

# Projection of Female Body in Advertisements: Gender Perspectives in Nepalese Context

**Kapil Aryal\***

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## Abstract

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*Advertisements on Television easily affect minds of viewers and can easily help build viewer's perception on various matters including gender relation and women's sexuality. Thus when women are portrayed in advertisements as sexual commodities or deservedly second-class people being oppressed by men, it institutionalizes gender discrimination. Apart from portraying women as sexual commodities advertisements also demonstrate women stereotypically, reflecting existing defective value system and conforming the existing socio-cultural notion of women subordination.*

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\* Assistant Professor, LLM Kathmandu School of Law

## INTRODUCTION

When one thinks and discusses about advertisements (ads), female body simply comes in mind. Why is it so? This question still lacks satisfactory answer. Most of the ads we watch contain female body, with direct or indirect projection of ‘perverted sexuality of women’. Media is a central element of modern life, whilst gender and sexuality remain at the core of how we think about our identities. Media containing so many images and messages relating to men and women and their sexuality, it is highly unlikely that these ideas would have no impacts on our own sense of identity and our attitudes toward gender relation. As advertisement is a controlled mass media<sup>1</sup> it certainly makes impact on people’s lives and perception.

These days, people spend several hours in front of television, read magazines and other publications, surf Internet, go to movies, and are generally unable to avoid popular cultures and ads. People in Europe and the USA for instance, spend three to four hours per day watching TV<sup>2</sup>. Certainly, media disseminates a huge number of messages about identity and other forms of self-expression, gender, sexuality, and lifestyle. In the light of this emerging pattern of life, one can conclude that the TV through ads, influences human thinking tremendously, both positively as well as negatively.

Furthermore, an average woman sees 400 to 600 advertisements per day<sup>3</sup>, and by the time she is 17 years old, she receives over 250,000 commercial messages through the media<sup>4</sup>. A large number of audiences and large scale of investment in advertisements is a genuine assumption that advertisements do make impact on people. Moreover, numerous studies have also proven this fact.

Carrie L. Bennett points out in her study, ‘Effects of Magazine Advertisements on College Females’, that advertisements adversely

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<sup>1</sup> Bishwo Raj Adhikari, *Advertising*, Pairabi Books and Stationary Center, Kathmandu, 2056, p. 23

<sup>2</sup> For statistics on ‘*Leisure Activities and Media Consumption*’, see [www.worldopinion.com](http://www.worldopinion.com), [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk) last retrieved March 4, 2005

<sup>3</sup> Dittrich, L. ‘*About-Face facts on the MEDIA*’ About-Face web site. [Online: <http://about-face.org/resources/facts/media.html> last retrieved March 1, 2005]

<sup>4</sup> *Media Influence on Teens*. Facts compiled by Allison LaVoie. The Green Ladies Web Site. [online: [http://kidsnrg.simplenet.com/grit.dev/london/g2\\_jan12/green\\_ladies/media/](http://kidsnrg.simplenet.com/grit.dev/london/g2_jan12/green_ladies/media/). Last retrieved March 1, 2005]

influence body dissatisfaction and negative self-perceptions. It also evidenced that when participants internalized ideal advertisements, they experienced significantly higher body dissatisfaction, and negative self-perception than those who discount<sup>5</sup>. Cynthia Carter and V. Kay Weaver also revealed a similar result in their study regarding media's role in increasing or decreasing violence. According to their study media promoting violence-contained materials, influenced actual violence<sup>6</sup>.

Ads present men and women differently as per the stage of modernization and the context of the society. Anyway, most ads present women either sensually or stereotypically. However, previous studies do not provide answer on this projection pattern.

There have been numbers of studies on media and gender. However, advertisements, an integral element of media is yet to receive proper attention. The role of ads is frequently neglected in discussions on media violence. Advertisements sometimes may not contain actual violent or specific images of violence but its dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity have been linked to the social acceptance of male violence toward women, whereby advertisement has been theorized as normalizing violence in relation to gender representations<sup>7</sup>.

