

**The Portrayal of Women in  
Ethiopian Television  
Advertisements**

**By**

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**Approved by the Board of Examiners**

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms:**

TV- Television

ETV- Ethiopian Television

Ad(s) - Advertisement(s)

Advert(s) - Advertisement(s)

FWCW-Fourth World Conference on Women

HIV-Human Immune- Deficiency Virus

MTV-Music Television

Vs. - Versus

USA- United States of America

**Key Words:**

Advertising

Portrayal

Content Analysis

Primary Character

Gender Stereotyping

# Table of Contents

	<b>Pages</b>
Acknowledgements.....	i
Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	ii
Key Words.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables.....	vii
Abstract.....	viii

## **CHAPTER ONE**

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	5
1.5 Scope of the Study.....	6
1.6 Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.7 Organization of the Study.....	7

## **CHAPTER TWO**

<b>Review of Related Literature.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Gender in the Media.....	8
2.2 Gender and Advertising as a Form of Mass Communication.....	11
2.3 Women in Television Advertisements.....	13
2.3.1 Stereotyped Images.....	13
2.3.1.1 Stereotyped Sex Roles.....	15

2.3.1.2 Women as Sex Objects.....	18
2.3.1.3 Women as Consumers of Products and Services.....	19
2.4 Advertising in Ethiopia.....	21
2.5 Women’s Images in the Ethiopian Society and the Media.....	22

### **CHAPTER THREE**

<b>Design of the Study.....</b>	<b>26</b>
3.1 Method.....	26
3.1.1 Method of Data Collection.....	26
3.1.2 Sampling.....	27
3.2 Coding Categories.....	28
3.3 Coding Procedure.....	33
3.4 Coding Reliability.....	35
3.5 Procedure of Data Analysis.....	35

### **CHAPTER FOUR**

<b>Presentation and Discussion of Findings.....</b>	<b>36</b>
4.1 Presentation of Findings.....	36
4.2 Discussion of Findings.....	44

### **CHAPTER FIVE**

<b>Conclusions, Recommendations and Directions of Further Study.....</b>	<b>54</b>
5.1 Conclusions.....	54
5.2 Recommendations.....	59
5.3 Directions for Further Study.....	61

References

Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E

Appendix F

Appendix G

Appendix H

Appendix I

Appendix J



## List of Tables

<b>Table Number</b>	<b>Pages</b>
1. Frequency of All Character Mix .....	36
2. Frequency of Adult Primary Characters.....	37
3. Products and Services Advertised by Primary Characters.....	38
4. Roles played by Primary Characters.....	39
5. Basis for Credibility.....	40
6. Setting of Primary Characters.....	41
7. Sexual Imagery (Sex Object) Role of Primary Character.....	42
8. Frequency of Voice-over Announcer.....	43

## **Abstract**

*This study examined the portrayal of women in Ethiopian television advertisements and documented the various depictions associated with women as compared to men.*

*Content analysis was chosen as a method of inquiry for this study. 140 advertisements were initially recorded, of which 94 advertisements were taken as a final sample (from the ETV Amharic language primetime evening programmes and Sunday 'Meto-Haya' entertainment programme). Each advertisement was initially coded for all character mix category and for primary character or figure - whether the primary figure was a male or a female. In addition, each primary figure in the advertisement was coded for the following categories:*

*1) Product type, 2) role, 3) setting, 4) basis for credibility, 5) voice-over announcer, and 6) sexual imagery or sex object. Using these dimensions, analysis was performed to determine how women are portrayed in the advertisements.*

*The analysis of the data gathered revealed that portrayal of women in ETV advertisements is in many ways stereotyped and demeaning. The study found out that the stereotypes associated with women are widespread. Along with this, the study provided evidence of the existence of similar trend in many cases toward portraying women and men as different in their earmarked roles, positions and behaviors.*

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Worldwide demographic data show that women make up more than half of the world's population. This numerical power, however, has not guaranteed their participation and positive representation in many spheres of life. Their lives are often shaped by the patriarchal rule with specific gender roles and relations and their potential and roles in many productive and reproductive areas of life have been degraded for a longer period of time. Among a lot of other areas, media of mass communications, mostly in their depiction of stereotyped gender roles and behaviors, have been mentioned as the one that degrade women.

