



# Discursive Construction of Femininity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Women's Portrayal in Pakistani TV Advertisements

Dr Anbarin Fatima

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University,  
Peshawar, [anbarin.fatima@sbbwu.edu.pk](mailto:anbarin.fatima@sbbwu.edu.pk)

Dr Sabeen

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar  
[sabeen.hayat@imsciences.edu.pk](mailto:sabeen.hayat@imsciences.edu.pk), <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-2719-1126>

Tayyeba Mehboob

BS Scholar, Department of English, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar

## Abstract

The present study is an investigation of the portrayal of Pakistani Women propagated through advertisements. For the present study, eleven advertisements have been gathered from Pakistani television and their websites. These advertisements consist of soap ads, face wash, shampoo, and cream advertisements. The study aims to explore the female depiction in selected advertisements from consumerists' perspective. This study unfolds the real image of women in these advertisements and how they are being objectified. According to Martha Nussbaum (1995, 257) it is the "instrumentality" of women. The analysis is constructed on Fairclough's 3D framework- description (textual features, interpretation (discursive practice), and explanation (social practice). The analysis reveals that women are being objectified and represented as beauty-obsessed, fickle and fragile. The findings of the study determined that these advertisements exploit the marginalized position of women in a patriarchal society and thus play with the emotions of the audience to benefit the producer of such goods. This study also exposes how the ideology of feminism is constructed and reconstructed through such portrayal by foregrounding the

stereotypical images of conventional Pakistani women. The language used in such advertisements manipulates the sentiments of the audience.

**Keywords:** Advertisements, Pakistani television, Feminism, objectification, CDA

## **Introduction**

When men began to trade, the idea of advertisements originated. There were different ways of advertising. To promote their products people often took help from advertisements in distinct ways. There were signs on walls and rocks. Phoenician traders had painted commercials on the rocks, while exposure to archaeological sites at Pompeii reveals that the entrance of each small shop had writings on the wall. Another way of advertising was town criers. Town criers are the ones who are paid to disseminate certain information among the people on the streets of the city or town to inform them about manufactured goods and other services. Later, in many European countries, they became the primary medium for public announcements. Greeks used it to announce ships' cargoes. After this, the era of printed advertisements began in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The invention of the press provided the base for modern advertisements, and it promoted media in the form of magazines and newspapers. William Caxton had written the first printed advertisement in his book *The Pyses of Salisbury Use* in 1477. It was a handbill hanging on the wall of a church. Later, radio came into being, and it became the first universally popular disseminating medium. Radio has played a significant influence in the evolution of advertising in the past. During the 1930s and 1940s, radio programming and advertising reached their apex. After radio advertisements, TV commercials are the first audio-visual medium and the most significant advancement in the history of advertising. It was a visual version of a radio. The first TV advertisement was Bulova Watch, broadcasted in 1941 (Mckmk, 2011).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when there were very few opportunities for professional work for women, advertising, on the other hand, was among the few jobs available to them. As it was the responsibility of women to make most of the domestic groceries and purchases, advertisers and marketers understood the benefits of women's involvement during the creative process.

The company Woodbury Soap became the first company to use sexual images for advertising a product in 1911. Helen Lansdowne created an ad slogan for the company that claimed "A-SKIN-YOU-LOVE-TO-TOUCH" to those who have used the soap. The soap promised that it would increase the prettiness of one's face and would give you a velvety skin to touch (Goodrum and Dalrymple, 1990). For 10 cents it gave a color print and a week's supply. The slogan "A-SKIN-YOU-LOVE-TO-TOUCH" became so popular that it was in use till the 1940s.

Advertise means to describe or to bring attention (a product service or events in a public medium to promote trades or attendance. Advertisements are messages paid for by those who send them and are intended to inform or influence people who receive them. Advertisements are power tools. With the help of advertisements, advertisers influence people's minds in society. This works best when people in their advertisements are related, such as celebrities, sportspersons, politicians, etc. (Cuneen et al., 2007). It is a type of communication that aims to

encourage potential customers to buy or consume more of a specific brand of product or service. Its long-term effects on society have been enormous, especially in this technological age. Advertisements influence people's habits, create false needs, and skew our society's beliefs and priorities with sexism and feminism.

Advertising has evolved into a poisonous snake ready to attack its prey. Advertisements are not 100% real. There is a hyperreality in it. Frequently, a story in the media is provided that does not reflect true reality. This can take a variety of forms. TV and film frequently convey a version of reality that does not fully relate to real life. This is especially true in the realm of 'reality television' and magazines. Advertisers and producers digitally edit the features of a character to attract the audience. People who have been digitally edited/alterd appear on magazine pages and in this way; they let their leading readers assume that what they see on the cover/title or other pages is real. As a result of this hyperreality, many women are unable to discriminate between the natural appearance and the boosted appearance of women/girls, and they set out to achieve a level of 'beauty' that is physically impossible to accomplish.