With the growing numbers of products for females, more and more females are being brought into ad business. It is perhaps (may be myth), females can rightly and attractively promote products in the market. Sometimes, it is only proper that some specific product needs female models to promote, for instance it is understandable that while advertising women's clothing and makeup goods, innerwear, and so forth female models be used. However, female models are seen in almost every other advertisement of products. Amazingly, in Nepal, women with wider exposure of body parts are used for the ads of alcoholic substances, where the object is to promote sale of that particular commodity to men.

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<sup>5</sup> Based on an undergraduate Honors thesis of Carrie L. Bennett on the topic '*Effects of Magazine Advertisements on College Females' Drive for Thinness, Self-Esteem, and Body Satisfaction*' Media Effects Research Laboratory, College of Communications, Penn State University, Pennsylvania, USA. [See, [www.psu.edu](http://www.psu.edu) last retrieved March 4, 2005]

<sup>6</sup> CYNTHIA CARTER AND C. K. WEAVER, *VIOLENCE AND MEDIA*, Open University Press, Philadelphia 2003 p. 71-93

<sup>7</sup> Id p.116

Ad is a public promotion of some product or service<sup>8</sup>. Advertisement includes any notice, circular, label, wrapper, document, hoarding, or any other audio or visual representation made by means of light, sound, smoke or gas<sup>9</sup>. Generally speaking, advertising is the paid promotion of goods, services, companies, and ideas by an identified sponsor. Marketers see advertising as part of an overall promotional strategy. Other components of the promotional mix include publicity, public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion<sup>10</sup>.

As the purpose of advertisement is to promote sale or consumption of products, commonly the question arises whether increased use of female body in the advertisements actually promotes marketing or increased consumption of such products or not? In this regard, as the theme of male dominance and female victimization is an important issue in feminist discussions,<sup>11</sup> study on media can help probe into this theme. However, this part of gender study has largely been left in isolation and shadow. Thus this article is an attempt made to address this aspect of problem. The article is limited to contemporary television and magazine advertisements and tries to link the issue of rising pattern of involvement of women in advertisements. This article mainly discusses on the issue of presentation of females in advertisements in the light of exploitation of sexuality of women.

## **FEMALES IN ADVERTISEMENTS: GENDER PERSPECTIVES**

Unequal power exercise between male and female creates women's subordination. In turn it creates violence, their objectification, exploitation, and discrimination, in the form of rape, marital rape, sexual harassment, incest, child marriage, polygamy, female genital mutilation, defective cultural practices, pornography, trafficking, prostitution and so forth. Furthermore such subordination may cause men to exploit women and present them stereotypically or pornographically.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn](http://www.cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn) Last retrieved May 12, 2005

<sup>9</sup> [www.chiefexcusgujarat.org/servicetax/definitions.html](http://www.chiefexcusgujarat.org/servicetax/definitions.html) Last retrieved May 12, 2005

<sup>10</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advertisement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advertisement) Last retrieved May 12, 2005

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth M. Schneider, “*Describing and changing: Women’s self-defense Work and the Problem of Expert Testimony on Battering*” Women’s Rights Law Reporter 1986, 9:195 p. 220-21

Richard and William writes<sup>12</sup>:

“The term gender is used to refer the behavioral differences between males and females that are culturally based and socially learned... We will therefore reserve the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’ for sex differences and that are biologically in origin while using the terms ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ to refer to the corresponding culturally specific gender differences that are social in origin.”

Judith Lorber writes<sup>13</sup>,

“I see gender as an institution that establishes patterns of expectations for individuals, orders the social processes of everyday life, and is built into the major social organizations of society.”

Such institutionalization is established in the economy, ideology, family, and politics.

Gender is a learnt process and human learn it from early ages. A study by Kevin Durkin<sup>14</sup> has shown that in the preschool years (up to around 4), children learn to use gender as a way of discriminating between people. During the early school years (around 4-7), child’s sense of gender becomes well established, though somewhat firmly stereotyped. During middle childhood (around 7-12), children refine their psychological understanding of gender and develop sex-typed performances of differing types of TV programs.