The media, which have always been at the center of feminist criticism, are crucial areas of debate as far as gender issues are concerned. Women's lack of or unequal access to mass communication resources, low level of employment position, their absence from the media, the absence of media outlets devoted to women's issues, and above all the continued projection of negative and degrading images have been identified as critical areas of concern of feminist researchers and gender sensitive action programmes. Raino (1994) maps out that the most frequent themes of the debates on gender in communication commence with the subordination of women in the communication industry. This evidently embraces issues of gender portrayals across different types of media.

Many gender related literatures, most of which are written by feminist scholars, have detailed the consistent biased, often negative and demeaning representation of women in the media. Here advertising is often singled out for analysis of women's images in television. This is probably because of the

increased privatization and commercialization; advertising has become the dominant mass communication industry in which women are largely exploited.

Although advertising is designed to sell products, in the process, it also communicates the concept of behavior and gender roles, which many argue, have an impact on viewers. In advertising, the long standing central concern is that advertisements more often than not present women in stereotyped ways, which are often believed to be not only potentially debilitating and demeaning, but also unrealistic. Since 1970s researchers in the West have reported that males and females are depicted in stereotyped ways in children's books, magazines and television advertisements (Furnham and Bitar, 1993).

More specifically, in many countries where television has been largely used as a means to communicate messages to potential consumers, scholars in the field of mass media communication have well documented the particular degrading images of women shown in television advertisements. And it is believed women's portrayal in advertising is not consistent with the behavioral changes that have been taking place in society. According to Mbilinyi and Omari (1996), researches undertaken in developed countries have shown that advertising portrays a distorted social reality. Courtney and Whipple (1983:24) contend that

Women and men in the society today clearly are far from their portrayed images in advertising. As sex roles continue to change and expand at a faster rate than the advertisers' response, the image of the sexes in advertising is not keeping pace with the change. In fact, the image reflects the status quo of a time gone by.

Although women in today's society occupy many different and diverse roles and have accomplished many achievements, their role is vaguely illustrated

on TV commercials. Significant strides made by women into various sectors are not reflected; women are often rather portrayed in similar stereotyped roles and are grouped together with the assumption that all women are the same or should be the same.

Media in Ethiopia are centralized in few towns of the country, and with this women are still at a disadvantage. Their participation seems to appear negligible, and their images are believed to be often stereotyped and degrading. On ETV, images of women are common ingredients of dramas, comedy shows, feature programmes, and advertisements.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In Ethiopia television-advertising portrayal of women and the powerful impacts they project seem to have been neglected as part of crucial gender issue. To my knowledge, no empirical research has been conducted on women's portrayal in television advertisements although advertising as one of the major shows of airtime on ETV depict women with various roles and behaviors.

It is obvious that women are common participants of nearly all ETV advertisements. However, as many media shows have been consistently filled with stereotypes, ETV advertising, as part of the dominant type of communication on ETV cannot also escape from portraying women with traditional stereotyped roles and behaviors, which degrade their potential and productive roles they can play in the society. This may happen even when there are some improvements regarding their participation and position in many socio-economic sectors of the country.

It can be argued most of us often fail to recognize how women are portrayed and what the portrayals would mean. This area needs to be studied. I find

it, therefore, important to conduct an empirical study that would possibly offer a clear picture of women's images portrayed in ETV advertisements and their possible implications. This research paper in general attempted to investigate, in an empirical way, how women are depicted in the ETV ads.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study was to examine and analyze the various images of women depicted in ETV advertisements. In other words, the study aimed at looking into how women were portrayed in ETV advertisements. And specifically, the study attempted to answer the following questions.

1. To what extent do female characters as primary characters appear in ETV advertisements as against males?
2. Relative to males, when females are portrayed in ETV adverts, what kinds of roles are they given to play? To what extent, in general, do ETV advertisements present women in stereotyped sex roles?
3. Relative to males, when females are depicted in ETV advertisements, what kinds of products and services do they advertise? And what relation do they have to the advertised products and services?
4. In what kinds of settings are women shown in ETV advertisements?
5. Are women presented as decorative or sex objects in ETV advertisements? If they happen to appear, to what extent are they presented this way?
6. What proportion of the advertisements is taken up by male voice-over announcers or female voice-over announcers?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

In the developed nations, researches on women's issues, more specifically on their images in the media, have been commonly conducted. Stereotypical portrayal of women, violence, and media effects on views of gender are some of the target issues in these researches. The findings are often thought to help change women's situation, media policies, and bring about a balanced and realistic presentation of women in the media.

