amongst the different sections of society. As per these sections government has the power to forfeit all the copies of published material containing anything against above. Punishment may be in the form of imprisonment or fine, in certain cases it can be both. But it has been found that these sections are not sufficient enough in stopping growing indecent representation of women in publications and in advertisements.

To decide whether a publication is obscene or not has to be decided from case to case. Every nude image of women cannot be obscene. To find the answer the court should see the effect of the publication. Obscenity cannot be protected on the grounds of freedom of expression under Article 19 (1) (a) In *Chandrakant Kalyandas Kakaodar Vs. State of Maharashtra and others*, it was decided obscenity cannot be defined in similar manner for all the cases, as there are no fixed rules available to define it. It will differ from country to country as each country has its own moral standards. Whereas in *Ranjit D.Udeshi Vs. State of Maharashtra*, where a bookseller was found selling a copy of “Lady Chatterley’s

Lover” and was convicted under Sec 292, the court it should be seen what will be effect of book on society and there should be a balance between public decency and morality.

Even though the word “obscene” has not been defined clearly, use of the words “shall be deemed to be obscene” but anything that creates a fiction, and is lascivious or which appeals to the prurient interest or the effect of which has tendency to deprave and corrupt persons is “obscene” within the meaning of this section.

12. In Young Person’s (Harmful Publications) Act, 1956

Harmful publications is described as any book, magazine, pamphlet leaflet, newspaper or other similar publications which contain stories told with the aid of the pictures or without the aid of the pictures or completely with pictures any of the stories which portray wholly or majorly:

1. The commission of offences, or
2. Acts of violence or cruelty, or
3. Incidents of a repulsive or horrible nature.

In such a manner that the publication will corrupt the minds and acts of the persons in whose hands it falls. Liability of act committed in such a manner is on the person who prints, sells, distributes, lets on hire, distributes, or is in possession etc of the harmful publication shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to around six months, or in certain cases with fine or both.

As per section 3 of the act, if any person advertises or makes known by any means whatsoever that harmful publication can be procured from or through any person, shall be punishable with an imprisonment which may extend to around six months or with a fine or both. Further on conviction in this section, the Court can order the destruction of all the copies of the said harmful publication.

13. National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)

NHRC also along with State Human Rights Commission has the power to look into protecting dignity of women in advertisements. Section 2(d) of act states, human rights means the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India. In light of this section NHRC has taken cognizance of certain infringements of dignity of women that has taken place under this law.

14. Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI)

It is a self-regulated organization, which constitutes members from both advertising and non-advertising backgrounds. Advertising agencies are aware of the fact that the advertisers often manipulate facts to sell, and consumers complaints regarding advertisements is also large. Therefore ASCI has drafted code of ethics for advertisements and has brought ad agencies, advertisers and media at a common platform in terms of regulation and has drafted a code which is mandatory for all to follow. ASCI has also established a Consumer Complaints Council to look into complaints received. Its main objective is to promote responsible advertising thus enhancing the public’s confidence in Advertising.

The code drafted by ASCI is to ensure that advertisements are not offensive to generally accepted standards of public decency, advertisements shall contain nothing indecent, vulgar or repulsive to cause grave or widespread offence. It is governed by most of the constitution laws of India like Indecent Representation of Women Act, Young Persons, Press Council of India, etc.

India still major population staying in rural areas and are illiterate. Therefore it is always a dilemma what is decent in part may be considered indecent in other. In the ASCI has taken strong decisions by making advertisements of Amul Macho wear and certain deodorants off publication but in certain cases they still rely on government judgment.

15. The Press Council of India

It was established in 1978, with an objective of the freedom of the press and also to improve the standards of the newspapers and also of the news agencies in India, i.e., council is expected to assist newspapers and various agencies to have their creative freedom and yet follow a code of conduct which maintains the standards of the society, gives citizens a due sense of their rights duties and responsibilities. Editor should look into it that nothing should be published which crosses the border of decency and obscenity. If violation of this particular code happens it shall be the responsibility of the editor.