Most social scientists distinguish gender from sex. Gender roles are not biologically determined, but vary according to culture and epoch and even for individuals during the course of their lives. Gender roles are consequently described by social scientists as socially constructed. Most of the behavior associated with gender is learned rather than innate. People learn what sorts of behavior and personality are regarded in their cultural context as appropriate for males or females.

Even within a culture, masculinity and femininity may be defined differently, in particular according to ethnicity, age, social class, and sexuality. In this sense there is no single masculinity or femininity, but rather multiple masculinities and femininities. Not all men are ‘leader like’, ‘aggressive’, ‘assertive’, ‘independent’, ‘risk-taking’ and so on; and not all

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<sup>12</sup> RICHARD P. APPEALBAUM AND WILLIAM J. CHAMBLISS, *SOCIOLOGY*, HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995 p. 3

<sup>13</sup> Cited in ‘*Outline of Gender Studies*’ by Tulsı Ram Poudel p. 8

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Danial Chandler, *Television and Gender Roles*, [http://kidsnrg.simplenet.com/grit.dev/london/g2\\_jan12/green\\_ladies/media/](http://kidsnrg.simplenet.com/grit.dev/london/g2_jan12/green_ladies/media/) Last retrieved March 1,2005

women are 'affectionate', 'gentle', 'sympathetic', 'dependent', 'emotional', 'nurturing' etc. Yet, all men and women are aware of the cultural prevalence of traditional gender stereotypes, and television to a large extent contributes to this awareness. Sex roles involve cultural expectations, such as men will seek achievement and dominance, and women will be compliant and supportive. And often such attribution leads to conflicts among individuals.

Gender is relative social characteristics that vary from time, society and place. In mainstream Nepalese culture, behaviors like, active, aggressive, rational, strong, independent, hard, 'high' sexuality, mechanical, competitive, dominant, factual, messy and judgmental are attached to males; whereas, behaviors like, passive, tolerate, emotional, weak, dependant, soft, 'low' sexuality, artsy, cooperative, subordinate, intuitive, neat and clean, and supportive are attached to females<sup>15</sup>. And as per such gender construction of the society, its social and cultural patterns, media naturally gets affected and hence further institutionalizes gender through TV programs and advertisements.

Media thus, perpetuates traditional gender stereotypes by reflecting dominant social values. And in reflecting them media also reinforces the idea, presenting them as 'natural'. As one might expect in a society dominated by men, men dominate media production, thus further contributing, in reproducing a traditional 'masculine' perspective, perpetuating dominant gender stereotypes. Daniel Chandler writes:

"Many narratives on TV are still implicitly designed to be interpreted from a masculine perspective. Viewers are frequently invited to identify with male characters and to objectify females. This has been called 'the male gaze'. This mode of viewing is called 'unmarked': it is an invisible and largely unquestioned bias - the masculine perspective is the 'norm'<sup>16</sup>.

There are several aspects of advertisements linked with female body. The most prominent of them are pornographic, stereotypical, and violent presentation of women.

## **STEREOTYPICAL PRESENTATION**

In television advertisements, gender stereotyping seems profound. In advertisements, men tend to be portrayed as more autonomous. They are

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<sup>15</sup> TULSIRAM POUDEL, *OUTLINE OF GENDER STUDIES*, Nima Pustak Prakasan, 2058, p. 2

<sup>16</sup> *Supra* note 10

shown in some occupations unlike women who mainly are shown as housewives. Similarly men are shown advertising cars or business products; women, domestic products. Men are more often portrayed as authorities. As far as ads go, with age men seem to gain authority, whilst women seem to disappear.