In Ethiopia, these issues do not go beyond personal reflections based on mere observation and impression from individual TV viewers and perhaps newspaper readers. We cannot find well-documented studies on women's portrayals even in textbooks, plays and other texts that contain women as characters. This study may, therefore, make the following contributions:

1. It may help women and organizations working on gender issues to critically consider traditional stereotypes of women shown in television advertising to be problematic.
2. By making viewers and media practitioners recognize women's portrayal in advertisements, the study may call attention to the negative and degrading depiction of women in the media and attempts to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.
3. The study may provide advertisers and journalists with ideas of positive representation of women in the advertisements, which in turn may make them conscious about their work and help bring in a more diverse and realistic portrayal of women.

4. This study may also provide an essential starting point and, of course, foundation for further media research in general and critical analysis of gender and television commercials in particular.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

The study covered a one month and 15 days of only ETV Amharic prime-time evening and Sunday Amharic daytime entertainment programme segment advertisements. Ads in other programme segments were not covered. As for the gender contents, only some features of women's portrayal like sex roles, types of products or services advertised, setting, sexual image, etc, were monitored. Advertising depictions with respect to, for example, level of dependence, social relationship between the primary figure and other characters, employment positions, argument, etc, were included.

#### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

As for the limitations, first, content analysis is susceptible to bias due to methods of data collection, interpretation, or analysis. This method by its nature has also limitations in telling how the messages communicated influence viewers. Hence, the impacts the gender portrayals project have not been addressed as it needs an in-depth and independent study by itself.

Second, sampling limitation may have influenced the findings. Data were collected over six weeks on prime-time viewing hours. Although this viewing time has been used in other similar studies, a broader time frame was thought to be important to complete the results. However, given the limitation of time and resource, it was very difficult to include ads from other programme segments. More convincing findings could be acquired by incorporating ads from various other programmes. Future research may examine a sufficiently larger sample of ads to provide strong evidence.



Lack of local research and well documented materials that could be used as a baseline for this study may have made the discussion of the results depend more on the context of the findings in other countries.

## **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The research paper has five chapters. Chapter one consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, significance, scope and limitations of the study. Chapter two contains the review of related literature part. Chapter three treats the research method of the study. This part presents a clear picture of the method, sampling, coding features and procedures used. The analysis and discussions of the findings are embraced in the fourth chapter. Chapter five is devoted to conclusions and recommendations and directions for further study sections.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

A number of studies have dealt with the portrayal of women in all forms of media. A close examination of the literature on the portrayal of women in media in general and television advertising in particular revealed that each of these studies had its focus mainly on stereotyping images of women manifested in various ways. Particularly, television-advertising portrayals of women, as contrasted to men, have been quite a major concern with media researchers. With a particular focus on television advertising, thus, this chapter examines previous studies under the following sub-topics.

#### **2.1 Gender in the Media**

The media of mass communication are of paramount importance for many reasons, including their long acknowledged power to signify socially acceptable ways of being or relating to others, as well as to assign or more usually withhold, public recognition, honor and social position to groups of people (Carter and Steiner, 2004). In all of these media functions, gender is often used as a key to illustrate the media's representation of what is called socially acceptable roles, positions and behaviors of characters appearing in various forms of the media. Davis et al (2003) assert that gender has been an integral part of media studies throughout their history, and many content analyses have been conducted on the matter.

Gender identities that are feminine and masculine differences are constructed in practices of everyday life in which media consumption is a part of it (Ang and Hermes, 1991 in Zoonen, 1995). It is inevitable gender representations are a common phenomenon in the media as media have a role to play in the society. The media have always been the center of feminist criticism as a consequence of the power they communicate, as

noted by Parry and Karam, “patriarchal (rule of the father, subordinating the female to the male) and ideological (how men of all classes and races use the media to oppress women) messages” (2001:383).