### **Representation and objectification**

“Representation and objectification of women means that it is the treatment of women in manner or context that suggests they are objects to be looked at, stared at, or even touched or treated like commodities or commodities to be bought, even discarded, often to be replaced by newer, younger version. In a nutshell, they are not treated with equal rights” (Rozdzial, 2012). Women are frequently objectified in mainstream media; we see it everywhere such as in advertisements, movies, calendars etc. they are represented as mere objects by the advertisements companies to sell their products and achieve their desired goals.

### **Fairclough (3D) model**

Norman Fairclough is recognized as a central figure who discussed in detail language, discourse, and society. Fairclough suggests that language is the part of society. He further explains this point that society and language are internally related. In other words, language reflects society and society reflects language. This research draws upon Fairclough (3D) three-dimension model of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Fairclough (1989) claims that critical text and discourse analysis can aid in the discovery of hidden agendas. Critical analysis, it is further asserted, attempts to study the “hidden determinants” in social interactions as well as the “hidden effect” that they may have (Fairclough, 2001, p.4). Using this approach, it is demonstrated how advertising language depicts women. The vocabulary chosen to describe women reflects societal attitudes.

The first stage that is 'Description' that deals with the language of the text. The second stage is 'Interpretations' that deals with the relation of the meaning and text. And the third stage is 'Explanation' that deals with the social practice.

CDA was proven to be useful in revealing the relationship between language, power, and hidden ideologies, specifically how language reflects power and ideology, or how the latter influences language, during the research.

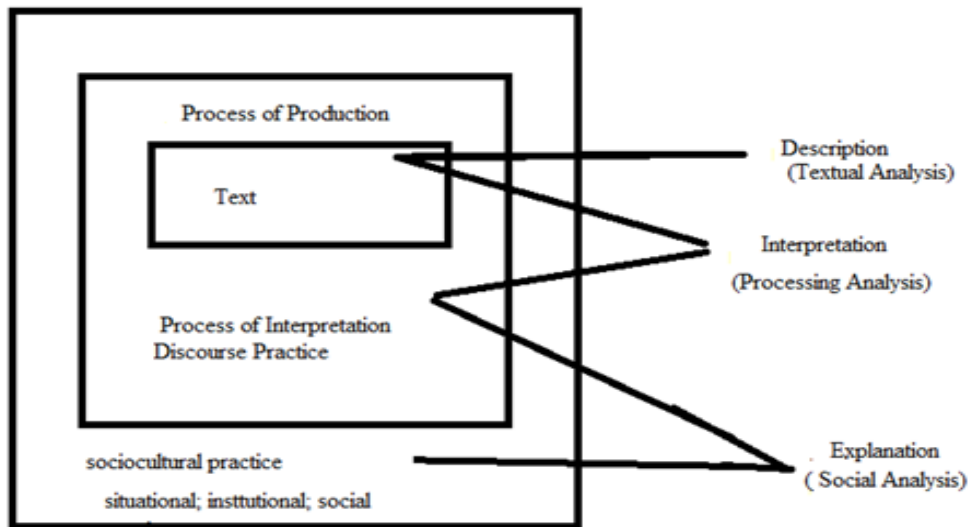


Diagram of Fairclough's 3 D Model

## Pakistani

### advertisements

The advertising sector in Pakistan is rapidly expanding. In general, Pakistani advertising has followed worldwide trends and developments. Today's mass media relies heavily on marketing to make revenue. Media can have numerous advertisers exhibiting and appealing to their potential customers for this purpose. The arrangement of commercials is solely determined by the standard set by the advertiser, and media must display these advertisements in the manner in which they are created. The demand for advertising is increasing; enormous sums of money are being spent to successfully market so that businesses can make multibillion-dollar profits.

There are certain strategies an advertiser uses to attract buyers. Customers are persuaded by various tactics, which leads to sales. To advertise, media use a large number of people, words, music, and a variety of other content that is suited to the needs of the advertiser.

In the time of Zia-ul-Haq, women were allowed to several roles however they were restricted to certain dress codes. They would be directed to a very modest dress and dupatta on their heads. Until the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Pakistan television was under the government of Pakistan. But in Parwez Musharaf's regime, it got freedom, and the liberalization of media started. Media agencies started using women as objects to attract customers. The objectification of women in Pakistan is as common as in Western media. Pakistani media also shows advertisements that objectify women, especially in advertisements of beauty products. Also, in Pakistani advertisements women are assigned the role of homemaking. They can always be seen standing in the kitchen cooking, cleaning, and washing the utensils. Women's self-objectification has increased as a result of the display of an unrealistic picture of women, and as a result, women are acquiring a self-comparison tendency.