Programs shown on TV along with advertisements are provocative that 'good' women are presented as submissive, sensitive, and domesticated; 'bad' women, rebellious, independent, and selfish. The 'dream-girl' stereotype is gentle, demure, sensitive, submissive, non-competitive, sweet natured and dependent. And in comparison male tend to be physically strong, aggressive, assertive, takes the initiative, and is independent, competitive, and ambitious. Similarly, TV and film heroes represent goodness, power, control, confidence, competence, and success. They are geared, in other words, to succeed in a competitive economic system. Similar fact has been revealed by the study of Welch et al<sup>17</sup>. They write:

Most modern TV ads feature both girls and boys, but boys tend to be the dominant ones. Ads aimed at boys portray far more activity and aggressive behaviour than those for girls, and tend to be far louder. Boys are typically shown as active, aggressive, rational and discontented. Boys' ads contain active toys, varied scenes, rapid camera cuts and loud, dramatic music and sounds. Girls' ads tend to have frequent fades, dissolves, and gentle background music.

There are numbers of blatantly offensive advertisements that portray women as sexual toys or victims of violence.

In recent years, as society heads towards modernity media performance is gradually changing. However, there is no any majoring rod of modernity and quality of media performance regarding gender identities. However, in most occasions it becomes obvious what sorts of exposures are 'glamorous' and what sort pornographic. Nonetheless stereotypical representation of women continues on Television.

## **PORNOGRAPHY**

Advertisers use sexuality in a number of different ways and for a variety of purposes, one of them being using advertisements to make them play upon viewers desires of sexual relationships by using images of attractive young women (and lately, men) and suggestive language that are designed for

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<sup>17</sup> R L Welch, A Huston-Smith, J C Wright & R Plehal 'Subtle Sex-Role Cues In Children's Commercials', *Journal of Communication* 29: (1979): pp. 202-9

sexual arousal. Women in general are shown in various stages of nudity using suggestive body language, or in scenarios in which sexual activity is implied, which is often reinforced by the language used.

Sometimes, advertisers also attempt to create anxiety in our minds about our sexuality and desirability, which they then “solve” by suggesting products or services.<sup>18</sup> Advertisements use sexuality in an attempt to evade rationality (behavior dominated by the ego) and provoke emotional, impulsive acts or decisions<sup>19</sup>.

In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault dismissed the common view that sex has been a freely expressed, unproblematic part of life throughout history until it had been suppressed and hidden from public in the last couple of hundred years. Tracing the history of disclosures about sex, Foucault argues that sex was brought into the spotlight by Christianity in the seventeenth century, when it was decreed that all desires – not just forbidden ones, but all of them – should be transformed into disclosure, in the form of Christian confession.<sup>20</sup>

However, pornography is different from sexuality and thus it is perceived differently. Writers like, Emily Jackson, Andrea Dworkin, and Catharine MacKinnon have found it difficult to define pornography. Pornography depends upon ones’ perception and to speak of ‘pornography’ is to speak of something that escapes definition, both in a legal and an extra-legal context. There is no any definition of pornography that has not been criticized neither has provided the perfect interpretation. Looking at the literal meaning of pornography, the radical feminist Andrea Dworkin states:

The word *pornography* derived from the ancient Greek *porne* and *graphos*, means ‘writing about whores.’ *Porne* means ‘whore’, specifically and exclusively the lowest class of whore, which in ancient Greece was the brothel slut available to all male citizens. The *porne* was the cheapest (in the literal sense), least regarded, least protected of all women, including slaves. She was, simply, clearly, and absolutely, a sexual slave. *Graphos* means ‘writing, etching, or drawing.’

The word pornography doesn’t mean ‘writing about sex’ or ‘depictions of the erotic’ or ‘depictions of sexual acts’ or ‘depictions

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<sup>18</sup> ASA BERGER, ‘SEXUALITY IN ADVERTISEMENTS’ IN MEDIA RESEARCH TECHNIQUE, Sage Publications, 1998 p. 65

<sup>19</sup> Id.