According to Carter and Steiner, “Critical forms of feminist inquiry emerging in the 1970s examined the ways in which media representations supported the interests of two interlocking systems: Patriarchy and capitalism” (2004:2). It is obvious for a long period of time that these systems have been explained and defined as systems of power and they have been naturalized and made to seem normal in the spheres they have appeared in. Media are said to perpetuate these systems.

Although it has been a long time since the 1970s studies, those dominants in the systems, mostly men, have still been enjoying positive depictions in the media; they have been presented to everyone as powerful and always possessing dominant positions, while other groups, mostly women, have been suffering from negative representations. This is made clear in various portrayals of men and women in a wide array of media forms, including films, prime time television dramas, newspapers, pornography, news magazines, popular music, soap operas and advertising. This has been happening even when the current social situation of gender seems to have shown improvement. Zoonen (1995) reports, many authors grumble that the depiction of gender in the media is hardly representative of the positions of women and men in current societies.

Reviews of extensive literature on gender and the media reveal fundamental differences in the portrayal of men and women in the media of mass communication. This starts from inequality in the frequency of appearances. However, as Gallagher (1995) asserts, since numerical imbalances tell a small part of gender portrayal, most studies go further monitoring gender differences in social and occupational roles, psychological and personality

traits, physical features depicted in the media. The results of all these have been extensively documented in many countries. According to Croteau and Hoynes (2003), in the number of women's appearances, more often than not, they are featured in stereotyped roles. Family and sexual relationship are central to the plots of many films, music videos, and television programs ensuring that women are often included in these media though in secondary roles. Men are, on the other hand, more often shown in lead and dominant roles.

There can be no doubt that in all forms of media of mass communication images of gender are explicitly or implicitly communicated. However, as many feminist scholars and media critics who have analyzed media content to date have detailed many of the images communicated in the media of many countries are unrealistic and stereotyped.

Steeves (1997:8) notes that "feminist scholars around the world have documented ways in which the products and processes of global media reflect patriarchal values - by ignoring and excluding women, by stereotyping women in narrow traditional roles and by degrading women via representation of them as sex objects of abuse." The fact is that in many media forms that portray gender, the different ascribed images of men and women appear to be alike. Gallagher found similar gloomy pictures in industrialized and communist countries, as well as developing countries:

Women are under-represented in the media, in production as well as in content. They are shown in their roles in the family environment and rarely in the work place. If they work, they work in low-status jobs without much power or authority. They tend to be young and conventionally pretty, defined in relation to their husbands, fathers, sons, bosses, or other men, and portrayed as passive, indecisive, submissive, dependant people and so on (Gallagher, 1980 cited in Kellner, 1995:319).

Summarizing the existing few studies conducted on portrayals of men in the media, on the other hand, Fejes (1992) claims the depiction of men can be described as the opposite of that of women. Wood (1999) agrees with these points. She states that media persist to show women and men in stereotyped ways. Typically men, in contrast to women, are portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, and largely uninvolved in human relationships. In her article dealing with gendered media, Wood (1999:26) has identified three themes that describe how media represent gender:

1. Women are under represented, which falsely implies men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant and invisible;
2. Men and women are portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed views of gender;
3. Depictions of relationships between women and men emphasize traditional roles and normalize violence against women.

And it has been noted that studies of women's images and gender ideologies in the mass media indicate that from country to country there is a remarkable consistency in the media's depiction of these issues (Imam et al, 1992). The following section details these and other related themes in relation to television advertising.

## **2.2 Gender and Advertising as a Form of Mass Communication**

In many modern societies, the public depends for most of its information about various public affairs on mass media of communication. Advertising as a form of mass communication is said to be an effective communication tool as far as presentation of information to potential consumers is concerned. It is a communication tool between the seller and the buyer. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica (2004), advertising is referred to as

“The techniques and practices used to bring products, services, opinions, or causes to public notice for the purpose of persuading the public to respond in a certain way toward what is advertised”[CD-ROM]. The messages are communicated by means of printed words, radio, or television and currently via the Internet.