### Objectives of the study

The present study aims:

- To explore the representation and objectification of Pakistani women in TV ads.
- To study the ideal women and their lifestyles that the advertising/manufacturing companies advocate or showcase in TV ads.

### **Research questions**

The present study aims to address the following questions:

- How Pakistani women are being represented and objectified in TV ads?
- What are the ideal women and their lifestyles that the advertising/manufacturing companies advocate or showcase in TV ads?

### **Literature Review**

This 21st century is the century of technology and media. Media is considered a very powerful source of disseminating certain ideologies, advertisements, propaganda, or any kind of other information. Nowadays, advertisements also propagate different concepts and creeds. Cook (2001) also contends that advertising is a fertile discursive context. The way girls/women are used/portrayed as models or brand ambassadors has been a hot topic of nowadays academics and a lot of research has been done on it.

Fatima (2019) has investigated and assessed ladies' portrayal in Pakistani mainstream social writings and issues of sexual orientation in Pakistan. Drawing upon Butler's hypothesis of performativity and experiences, she examined the contents and conversation/dialogues in Pakistani drama serials/shows. She uncovered the use of femininity in Pakistani dramas by pointing out the top ten drama serials of the period 2010-2015. According to her study, she revealed that drama serials were overwhelmingly female-centered by focusing on their role, thoughts, feelings, and emotions. All the sampled dramas focused on honour and shame and were coded with women's honour being at stake, highlighted explicitly by using the word "izzat". This research aimed to show 'how' women are portrayed in Pakistani drama serials and to what extent their on-screen roles comply with society's widespread honour discourses. The findings suggest that practically every facet of a business may be improved. The emotional, social, religious, economic, and political lives of women continue to be influenced by them.

Susanti (2019) focused on the use of language in two beauty advertisements of pentene and Garnier. The study focused on the justification of the strategies used for persuading the consumers. A descriptive qualitative method was used for gathering data for analysis. The data has been analyzed on the Fairclough 3D model consisting of three steps; textual level, discursive level and social level. At the textual level the researcher concluded that how with the help of powerful words such as the use of adjectives, rhetorical devices and pronouns, the advertisers influenced the consumers. The disjunctive syntax is used with the purpose of grabbing the attention of the audience. At the discursive level, she found out that the ads have used controlling discourse strategies to attract the audience. In the last social analysis, she concluded how the discourse can impact the audience in social terms. In short, the results of the study show that the language used in the ads is very persuasive and it easily grabbed the attention of the consumers.

Ali (2018) investigated women's objectification in television advertisements. He took advertisements from popular Pakistani television channels. A content analysis technique has been applied to the collected data. After the collection of data, he applied the chi-square test for hypothesis testing. The hypothesis of the research was 'whether, and to what extent there is a relationship between sexual objectification and television advertising in Pakistan?' Results of the study showed that there is "no such relation exists between them in Pakistani advertisements". This is mainly because of the cultural value that we have and our society too does not accept such types of advertisements. Defending the above quotations, researchers do come up with the observations that there are advertisements like; shampoos, beauty creams, and soap, etc. where they objectify the women. The marketers and the advertisers are exploiting the images of women to meet their target interests. Rather than exploiting, there should be a portrayal of such actions that change the limited perception of society about the role of women.

Kumar (2017) examined present and past commercials concerning sex appeal in advertisements of brands like Lux, Nissan, and Haagen Daaz from India, the US, and the UK respectively. Discussing the ways women are portrayed in the advertisements, she contends that ladies are especially defenseless against a marketer's utilization of portrayal of women as images and are generally fragile because of male strength in the present society. The first purpose of the study was to know about the perspective of people regarding the objectification of women and overt sexuality in ads for a long. She employed qualitative analysis techniques in her study. She studied that women in print ads look more objectionable than their male counterparts. These brands use women as images to appeal to the minds of the consumers, ultimately hurting the feministic sentiments. The advertisements of brands like Haagen Daaz and Nissan have proved to symbolize women as sexual objects. It is also supposed that the use of sexual appeals grab the attention of buyers. The consumer's perception of the brand reveals that these commercials are largely aimed at younger groups with a broader viewpoint and a stronger voice.

Tehseem and Hameed (2015) studied the advertisements of beauty products by applying the Fairclough 3D model, a critical discourse analysis and Kress & Leeuwen's grammar of visual design. The purpose of the study was to discover linguistics strategies used by advertisers to influence consumers and explain the relationship between product-consumers and product-producers. The study is mainly focused on the influential type of discourse of 21st century, which is advertising discourse. The study unveils the ideological concepts from the perspective of feminism by presenting celebrities as a tool for ads. The findings of the study show that the ad companies have used many strategies and techniques to catch the attention of the audience/consumers. The study was concluded on the effectiveness of the endorse celebs and the use of CDA in advertising.