<sup>20</sup> MICHEL FOUCAULT, THE WILL TO KNOWLEDGE: THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, Volume One, translated by Robert Hurley, London: Penguin 1998, p. 20

of nude bodies' or 'sexual representations' or any other such euphemism. It means the graphic depiction of women as vile whores.<sup>21</sup>

Catharine MacKinnon, in relation to feminist view of pornography further adds,

“Pornography, in the feminist view, is a form of forced sex, a practice of sexual politics, an institution of gender inequality. In this perspective, pornography is not harmless fantasy or a corrupt and confused misrepresentation of an otherwise natural and healthy sexuality. Along with rape and prostitution in which it participates, pornography institutionalizes the sexuality of male supremacy, which fuses the eroticization of dominance and submission with the social construction of male and female. Gender is sexual. Pornography constitutes the meaning of that sexuality. Men treat women as who they see women as being. Pornography constructs who that is. Men’s power over women means that the way men see women defines who women can be. Pornography is that way.”<sup>22</sup>

Until and unless law defines pornography, it is only a concern of morality. Feminists critique of pornography as subordination of women. MacKinnon views pornography as a social injury rather than a mere moral harm. Furthermore, the measurement of harm of pornography is very controversial, such measurement basically based on women’s experience of pornography and their testimony about the pain it ensued. In addition, pornography being a systematic practice of exploitation and subordination based on sex it differentially harms women as members of the group ‘women’. It dehumanizes women, it institutionalizes women as sexual objects, and it misrepresents women’s sexual behavior. Lastly, it subordinates women to men. The prime purpose of pornography is to exploit women’s sexuality within commercial context and benefit for others.

### **Laws Concerning Prevention from Exploitation of Women through Printing Filthy Advertising Materials in Nepal**

Male violence against women is a widespread problem that historically has tended to be suppressed from public view in law and media<sup>23</sup>. There is no

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<sup>21</sup> A. DWORKIN, PORNOGRAPHY: MEN POSSESSING WOMEN, London: The Women’s Press, 1981, p. 199-200.

<sup>22</sup> C.A. MACKINNON, FEMINIST UNMODIFIED: DISCOURSES ON LIFE AND LAW, London: Routledge, 1989, p. 120.

<sup>23</sup> ISABEL MARCUS, REFRAMING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: TERRORISM IN THE HOME, Fineman and Mykitiuk, 1994. p. 59

any particular law in Nepal that explicitly prohibits the use of female body in advertisements obscenely, pornographically or stereotypically. As law of the land depends or is adapted to the particular socio-cultural context, it is really difficult to define the parameters or indicators of 'obscenity' 'pornography' and 'stereotype'. However, many countries of the world control or prohibit sexual exploitation and expression as per the ground of their perception and context of morality.

Consumer Protection Act 1998, Press and Publication Act 1992, Some Public Offences (Control and Punishment) Act 1971, Children Act 1991 can be discussed in context of using female body in advertisements in Nepal.

Consumer Protection Act 1998 came into force aiming with the purpose of protecting the rights, welfare, health, and comfort of the consumer. Maintaining economic welfare of the consumer and quality of consumable goods and services are also its purpose. Furthermore, among other purposes of the Act are protection of the market from being monopolized and from unnatural business activities, protecting consumer rights, protecting them from harm, providing legal remedies from those who cause them harm; altogether making the rights of consumer systematic are the purposes of the Act<sup>24</sup>. As per the name of the Act, it came into force to protect the consumer from being misinformed or cheated. So, it has provided some rights to the consumer and some duties and responsibilities to the seller-manufacturer.

Section 10 (d) prohibits false or misleading description and advertisement in accordance to unlikely business activities about the use, utility, or effectiveness of any consumable goods or service. The provision is limited in false or misleading advertisements. There is not such provision in the Act on control or prohibition of involvement of child or women in advertisements.

Press and Publication Act 1992 provides that every press should be registered before it starts its work<sup>25</sup>, every book should be registered in the office of Chief District Officer and submit two copies of published book<sup>26</sup>, every magazine should be registered before its publication<sup>27</sup>, and Section 14 prohibits on the publication of the material that adversely effect morality

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<sup>24</sup> Preamble of the Consumer Protection Act 1998

<sup>25</sup> Press and Publication Act 1992, Section 3

<sup>26</sup> Section 5

<sup>27</sup> Section 7

and social dignity of general people and similar materials are controlled to import<sup>28</sup>.