As a form of mass communication, advertising performs essential social and economic functions. It is capable of bringing the public a wide variety and a greater quantity of information about products and services on sale. Through advertisements, consumers are able to do much of their shopping before they ever leave home. Advertising can persuade, create and reinforce consumer preferences for products and services. Advertising is not, however, only a communication tool between sellers and their customers, but also a social actor and a cultural artifact. As a social actor, according to Leiss et al, (1990) quoted in Uray and Burnaz (2003:1), “Advertising stages a powerful social drama that transforms symbols and ideas and bonds together images of individuals and products.” As a cultural artifact, it reflects only certain attitudes, behaviors, and values and reinforces only certain lifestyles and philosophies that help to sell commodities (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990). In support of this view, Kilbourne (2003) emphasizes that advertisements sell much more than products. They sell values, images, sexuality, fame, etc. They tell us who we are and who we should be. Kellner also notes that “Advertisements are complex texts, the images, words, framing devices, and structures of which attempt to influence individuals into accepting certain values and role models and into adopting a certain life style” (1995:334).

In the process of advertising communication, according to Joshi (2001), the advertiser is the sender, characters and technologies used are the channel, and consumers are receivers. Human beings here are central; human beings act as consumers and/or as images to communicate messages to consumer

groups. With this advertisements communicate gender through a variety of ways. They communicate gender through gender specific activities, products and services, settings, body positioning, gaze, verbal references and so on. In advertising where people are portrayed as a way to communicate messages, women are exploited at large. They are widely used actors to sell products and services.

## **2.3 Women in Television Advertisements**

A series of studies have shown that television advertising portrayals of women differ from those of men in frequencies, sex roles, settings, product types, role relationships, occupations, etc. In many of these categories, which the studies have particularly focused on to examine portrayals, stereotyped images are commonly reflected.

### **2.3.1 Stereotyped Images**

“Stereotypes refer to the social classification of particular groups and people as often highly simplified and generalized signs, which implicitly or explicitly represent a set of values, judgments and assumptions concerning their behavior, characteristics or history” (O’Sullivan et al, 1994:299-300).

Stereotypes in advertisements are not a strange phenomenon, and it is related to its content, which ranges from gender and social class portrayal, to ethnic portrayal. Over the years, critics and consumers alike have more than ever complained about the stereotyping in relation to portrayal of men and women in television ads.

Television in many countries is said to have failed to provide a balanced picture of the diversity of women’s lives and their contribution to society. A large body of researches conducted on the images of women on television has echoed this critique:

Women in the world of television are portrayed in roles of domestic help, a wife, a mother, and so on. They are portrayed as submissive and suffering types engrossed in common family affections and duties, the most common place being childcare and family nurturing. As against this men are depicted as employed, competitive, and those who are seen calling the shot in the society (Gandhi, 2004:2).

Advertising is one of the dominant and ever more frequent mass communication aspects or shows in the television industry where women characters are often found to be portrayed in these stereotyped ways. As noted by Kellner, "Television is one of the most ubiquitous and influential promoters of advertising... Television advertisements are typically 60-, 30-, 15-, or even ten-second dramatizations of the value of products and services as a way of life and the joys and the benefits of the consumer of society" (1995:337).

This medium, among other forces, appears to play an important role in the reinforcement of the socio-cultural sphere of dominant gender relations and gender inequalities, which can be manifested in terms of roles, social positions, behaviors, etc. These and other aspects of gender depiction, as Mbilinyi and Omari (1996) have noted, appear to be fulfilled often by portraying negative images of women in television advertisements. In fact, the concepts of behaviors and gender roles communicated in the process of advertising are more often stereotyped.

Researchers, particularly in media developed countries, have been analyzing the content of television advertisements since the 1970s in order to assess the degree of stereotyping. Most of the analyses have shown that many advertisements contain gender stereotyped ideas and pictures. Goffman, who was one of the first sociologists to analyze gender stereotypes in advertisements, argues that advertisements help to construct the ideals of masculinity and femininity. He found that women were often portrayed in



very stereotyped ways like in submissive roles or family roles, and in lower social positions than men (1979).