It consists of a Chairman and 28 other members. Of the 28 members, 13 represent the working journalists. Of whom 6 are to be editors of newspapers and remaining 7 are to be working journalists other than editors. 6 are to be from among persons who own or carry on the business of management of newspapers. One is to be from among the persons who manage news agencies. Three are to be persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of education and science, law and literature and culture. The remaining five are to Members of Parliament: three from Lok Sabha, and two from Rajya Sabha.

Section 14 (1) of the act states, "Where, on receipt of a complaint made to it or otherwise, the Council has reason to believe that a newspaper or news agency has offended against the standards of journalistic ethics or public taste or that an editor or a working journalist has committed any professional misconduct, the Council may, after giving the newspaper, or news agency, the editor or journalist concerned an opportunity of being heard, hold an inquiry in such manner as may be provided by the regulations made under this Act and, if it is satisfied that it is necessary to do, it may, for reasons to be recorded in writing, warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist, as the case may be".

As per norms of journalistic conduct of PCI, Newspapers/journalists shall not publish anything which is obscene, vulgar or offensive to public good taste, Newspapers shall not display advertisements which are vulgar or which, through depiction of a woman in nude or lewd posture, provoke lecherous attention of males as if she herself was a commercial commodity for sale.

In *Shri Padmashri Prakash Singh Vs. The Editor, The Hindustan Times*, the complainant said that advertisements of massage parlours represent women in objectionable and provocative manner which are likely to have adverse moral effect on society. Newspapers and periodicals are restrained from publishing any advertisement which would violate Section 3 of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 and other provisions of different Acts, accordingly in said case newspaper was directed to take advertisement off print. The council decides on the basis of recommendation of its committee.

16. National Commission for Women

The National Commission for Women was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 (Act No. 20 of 1990 of Govt of India) to:

1. Review the Constitutional and Legal safeguards for women;

2. Recommend remedial legislative measures;
3. Facilitate redressal of grievances and
4. Advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.

It was found that the status of Indian women was better in 1990's then pre independence, but still they were facing injustices and were discriminated against, this prompted government to have an apex body to look into matters relating to women. Therefore, this statutory body was formed after various consultations with the NGO's, social workers, other experts working in the area of upliftment of women, etc.

The Act of 1990 under Section 3 provides for the constitution of the National commission. This section lays down that the commission will consist of one Chairperson, who is committed to the cause of women, five members from various fields and a member secretary who shall be an expert in the fields of management, organizational structure, sociological movement or a, member of the civil service of the Union. All the members of the commission are nominated by the Central Government.

The Complaints and Investigation Cell of the commission processes the complaints received oral, written or suo moto under Section 10 of the NCW Act. The complaints received relate to domestic violence, harassment, dowry, torture, desertion, bigamy, rape, refusal to register FIR, cruelty by husbands, deprivation, gender discrimination and sexual harassment at work place.

The procedure to solve complaints is, first of all investigations by the police are expedited and monitored, secondly family disputes are resolved or compromised through counseling and finally for serious crimes, the Commission constitutes an inquiry committee which makes spot enquiries, examines various witnesses, collects evidence and submits the report with recommendations. The State Commission, the NGOs and other experts are involved in these efforts. There were 32118 number of complaints received by the commission in the year 2014-2015 and 102 were regarding Indecent Representation of Women.

The commission has worked in number of areas related to women like Dowry, Domestic Violence, Female Foeticide and many other social evils. The body has made more number of females aware of their rights by organizing regular seminars, consultations and workshops. They have also suggested many amendments to various acts of constitution like Indian Penal Code, Indecent Representation of Women, Hindu Marriage Act, etc., to make the body more strict and effective. As a result number of complaints received and cases solved have gone up.

Though commission has achieved a lot but due some shortcomings it cannot function to its fullest. These are commission does not have legislative powers, cannot appoint its own members and is dependent on Union Government for financial funding.

17. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

In this section we present data analysis for above mentioned objectives. Data is collected over following demographic details due to their sensitivity on attitude.

1. Age 20 to 60 years;
2. Employment status;
3. Gender;
4. Residential zone;
5. Annual Income;

A five point Likert scale is used for numerical measurement of questions. Following is the numerical value assignment for scale.