Abdelaal (2014) examined two ads for beauty products from a web magazine. He has done a comparative study of those two ads and investigated how the producers made the audience believe and convince them to buy their ideas, products, and beliefs. One of the two ads was quantitatively analyzed based on the content and the other was analyzed on Fairclough 3D model. The objective of the study was to carefully look for meaning hidden under the discourse of the ads. The study aimed at to explore the meaning of verbal signs, non-verbal signs and to identify

the hidden message of the ads. The findings of the study suggest that both advertisements used colours to attract the audience, and encourage luxury lifestyle and the target audience is women. It shows that the ads mostly target women. The findings suggest that the language used in those ads conveyed a brief but strong message to the audience.

Jaggi (2013) has conducted research on women's representation, particularly in Indian television channels and the focus was mainly on the discourses of advertisements which are about fairness creams i.e. Fair & Lovely ads. In her study, she has tried to bring the reader's attention to the worth of the Fair and Lovely brand which is considered to be the world's first and also famous brand in selling of its products. This study was carried out using Brand Asset Valuator model that was proposed by Young and Rubicam. By making use of this model Fair & Lovely ads were examined through four fundamental elements i.e. Brand Differentiation, Brand Relevance, Brand Esteem, and Brand Knowledge. The purpose of the study was to deconstruct the myth created by the brand that has been propagated, related to women which are that the only kind of beauty is having fair skin. According to Guy Cook's (2001) articulation on 'Critical Discourse Analysis' suggests that advertisements carry a fertile discursive context. This shows that it is very much necessary to see how the advertisements contribute constructing an ideological stance on the issues and people. In order to take on the discourse analysis of the 'Fair & Lovely' advertising campaign over the last few years the notions of substance, co-text, situation, inter-text and function have been applied by the researcher which is from the two-decade period of Cook's methodological framework. The findings of the study reveal that women have been frequently objectified in the 'Fair & Lovely' ads and therefore these campaigns have been criticized over the last many years for holding up negative narratives regarding women. The campaign has adopted this narrative about women that women's success whether personal or professional, is totally dependent on their physical parameters like skin tone and color. This discourse has got adopted so much that another fairness product by the name of 'Fair and Handsome' was introduced by the same company for men as well a while ago.

Carpenter and Edison (2010) shed light on the paper's major goal, which is to grasp people's perceptions of undeniable sexuality and the typification of women in advertising throughout history. The study compared advertising from 2004 to Soley & Reid's initial study (1988). They discovered that in 1984, women were dressed more sexually than in 1964. According to more recent research, the growth of sexiness in advertising is slowing. The research also demonstrates how sexual appeals in advertising have evolved over the last four decades. In advertising, women are more likely than males to be represented as domestic providers or sex objects. According to Shields (1997) and Goldman (1992), many advertisements focus on the female "ideal," a self-image to which all women should strive. By replicating Soley & Reid's (1988) content analysis, the research looked at sex in magazine adverts in 2004. The results of this study suggest that the trends found by Soley and Reid (1988) and Soley and Kurzbard (1986) remain the same. Girls continue to be sexually featured in media, and sexuality in advertising has become more frequent throughout time. Males are more exposed to commercial than their female counterparts. There was a boom in provocative model clothes between 1984 and 2004. Almost entirely devoted to the portrayal. When males featured in advertising alongside women, they were more likely to be

dressed provocatively than when they were alone. However, neither sexual interaction between genders nor headline innuendo increased much.

## **Method**

This study is qualitative and investigates eleven advertisements of beauty products on Pakistan Television. Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional CDA model has been used to analyze the data in this study. This 3D model according to Fairclough, has three dimensions and provides three-dimensional approaches for text analysis. Fairclough posits that "discourse can be viewed as 1) linguistic text (spoken or written) 2) discourse practice (text production and text interpretations) and 3) sociocultural practice" (1995, p.97).

Around three phases are involved in the critical discourse analysis (CDA) of a text.

- 1) **Description:** concerned with the linguistic features of a text.
- 2) **Interpretation:** deals with the relationship between the process of interpretations, production and consumption of the text.
- 3) **Explanation:** this phase is related to the explanation of the relation between processes of production and interpretation and social practices.

## **Analysis and discussion**

According to the CDA framework of Fairclough (2001), textual analysis, discursive practice analysis, and social practice analysis of selected advertisements are done. The advertisements of popular soaps, shampoos, creams and lotions brands are analyzed below:

### **Textual Analysis**

For the textual analysis of the selected ads, these categories are focused on vocabulary/word choice, sentence structure, cohesive devices and rhetorical devices.