### **2.3.1.1 Stereotyped Sex Roles**

Gender stereotypes are general beliefs about sex-linked characteristics and behaviors characterizing men and women, and gender roles are activities differentially appropriate for men or women (Browne, 1998). Sarawathi adds that gender stereotypes are widely held beliefs about characteristics believed appropriate for males and females in a given culture. And gender roles are the reflections of these stereotypes in everyday behavior (1999).

Uray and Burnaz point out that the first series researches carried out on gender roles in advertising focused on magazin advertisements. Gender role in television advertisements was for the first time studied by Dominick and Rauch (1972). This study and most of the following ones indicated that women characters were depicted in traditional women-dominated roles and positions. They were also found predominantly in the home (Uray and Burnaz, 2003).

It is common for television viewers to watch women in a family environment and less in a work or social environment in most television advertising. Women in many television advertisements are still portrayed as holding lower jobs, often in relation to domestic work as if they were incapable of doing things men do outside. Most of the researches on sex stereotyping have agreed to varying degrees that there exists a similar trend of these kinds of portrayals. Lazier and Kendrick state:

In print advertising the results of more than a dozen of studies, most conducted in the 1970s and many of them are considered as benchmarks, have shown the messages of advertising to be astonishingly similar:

women's place is in the home; women are dependent upon men; women don't make independent and important decisions; women are shown in few occupational roles. The issues and the findings from television content analyses were similar to those found in the print studies (1993: 202-203).

Summarizing across the 1980s studies on the roles of men and women portrayed in television commercials, Lazier and Kendrick (1993) have also observed that a 1989 study of 353 TV commercials by Lovdal found men were portrayed in 3 times the variety of occupational roles as were women. These findings confirmed those of Bretl and Cantor (1988) of male characters in higher status occupations and those of Gilly (1988) that men were more likely to be portrayed in independent roles in relation to women who were portrayed in a plethora of stereotyped roles such as wife, mother, bride, waitress, actress and dancer.

The traditional concepts of the domesticity role and the submissive characteristics of women are also presently available on contemporary TV ads. Many studies still document that these roles of women depicted in television advertisements are demeaning in many countries. Women are shown as domestic help and housewives engaged in cleaning, caring for children, washing, cooking, and doing all the household chores. Men, on the other hand, are shown being unable to do these chores; they are rather mostly presented with professional jobs in many television advertisements. When a man is portrayed in an ad performing a simple household chore like washing his clothes or cooking, it is portrayed as unnatural or almost in humorous way or otherwise while doing these chores in the advertisements, he is always shown being guided by the female character in order to use the product. In a way the female character is again being labeled or referred to as a source of domesticity.

Reviewing and comparing fourteen studies carried out on television sex role stereotyping in five continents over 25 years, Furnham and Mak (1999:20) found “In the 1970s the commercials typically show men as authoritative and knowledgeable, whereas women are confined at home, and such pictures have not changed much over the 25 years, although in some aspects men and women are depicted more equally.” Chandler (2004) also states that in adverts men tend to be portrayed as independent. They are more often portrayed as authority figures and shown in more occupations than women. On the other hand, women are shown mainly as housewives and mothers. As to the setting, men are more likely to be shown outdoors or in business settings, while women are in domestic settings.

The settings in which characters are portrayed are very significant in order to identify the kind of earmarked stereotyped roles of women as shown in television advertisements. Bresnahan et al (2001) agrees that conventional domestic settings echo traditional values that label women as the caregiver of the house. It is unlikely to see women in a workplace setting where they are given authoritative and executive positions. If women are portrayed in workplace setting, they are more likely to be portrayed in controversial and conventional professions such as secretary or nurse. In comparison, men are used as major characters in products or services that require intelligence and are depicted as independent and successful members of society. They are shown as experts, lawyers, doctors, technology adapters, etc.

In agreement with this argument, McArthur and Eisen (1976) also found out that advertising directed, for example, towards children has positioned boys in more dominant, active roles, and when characters are presented in occupational roles, men generally work outside the home, and women are in domestic roles such as parent, spouse, or homemaker.

### **2.3.1.2 Women as Sex Objects**

Apart from portraying women often in domestic settings and activities; in using them as marketing tools, advertisements also depict women as sex or decorative objects. An individual is considered to be a sex object, when “regarded especially exclusively as an object of sexual interest - used as objects of attention, erotic/sexualized behavior” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2004, [CD-ROM]).