Table 1. Data is Collected from over 36% Male and 64% Female Respondents

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

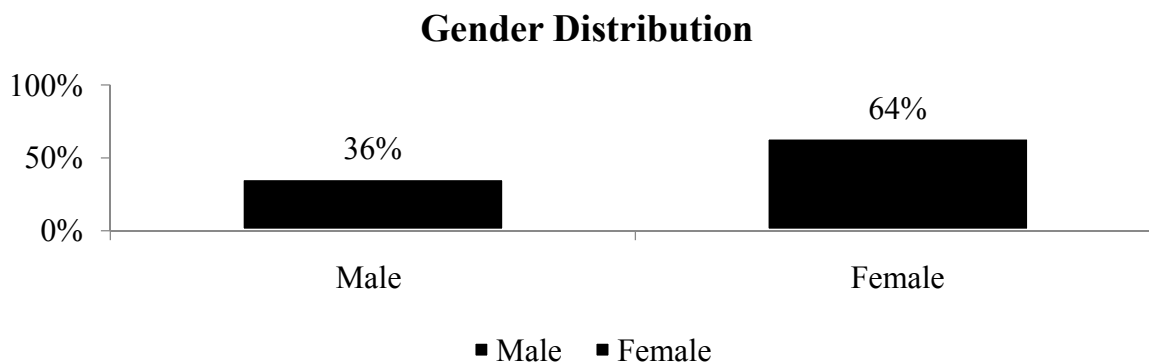


Figure 2. First the Respondents Were Asked What Kind of Advertisements Appeals to Them the Most. Following Figure Depicts Comparison of Means

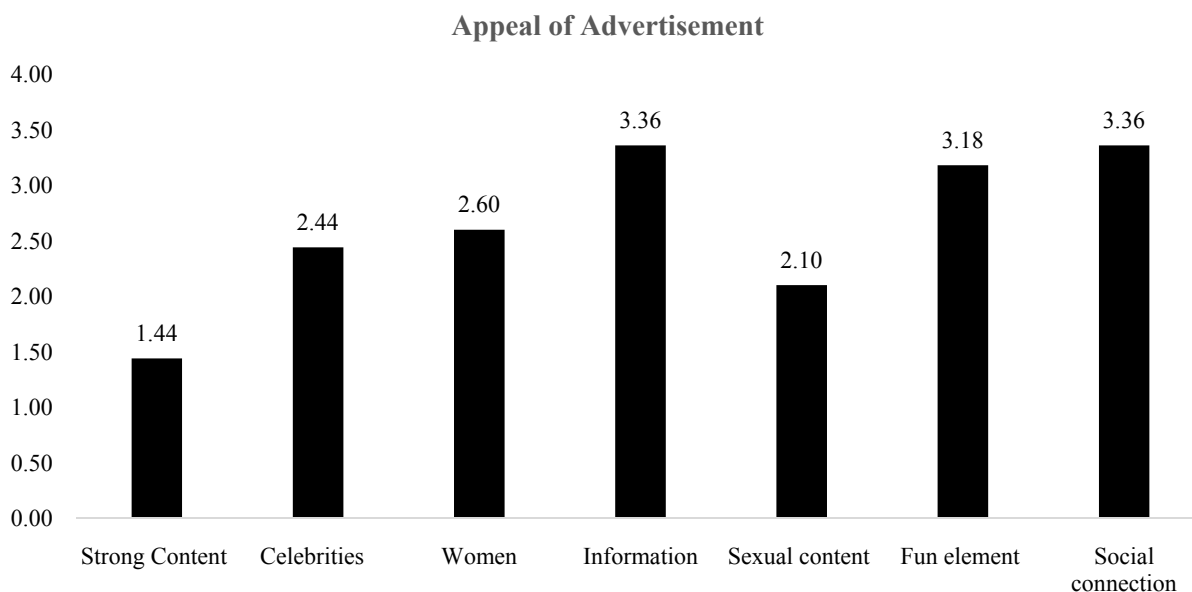


Figure 2. Appeal of Advertisements

From the Figure 2 above, it is clear that, people like advertisements most which are informative and also have social connect as they have highest mean value of 3.36 and they are followed by advertisements with fun element in them. Strong content is not the biggest attracting factor for people as it has the lowest mean score of just 1.44. Presence of women is also appealing to people with a reasonable mean score of 2.60. Mean score for celebrities is 2.44 which proves people are neutral about celebrities. Presence of sexual content with a mean score of 2.10 proves it is not that appealing for people.