In the text of the selected brand ads (Lux, Palmolive, Fair and Lovely, Ponds and Sunsilk) an informal day-to-day Urdu language has been used. The purpose of informal vocabulary is to stand on an equal footing with the audience/consumers and to gain the confidence and attention of the audience or women folk. This is also the language and speech style of young women in our society when they sit and gossip together. For example, *Teek sy betho*, *Log kia kahengay*, *Logon ka kam hai bataein banana*, *Khubsoorati sy kia sharmana* etc. This shows the psyche of women that how young women remain occupied with what other people will think about them and therefore they shouldn't care for what is said about them and instead focus on improving and intensifying their beauty by using Lux soap. Such sentences compel the audience/women to buy the products for having glowing skin. Same is the case with vocabulary in other ads.

Looking at the grammatical features, advertisers use both positive and negative adjectives. Such adjectives are mostly about the quality of the product. They use mostly the positive adjectives e.g. "*mulayem skin*", "*mehkta ihsas*", to satisfy the audience/consumers of the impacts/results of the products. By the use of these adjectives, a sense is conveyed to women that they can become ideal women and can attain ideal lifestyle. These arouse the feelings of dream and fantasy in



women and compel them to buy these beauty products. Likewise, negative adjectives are used to highlight the issues that women were facing before the use of the product such as “*itni dark lipstick, Itni unchi heels*”. The underlined words are negative adjectives because of the context in which the product ambassador says them. She mentions the conditions that if they buy and use the product, it will solve all their problems.

Moreover, the advertiser also uses technical words in ads that attract consumers. To give a touch of professionalism, they use words like *scientifically proven* and *beauty ingredients* to engage the consumers deeply. The usage of the words ‘*7 beauty ingredients*’ in the lux soap refers to this technique of advertisers. Such technical words cover reality with the fake image of beauty and trap its consumers. Such speech or language features attract the consumers’ attention. These are the trending speech styles that are used on a daily basis. People relate it to their daily life and give more attention. Such treatment of people is said to be the ‘synthetic personalization’ according to Fairclough (1989:62). Audiences, especially women, see themselves in the scenario (of the ad) and then try to emulate these brand ambassadors.

As far as sentence structure is concerned, the ads are composed of short and witty sentences such as “*Over lag rahi ho*”, “*itni dark lipstick*”, “*Itni unchi heels*”. In these lines, it is clearly seen that the advertiser is using the first person pronouns that the reason for my glowing skin is lux soap. It is a complete show of promise and honesty of beauty and builds up a strong relationship between the advertiser and the audience. The researcher observed great use of indirect sentences by making a bridge between the product and the audience. Such speeches create a bond with the targeted audience.

Cohesive devices have been observed in the above lines such as “*Aur*”, “*Jis*”, and “*Jo*” that connect sentences together to convey the narrative of the ad clearly. Lastly, they put some poetic devices like alliteration, rhyme and repetition that are the common tools in the hands of all the advertisers like,

“*mulayem skin and mehкта ihsas*”. (Alliteration)

Rhyme can be seen in “*zor sy na hanso*”, “*Teek sy betho*”. The sentence “*Khubsoorati sy kia sharmana*” has been repeated two times and the word “*khubsoorti*” is repeated three times in the text of the ad. Such terms are used so that the consumers can well remember the product and its message. The advertisements construct an ideal image and the consumers especially women like to have these products because women are more indulged in the complex of fair and white skin. The advertiser constructs a false impression of the women and here language plays a role in hiding the reality of the advertisement. These are the techniques that they use to increase the market value of the product.

In the perfume ads, a women body is presented as a fragrant toy, while men are always on the hunt for women having fair, fragrant bodies and glowing faces. The advertiser manipulates human needs as a tool to hook consumers. There is a significant gap between how a marketer portrays their products and the end result. Moreover, they also choose beautiful and well-known models/actresses to show that they too obtained their beauty through those products. At every

phase, women are represented as paragons of beauty and sex objects for men, and that beauty is only in the branded products.

### Analysis at Discursive Practice Level

This level is about the production, distribution, and consumption of the text. The advertiser uses a number of strategies to attract the attention of the audience. The following table summarizes these strategies.