Some like Tygart (2004) contend television advertisements have altered the portrayals of women as homemakers into sex objects over time. Particularly when advertising is aimed at selling cosmetics, health products, and anything that works to improve the appearance of the body, women are shown in postures or positions of alluring sexual display. According to Joshi (2001), advertisements are strongly decried for portraying women as beautiful objects, sexual being and exchangeable with objects. Young girls are shown beautifying themselves or trying to catch men’s attention.

The phenomena of presentation of provocative images of women's partly clothed or naked bodies are especially prevalent in advertising. This has come to be characteristics of many television advertisements in many countries, if not all. Images of particularly females’ bodies are everywhere in advertisements. Women and their body parts sell everything from food to cars (Media Awareness Network, 2006).

In an attempt to sell products and services, advertisers are often said to emphasize sexuality and the importance of physical attractiveness. And the pressure put on women to be sexually attractive and active is profound. Graydon argues, “Women’s bodies are sexualized in advertisements in order to grab the viewer’s attention. Women become sexual objects when their bodies and their sexuality are linked to products that are bought and sold.

This is mere portrayal of women as sex objects” (Media Awareness Network, 2006). With this also, Kilbourn (2003) notes, “Women’s bodies are often dismembered into legs, breasts or thighs, reinforcing the message that women are objects rather than whole human beings.” Baranski and Batt (2003) supports this notion by arguing that images of half naked women or their body parts are depicted in advertising as their sexuality is trying to help sell the product. Many ads dismember a woman and only show part of her or her body parts. Research on MTV has also found that females in commercials are heavily eroticized and generally better looking. They are often used as objects of attention for male characters (Signorielli and McLeod, 1994).

There are also adverts with women holding roles that do not demand body portrayal but still we see an emphasis on physical body. This is still depicting women as sex objects. In television advertising particularly, clothes, behaviors, positions and poses, camera angles, language, audio track, and/or product placement can all contribute, implicitly or explicitly, to sex object portrayal of women. A number of women characters depicted particularly with beauty enhancing products can be evident enough.

### **2.3.1.3 Women as Consumers of Products and Services**

Women are frequently featured in many television advertisements mostly as consumers and as instruments of persuasion (Joshi, 2001). More often they are shown as product users than being authorities over the products and services they advertise. Besides, their role as voice-over announcer is insignificant.

Advertisements bring us a broad range of products aimed at women and these are most likely advertised by women. In television advertisements women are often attached to specific commercials, which are left only aside to them as if it were natural to them. In the article on the portrayal of

women in the media, Trowler (1988) has cited a study of women in advertisements which shows that women's appearance in personal hygiene product adverts are seven times more than those of the advertisements in other categories. 75 % of all advertisements portray women for products used in the bathroom or kitchen. Men are, however, more likely to be shown advertising cars and business or occupational products.

Most researchers on advertising like Dominick and Rauch, 1972; Courtney and Whipple, 1974 and Bresnahan et al. (2001) also report similar results that confirm that in television ads women are often shown promoting domestic, food, beauty and health products, and less often are cast as major characters in such technical or technological products as electronic and car. The products being promoted by women would seem to indicate that women are only capable of using simple and uncomplicated products that are mostly associated with home environment. Many other researchers as well have documented gender specific products and services advertised in the various forms of media.

As for the voice-over, it is men's voices that we hear mostly in television advertisements. Women's voices rarely reach consumers. Previous researches done regarding the gender of voice-over announcers revealed that a woman's voice is rarely used as a voice-over and that men are presented as authoritative, even for products used primarily by women (Bretl and Cantor, 1988). Similarly, recent researchers have come up with the findings that indicate the presence of far more men announcers on commercials than women. According to Fullerton and Kendrick (2000), in British television, females appear more frequently as product users and males as product authorities; males are more often assigned the role of narrator. Men's voices still dominate in voice-overs with women speaking as a subordinate or mostly to those of inferior status (Lazier and Kendrick, 1993).