When respondents were asked about their awareness of laws of advertisement. The result shows that people are aware about rules and regulations further respondents are asked specifically about awareness

of different laws, rules, statutory bodies and regulations for advertisements. The level of awareness of respondents is represented in following Table.

Table 2. Awareness of Different Laws

Article 21	2.92
Section 292 of IPC 1960	2.72
The Indecent Representation of Women(Prohibition) Act or IRWA1986	3.08
Young Person’s(Harmful Publications) Act, 1956	2.86
National Human Rights Commission	3.58
The Press Council of India	3.12
Advertising Standard Council of India	3.08

Source: Field Survey.

Same results have been shown with the help of a column graph below.

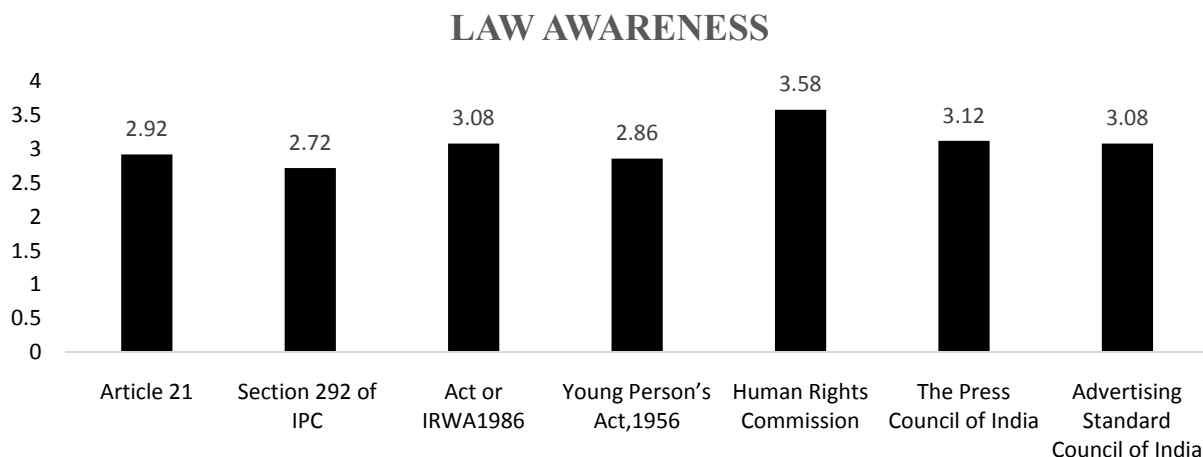


Figure 3. Awareness of Laws

From Table 2 and Figure 2, it is clear that highest level of awareness amongst people is of human rights commission with the highest mean value of 3.58 while section 292 of IPC 1960 is least known as it has a very lowest mean score of just 2.72. Awareness of other laws is nowhere close to in certain cases highest mean value.

Next respondents were asked about their perception about women portrayal in advertisements. Their opinion was taken on various statements mentioned in Table 3. Here 5 represented highest level of agreement and 1 represented least level of agreement. Results obtained in Table 3 are further graphically displayed in Figure 3.

Table 3. Perception about Women Portrayal in Advertisement

A. Advertisement featuring women have a higher impact	3.70
B. Women are portrayed in advertisements even if it’s not needed	4.08
C. Advertisers often treat women as a commodity	4.00
D. Discriminating men against women is very common in ads	3.50
E. Advertisements project women as if they are inferior to men and do not ever contribute	3.44

anything socially or economically ever to the society

F. In Advertisements most of the times women are depicted as if all they are most concerned about their beauty and looks	3.94
G. In advertisements women are shown as weak, incapable and somebody who cannot take care of anything except at the most household work	3.32
H. Advertisers fail to realize it is women who share equal responsibility with men both in and outside the house	3.94

Source: Field Survey.