**Table 1**

Strategy in Advertisements	Linguistics Terms
1. Celebrity endorsement	Modelling by renowned celebrities like Saba Qamar, Hania Amer, Sohaili Ali Abro, Mawra Hocane, Zara Noor Abbas.
2. Scientific expressions/evidence	<i>“7 beauty ingredients”, 5 natural oils”, “olive oil”, vitamin B3 C our E se barpur formula, Brightening crystals” clinically proven</i>
3. Code switching/mixing	<i>“mulayem <u>skin</u> aur mehka ihsas der tak”, <u>beauty ingredients</u>, <u>heels</u>, garmi ho ya paseena, ye de apki baloo ko up to 24 hours shine”. Iski <u>brightening crystal jild ki gehrai mai jaye</u>” <u>Winter mai dry skin?</u></i>  <i>Isko chupao mat, <u>nourish</u> karo.</i>  <i>iska <u>vitamin B3 C our E se barpur formula day 10 layer deep action</u></i>
4. Emotional phrases/words	<i>“Khubsoorati, mulayem skin, mehka ihsas,”, You can feel it”! baal sambalengy! Shaan se shine be karengy” Mulayem, pyara ye pal, dil ajnabi</i>

*Table 1: Linguistics strategies used in advertisements to attract the attention of the audience*

The ads build a discourse regarding women psyche and their expectations and desires. The brand ambassadors narrate their experiences and splendid moments that they are enjoying due to the use of these products. Their language, expressions and body movements all reiterate the significance of beauty in the life of a successful woman and this is all possible by using the product that they publicize. The advertisers/manufacturers create and produce a discourse that revolves round women’s desires and weaknesses. Women are the consumers of these products and therefore they can be appealed by creating that discourse.

The language of the ads represents the day-to-day conversation of young women. This shows that women are mostly obsessed with beauty and outward looks. The advertisers give the concept of beauty in their own way and for their own benefit. The advertisements change the perception of the consumers by creating an image of beauty of their own. They construct the sense that people with dark skin and rough skin or hair are not beautiful and attractive at all. Similarly, they have a low or no chance of a bright career. Only beautiful women with shiny skin and silky smooth hair are eligible to have a prosperous and bright future. Such ads contribute to discriminatory sentiments towards women/people with dark skin colour and rough hair.

Usually, women are the target audience/consumers of these products and hence, they are the main victims of the advertisers. Women are easily influenced by these ads because majority of Pakistani women spend most of their time staying at home and watching television. The advertisers enter the weaker zone of women and manipulate them with their products. In addition, famous and good-looking actresses are presented to advertise these products. The actresses create an impression that their glowing skin and beauty are due to the products they are advertising. With their (emotional) words they appeal to the emotions of women so these ads should be taken as positive, and women should trust those products. Examples are as under:

*“Hay girls ye sab kyon?”*

*Try kro meri tara PALMOLIVE NATURALS milk and rose*

Similarly, the use of scientific expressions in the ads further strengthens the feeling of trust and builds up a relationship between the product and the consumers. The strategy of code-switching and mixing leaves a strong impact on the consumers.

*“Jis me hai seven beauty ingredients”*

*Jis mai shamel hai 100% natural milk or rose Patel extracts*

The erotic colours and the images of natural ingredients like roses, coconut, natural oils, vitamins B, E and aloe-vera, etc. have been used in the products’ manufacturing. In this way, a number of techniques are used in the advertisements to keep a power relationship. Thus such kind of discourse is produced and is spread that can engage the women consumers, but it indirectly results in the exploitation of women.

### **Analysis at Social Practice Level:**

Social practice analysis examines the text from the societal perspective. The social conditions governing the processes of production and consumption of the text are the main concern in social analysis.

Social context always has a tremendous impact on texts. The selected ads demonstrate that Pakistani women still have a long way to go in terms of gender equality as Pakistani society is a patriarchal society. Women are usually regarded as a collection of bodily parts. Men, on the other hand, are considered as whole individuals and that, in a nutshell, is what objectification of women entails. Women are playing roles in most of the TV ads as brand ambassadors, however, some of those ads are called into question because of the way women are exploited. Those ads will leave viewers scratching their heads, ‘What are they trying to sell? Is it the product or the women?’

The present study criticizes the advertising companies for using women as an object for their own interests and financial benefits. Women are objectified, commoditized and fetishized by the brands: “*meri khobsurti ki shuruat hoti hai lux se*” and the brands are fetishized through her body:

*“Over lag rahi ho, itni dark lipstick, Itni unchi heels”*

These are some of the sentences which are related to the body and looks of a woman. Although emphasising these phrases in a rather ironic manner is fine, they nevertheless ignore the question of the fundamental right of women, which is respect.