The provisions of Press and Publication Act are solely concentrated on regulating books and magazines, rather than advertisements. Besides, the Act does not prohibit printing and publication of filthy materials. Thus, there is no such provision in the Act to control or prohibit the use of female body in printing advertisements.

Some Public Offences (Control and Punishment) Act 1971 was promulgated to control public offences and to punish and to maintain peace, comfort and morality of the people. Section 2 of the Act defines various acts as amounting to public offence. Among them, Section 2 (c) prohibits disruption of peace through voice, language, sign, and symbol or exposure of vulgarity in public places and Section 2 (c)(1) prohibits publication of vulgar language or words that portrays vulgarity or printing vulgar pictures or exhibiting such materials in public places or selling such product except for the purpose of public health or health advertisement. Section 3 provides that suspect of such offence may be arrested without warrant and Section 6 provides punishment for such offences.

In comparison with other Acts, Some Public Offences (Control and Punishment) Act defines exposure of vulgarity and selling of vulgar material as crime. However, the Act has not defined what are the parameters of vulgarity and whether it is equally applicable to advertisements or not?

Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in its Article 1 provides the definition of discrimination, in Article 6 provides for the suppression of all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women. In Article 11(f) provides right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions of women. General Recommendation No. 19 of Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommends state parties to safeguard the rights of women prohibiting gender-based violence. GR 19 (7.h.) provides the right to just and favourable conditions of work. Beside these provisions, there is no other provision that explicitly condemns or prohibits exploitation of women through media.

Among twelve critical areas of concern<sup>29</sup> of women identified in Beijing Conference and Platform for Action in 1995, the continued projection of

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<sup>28</sup> Section 16

<sup>29</sup> Twelve critical areas of concern of women identified in Beijing conference and Platform for Action 1995 were: (1) Women and poverty; (2) Education and training of

negative and degrading images of women, as well as their unequal access to the information technology, was identified as a critical area of concern. The Conference called for the empowerment of women through the enhancement of their skills, knowledge and access to information technology. The conference further discussed that the print, visual, audio and electronic media in many countries do not provide a balanced picture of the diversity of women's lives and their contributions to society. Pornographic and violent media products degrade women and negatively affect their participation in society.

The conference declared:

“...Ensure the success of the Platform for Action, which will require a strong commitment on the part of Governments, international organizations and institutions at all levels. We are deeply convinced that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework for our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Equitable social development that recognizes empowering the poor, particularly women living in poverty, to utilize environmental resources sustainably is a necessary foundation for sustainable development. We also recognize that broad-based and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development is necessary to sustain social development and social justice. The success of the Platform for Action will also require adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels as well as new and additional resources to the developing countries from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources for the advancement of women; financial resources to strengthen the capacity of national, sub regional, regional and international institutions; a commitment to equal rights, equal responsibilities and equal opportunities and to the equal participation of women and men in all national, regional and international bodies and policy-making processes; and the establishment or strengthening of mechanisms at all levels for accountability to the world's women;

We hereby adopt and commit ourselves as Governments to implement the following Platform for Action, ensuring that gender perspectives reflected in all our policies and programmes. We urge the United Nations system, regional and international financial

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women; (3) Women and health; (4) Violence against women; (5) Women and armed conflict; (6) Women and the economy; (7) Women in power and decision-making; (8) Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; (9) Human rights of women; (10) Women and the media; (11) Women and the environment; and (12) The girl-child.

institutions, other relevant regional and international institutions and all women and men, as well as non-governmental organizations, with full respect for their autonomy, and all sectors of civil society, in cooperation with Governments, to fully commit themselves and contribute to the implementation of this Platform for Action.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from women these days, children are also increasingly getting involved in advertisements. Optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Child on Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography has been adopted to safeguard the child considering the exploitation that is being occurred. The Protocol in its preamble explicitly provides

“...about the growing availability of child pornography on the internet and other evolving technologies, and recalling the International Conference on Combating Child Pornography on the Internet, held in Vienna in 1999, in particular its conclusion calling for the worldwide criminalization of the production, distribution, exploitation, transmission, importation, international possession and advertising of child pornography, and stressing the importance of closer cooperation and partnership between Governments and Internet industry”.