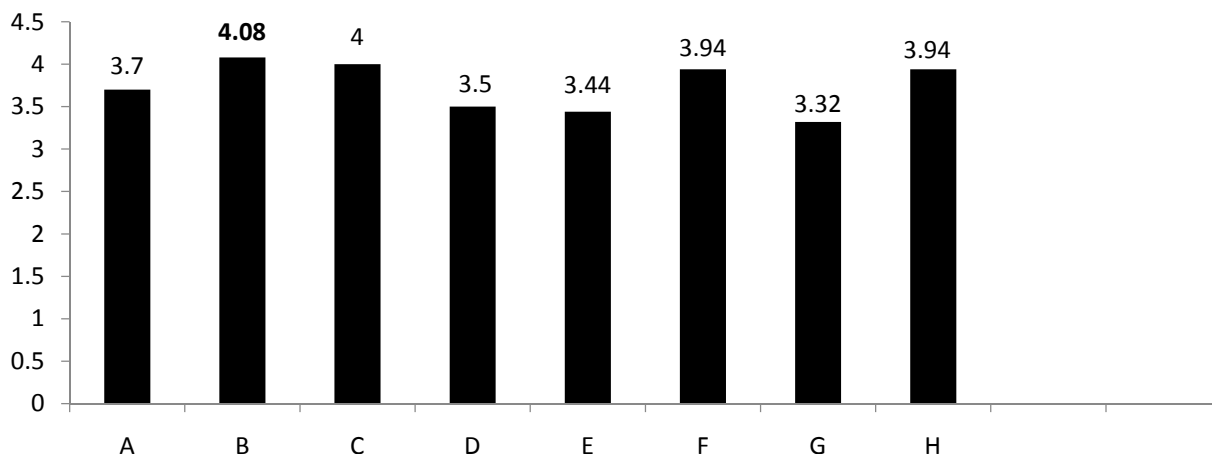


Figure 4. Perception about Women Portrayal in Advertisements

Table 3 specifies that people strongly agree that women are portrayed in advertisement even if it is not needed. In fact all of the factors fall in a high level of agreement as all Figures are above 3 on a scale of 5. Which proves respondents are of opinion, women are not represented in a highly graceful manner in advertisements.

An overall score of 3.54 to the question “Overall what is your opinion about projection of women in advertisements” on scale given below represents the agreement on compromising of dignity of women in advertisement industry.