The advertising companies portray women as brand ambassadors. These ambassadors propagate and advocate the beautification of women as if being beautiful is the sole purpose of women’s lives. They appeal to women’s sense of beauty in these ads and reinforce it by presenting/sharing their own personal experiences,

*“meri khobsurti ki shurwat hoti hai lux se”.*

The above line refers to her story of beauty that started by the use of lux, a soap brand. She does not know that she is a part of neo-liberal capitalist economic system which wants to promote their products at the cost of her body and self-respect. In the name of freedom, women’s self-respect and personal space are actually under attack. This is also evident from the fact that she is coming out of the brand new car accompanied by men all around her, holding cameras, capturing her from head to toe and at this moment she poses for the audience and says;

*“Khubsoorti se kia sharmana”*

This shot shows that she is an object and being beautiful is the only purpose of her life. Where her womanhood stand here? What is her own goal as a woman? Does the success of life for a woman means to be surrounded by men, lights, cameras and a glamorous set?

Usually the products and brands carry two types of values: use value and aesthetic value. The consumers/women mostly buy things because they have been fetishized. In the advertisement, for example, the brand ambassador is objectified, commoditized and fetishized by the brand lux: “*meri khobsurti ki shuruat hoti hai lux se*” and the brand is fetishized through her partially exposed body. In the process, she loses her own identity and turns out to be an object being manipulated by the advertisers or manufacturers.

The sexual objectification of women has been a growing trend in television, films, commercials, and music videos since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Women’s physical appearance, body image, behavioural standards and beauty have always been portrayed in the mainstream media in a false and artificial light. We can witness hyper-sexualized and unrealistically flawless shapes on television, billboards, glossy pages of publications, and social media. Girls and women are dehumanized and shown as commodities in advertisements, music videos, and films. Everything from car tyres to entertainment is sold using women’s bodies (Swagata Sen, 2019).

According to the data analysis, the most noticeable subject in the advertising is the hyper-real appearance or look of women. According to the findings, ladies with clear, soft, and smooth skin

appear more attractive. As it is clear from the data analysis, the advertisers used many strategies in ads that manipulated women's images. They created hyper-real situations in ads which are not real in reality. The image and the lifestyles of the women present there in the ads are so glamorous and artificial that it completely deviates from the real life and image of women in Pakistani society. They present Pakistani women as flawless, beautiful, white-skinned, in glamorous and fashionable dresses and all the time attractive dolls while in reality, it is not the case. These are all lies in the disguise of the advantages of the product. According to the analyzed data women are shown as beauty obsessed, and they only care about their bodies and hair. This is not true at all in the situation of Pakistani women. They have so many other things to do as well, such as pursuing their degrees, careers, dreams, and taking care of the family and children, etc.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of this study was to examine the language used in several beauty products commercials. The study illustrates how advertisers manipulate customers' ideologies to develop power relationships with them. The examination of these adverts suggests that advertisers employ a range of linguistic tactics to persuade individuals, particularly women, such as direct address (1st and 2nd person pronouns i.e. I, We, You, Us, etc.), positive adjectives, headlines, and attractive slogans. They presented women as toys, dolls and decoration pieces who are beauty-obsessed and want to be envied by other women through their flawless beauty and loved by men. They objectified women as toys of entertainment.

The most noticeable theme in this study is the presentation of the ideal appearance for females to manipulate women in our society. According to findings, a woman will only appear beautiful if she has a fair, flawless complexion free of marks and scars. She would only then be successful in her social and personal life. The study investigated the ideology that women can only get a decent job, a nice proposal and a nice career if their skin colour is fair/light and they have soft and smooth skin and hair. Furthermore, according to the targeted advertisements, this is not difficult at all. All women have to do is to buy and use their products to transform their lives. The advertisers use the models as a seducing tool to manipulate the common masses. In a nutshell, advertising and product dealers use speech to and other tactics to create an ideal lifestyle and ideal women for selling their products and persuade women into buying a new way of life.

### **References**

- Abdelaal, N.M., (2014). Advertisement analysis: A comparative critical study: *Advances in language & literary studies* vol.5 No.6, p. 254-259.
- Ahmed, Leila, (2016). "Pakistan: Honour Killings of Girls and Women." Amnesty International, 1999.
- Ali, S. (2018). Women Objectification and Advertising: An Analysis of Sexually objectified Portrayal of Women in Television advertising in Pakistan. *Global Media Journal* 16:31.
- Barthel, Diane, (1992). 'Men, media and the gender order when men put on appearances. Advertising and the social construction of masculinity'. In Craig, Steve, Men, Masculinity, and the Media. Research on men and masculinities, Sage.