Article 2(c) of the protocol further provides definition of child pornography. It reads “Child pornography means any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purpose.”

The abovementioned provisions may be taken into account while discussing about the laws concerning prohibition on printing and publicizing pornographic materials and prevention of exploitation of women. However, there is not a single instrument that explicitly prohibits or prevents exploitation of women through commercial advertisements.

Similarly, Children Act 2048, Section 16 prohibits the use of children in immoral professions. The said provision also provides in Sub-section (2) that no one should take photos of children and distribute those with the purpose of joining them in immoral acts. Section 53(4) provides that any person involved in activities above mentioned may be sentenced for fine up to ten thousands or imprisonment for up to one year or both.

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<sup>30</sup> However, there is a culture of following any directives, policies, programs, guidelines, principles and code of conducts as per the concept of any particular document's abidingness and non-bindingness, thus Nepal seems very insensitive towards following the Beijing Declaration.

## **CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION**

Advertisements certainly affect people. Sometimes advertisements help build concept of what is good and what is not while making purchases. Ads also help to find out new products and their qualities and to generate interest in some particular items. Numbers of product come in market as per the need of society and comfort of the people. But presentation patterns of the goods, materials and items need to be assessed very minutely.

Though, advertisement is one of the most neglected parts of media while studying media and gender. Advertisements play a significant role in institutionalizing gender and may often exploit females through pornographic presentation. Generally, contemporary advertisements represent existing society and culture. As per the study and analysis of contemporary magazine advertisements and television advertisements, there is a sort of gender discrimination.

The most common patterns of projecting women in ads are as beautiful attractive girls/ladies. Projecting women as housewife and caring mother or wife is another very common pattern. Though, in most of the ads in Nepal, both males and females are projected, the projecting pattern is completely different. Men are either shown more authoritative or powerful than girl or they try to impress girl making money or wining motorcycle. But girls in the ads try to be beautiful and attractive, who makes her hair brighter and smoother, dandruff free, cleans her teeth to be near to boys and so forth.

Yubaraj Sangroula and Geeta Pathak argue that women in Nepal have lower status and they are virtually second-class citizen. The defective value system is an outcome of a society with an imbalance of power between its members. A patriarchal value system is at the foundation of the Nepalese social structure, and is zealously protected by men wishing to sustain their control over it<sup>31</sup>.

Pornography is a male created business, for the benefit of male, with the exploitation of female. Stereotypical presentation on the other hand reinforces gender stereotyping and it shapes mindsets of people towards suppression and domination of women. It reinforces gender inequality in the society.

In this milieu, women themselves should be conscious from being exploited and victimized. Producers/manufacturers should be conscious to avoid

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<sup>31</sup> YUBARAJ SANGROULA AND GEETA PATHAK, GENDER AND LAWS: NEPALESE PERSPECTIVE, Pairavi Prakasan 2002, p. 1-27

unnecessary use of female in ads. Likewise, media house should implement strict censor system for the prevention from use of women in pornographic presentation.

There is also an obvious lack of proper Act in Nepal to deal with advertisements and pornographic presentation. Further, there is a serious need of a gender analysis of media, particularly the advertisements. Such study may reveal more facts or effects of advertisements in shaping gender. Moreover, Nepalese advertisements are familiarizing nudity and obscenity to the Nepalese viewers. In this context, adequate laws should be promulgated to address such difficulties. There should be particular rule and regulations to regulate advertisements to prohibit exploitation of children and women in advertisements.

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