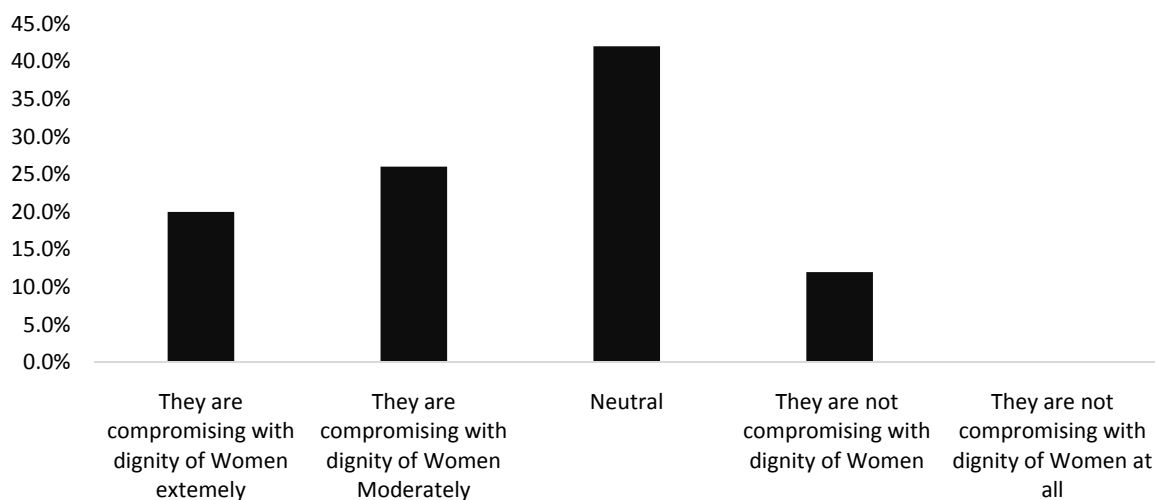


Figure 5. Compromising Level of Dignity of Women in Advertisements

From the Figure above it can be concluded that 42% of respondents are neutral and believe advertiser at times compromise with dignity of women in advertisements but 0% respondents or none of the respondents agree that advertisers are not compromising with dignity of women at all. Further if total of first two levels is made (20%+26%), i.e., 46% it implies nearly half of respondents feel dignity of women is compromised by the advertisers in advertisements may be extremely or moderately.

Over all analysis clearly shows that there is a gap between how people think and how advertisement project women image. A rethinking has to be given by advertisement industry and regulators to bridge that gap. India has a great culture with lot of ethos; advertisements in India should be made keeping those standards in mind by the advertisers. All products cannot be sold by advertisements; rather most of the products can be sold with product itself being good and educative advertisement.

18. Findings

Advertising is a strong communication medium hence advertisements images also send a strong message to the society, therefore it becomes important women are portrayed in positive accordingly image of women gets registered with society.

Advertisements images have a significant effect on the belief system of the society, today they sell more than the products value system and certainly influence the culture of the society, advertisers should understand culture of country and design advertisements accordingly.

Awareness of print media laws continues to be very less amongst literate class, therefore cases of obscene advertisements continue to be on rise. State should take it as their responsibility to make citizens aware about laws and also the complaint process to be simplified.

Advertisers continue to compromise with dignity of women as they are the easiest targets. The loss that women face is not physical loss or quantitative but a moral loss and it certainly affects the confidence of women and certainly changes the way society looks at them. The negative effects of advertising can be felt socially where women if portrayed unethically leads to low self-confidence and less on integrity.

19. Conclusion

Media, specifically the print medium has been instrumental in highlighting various issues, but if it continues with the aim of only making profits it will soon lose its credibility and trust. Putting a check on the creative freedom of advertisers should be done with a reason. There should be common set of regulations on which media personnel, people of society along with government agree.

Entire legal system should be clearly directed towards achieving human dignity and for this goal it is very important that dignity should be integral part of officials and their means of governance. On the other count not everything can be achieved by legal system and constitutional rights and duties, as constitutional rights and duties might be specific but the situations are very different in reality, advertisers and female models in advertisements are presenting women unethically in advertisements for commercial purposes to earn their livelihood, but that should not stop working of legal system and other statutory bodies and NGO's from protecting rights of women.

Constitution has guaranteed freedom of expression to everybody, but it has also been stated that it should never be used to degenerate dignity of any human being. Measures should be taken by the advertising industry to ensure that culture, morals, principles and reputation of any citizen and also of nation in which they are advertising are not compromised with. Woman should be portrayed in advertisements in the most natural manner, i.e., they should be made to believe that it is their inner

beauty which is more important rather than far from perfect images of woman being shown in advertisements.

Development of a nation is not judged alone from the economic progress it makes, or how much as laid down in the policies by the government has been achieved but nation progress also depends on certain social and religious parameters as well. Laws never discriminate amongst the human beings, it is the societal norms, traditions and customs which create a divide amongst the citizens and they are largely responsible for status of women as such. Realizing such type of discrimination still occurs in society. If India has decided to move forward in most of its areas why neglect half of its population, i.e., women. The current trend in society demands a more realistic approach to advertise a product. Sexual objectification of women may get initial attention of the consumer but in the long run what is more successful is the kind and quality of the product.

“What is demanded is not a charity nor grace nor legal aid to weaker sex. The militant claim is the woman’s rights to be oneself, not a doll to please, nor an inmate of workhouse. She has the human right to be a woman. The personality of one’s sister cannot be wrapped to suit the masculine ethos nor shaped to confer pseudo-freedom keeping subordination as an unwritten code of the suppressed tribe”.

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