- Belkaoui, A., & Belkaoui, J. M. (1976). A comparative analysis of the roles portrayed by women in print advertisements: 1958, 1970, and 1972. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 13, 168-172.
- Belkaoui, Ahmed., and Belkaoui, M. Janice. (1976). A Comparative Analysis of the Roles.
- Brickell, C. (2005). "Masculinities, Performativity, and Subversion: A Sociological Reappraisal." *Men and Masculinities* 8, no. 1 pp 24-43.
- Busby, L. J., & Leichty, G. (1993). Feminism and advertising in traditional and nontraditional women's magazines 1950s-1980s. *Journalism Quarterly*, 7, 247-64.
- Busby, L. J., & Leichty, G. (1993). Feminism and advertising in traditional and nontraditional women's magazines 1950s-1980s. *Journalism Quarterly*, 7, 247-64.
- Butalia & Urvashi. (1993). "Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency during Partition." *Economic and Political Weekly* 28, no. 17 WS12-S24.
- Butler & Judith. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive Limits of 'Sex'*, London, Routledge.
- Carpenter, C., & Edison, A. (2010). Taking It Off Again: The Portrayal of Women in Advertising Over the Past Forty Years. *International Communication Association (2005)*: 1-25. Salem State Library. Web.
- Claudia. et al (1973-2000). A Content Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Television Advertisements:
- Courtney, A. E., & Lockeretz, S. W. (1971). A woman's place: An analysis of the roles portrayed by women in magazine advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 8, 92-95.
- Courtney, A., & Lockeretz (1971). A woman's place: An analysis of the roles portrayed by women in magazine advertisements. *Journal of Marketing*, 8, 92-95.
- Courtney, A., & Lockeretz (1971). A woman's place: An analysis of the roles portrayed by women in magazine advertisements. *Journal of Marketing*, 8, 92-95.
- Courtney, A., & Whipple, T. (1983). *Sex stereotyping in advertising*. Health: Lexington, MA.
- Courtney, A., & Whipple, T. (1983). *Sex stereotyping in advertising*. Health: Lexington, MA.
- Courtney, E.Alice., and Whipple, T.W. (1974). Women in TV commercials. *Journal of Communication*, 24 (2) 110-18.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 1-32). Sage Publications Ltd.
- Fatima, A. (2019). Representations of Women's Role in Pakistan: A Critical Analysis through Drama Serials. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 20(3), 3-16.

- Folkerts, J. & Lacy, S. (2004). *The media in your life: an introduction to mass communication*, 3rd Ed. Pearson
- Folkerts, J. & Lacy, S. (2004). *The media in your life: an introduction to mass communication*, 3rd Ed. Pearson.
- Goldman, R. (1992). *Reading Ads Socially*, London, NY: Routledge.
- Guo, F. Liu, K. (2016). "A Review on Critical Discourse Analysis". *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. 6 (5)
- Harris, R. J. (1999). *A cognitive psychology of mass communication*, Third edition. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Hawkins, R. & Pingree, S. (1990). Divergent psychological processes in constructing social reality from mass media content. In N. Signorielli and M. Morgan (Eds.), *Cultivation Analysis: New Directions in Media Effects Research* (pp. 35-50). Newbury Park, CA:
- Iqbal, A. (2014). "Exploitation of woman in beauty products of "fair and lovely": A critical discourse analysis study", in *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*. Vol. 2, Issue 9. p.122-131.
- Jaggi, R. (2013). *Women in Indian T.V Advertisement: The Discourse in the Fair & Lovely Ad Campaign*. *Journal of Innovation*.
- Kilbourne, Jean (2000). *Video: Killing Us Softly 3: Advertising's Image of Women*. Northampton: Media Education Foundation
- Kumar, S. (2017) Representation of Women in advertisements. *International Journal of Advanced Scientific Technologies in Engineering and Management Sciences* 3: 25.
- Mckmk, (2011). Historical development of advertising. [URL] <https://www.slideshare.net/mckmk/history-of-advertising>
- Rehman, F. Gill., Azhar, M. A. (2018). Critical Discourse Analysis of PM N. Sharif's UNOGA Discourse Deciphering Covert Rhetoric—Dialectical Perspective. *Communication and Linguistics Studies*. Vol. 4.
- Roffee, J. A. (2016). "Rhetoric, Aboriginal Australians and the Northern Territory intervention: A socio-legal investigation into pre-legislative argumentation". *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*. 5 (1): 131–147. doi:10.5204/ijcjsd.v5i1.285
- Sherrow, Victoria (2001). *For Appearance' Sake: The Historical Encyclopedia of Good Looks, Beauty, and Grooming*. Greenwood Publishing Group. p. 5. ISBN 978-1-573-56204-1
- Susanti, S. (2019). "A Critical Discourse Analysis on Beauty Product Advertisements" in *Journal of Language learning and Research (JOLLAR)*. Vol. 3(1) 41-57.
- Tehseem, T., & Hameed, A. (2015). Celebrities endorsement in conflating beauty advertisements: a feministic perspective. *European Journal of English language, linguistics & literature*. Vol.2 No.2