## **2.4 Advertising in Ethiopia**

In ancient times traders in Ethiopia used to advertise their products by cutting stones in symbols or drawings. There were also public criers-those who advertised their products by shouting their information walking up and down streets (Muna, 1996). Advertising in Ethiopia showed further development with the establishment of the Ethiopian printing press.

It was some hundred years ago during Minilik's reign that the first press advertising appeared in the first Ethiopian newspaper, 'Aimro', which advertised washing soap on August 2, 1914 publication. Following this beginning, there appeared advertisements in Addis Zemen, an Amharic newspaper, at the end of 1950s and beginning of the 1960s.

The increasing need for different items for local people and for foreigners during the Italian occupation raised competition, which led into development in the advertising sector. After the occupation, the same trend continued well into the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s. Advertisements such as "'Wonji Sugar' strengthens like an elephant", and Philips with Wubshet Workalemaw started to transmit commercials at that time. The National Lottery had started to use public criers at market places, and continued commercial advertising after the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution. There were few advertising agencies that existed before the revolution, such as one of the first advertising agency, Anbessa, which Ato Wubshet, the advertising pioneer, opened up (Yosef Girmay, 2005).

Ato Woubshet, who has contributed to the development of advertising in Ethiopia, used to work first for the National Lottery. He used to prepare copies of advertisements for newspaper, magazine or posters, and read them for radio and television as well.

Ethiopian Television started its service on the Emperor's coronation day, on October 23, 1965 E.C. In 1969 E.C the Advertising and Distribution Agency was founded under the then Ministry of Information and Tourism. Its purpose was "to promote the advertising industry and to promote trade" in the country. However, after two years without doing much the agency was contracted to Ethio-marketing, a private enterprise (ibid).

After the Emperor, the Derg military government nationalized most companies and then all advertising agencies and almost all commercial advertisements, except public announcements, vanished from the media scene. Following market opportunities - the mass importation of consumer goods, and liberalization and deregulation after the fall of the Derg regime, the advertising sector in Ethiopia has begun flourishing. Presently, there are some legal advertising agencies, which employ both print and electronic media to advertise, and with this there started lots of advertisements appearing on Ethiopian television. These advertisements, containing various images of gender, are now knocking at everybody's home, and may tend to influence the lives of consumers through various appeals.

## **2.5 Women in the Ethiopian Society and the Media**

In most cultures, the role and behavior of men and women is clearly differentiated, and there is strong social pressure to maintain these distinctions. As such, women are to act "like women" and do the work of women and men are to act "like men" (Condon, 1980 cited in Uray and Burnaz 2003). This has also been true for men and women in the Ethiopian societies for ages.

Different behaviors, gender roles and many other sex-traits that men and women are to possess are said to be socially and culturally prescribed and are being given the status of being natural and normal. For instance, gender



roles exist in all spheres of society starting with the division of labor in the family. According to Mbilinyi and Omari (1996), in African societies, assigning roles is generally based on sex and age. While age, as the basis of division of labor, is lessening, sex based division of labor both at family and societal levels is still strongly persisting in many societies. There are certain activities which are specifically earmarked for women and often specifically for men.

Reviews of studies worldwide show that domesticity and subservience are presented as the essence of women's nature and role in society (Ceulemans and Fauconnier, 1979), and that a consistent picture emerges from those studies which have investigated the media's portrayal of women. "At best, the portrayal can be described as narrow, at worst it is unrealistic, demeaning and damaging" (Gallagher, 1979:47 in Imam et al, 1992). Mbilinyi and Omari, (1996:2) here also argue, "Women are a major human resource in the production of goods and services - the key essential of human life. But women are not a homogenous group. They differ socially, politically and economically, although they are, to a great extent, all negatively affected by patriarchy. As a sexual category, women's lives are shaped by the patriarchal rule with specific gender relations both in the productive and reproductive spheres of life."

The social situation of Ethiopian women is hardly any better than their typical counterparts in developing world, and Africa in particular. Studies concerning women in Ethiopia, and observers have commented on the physical hardship that Ethiopian women experience throughout their lives. Such hardship involves working in the home environment, raising children, cooking, etc.

As in other traditional societies, Ethiopian women have traditionally suffered from socio-cultural and economic discrimination and have had

fewer opportunities than men for personal growth, education, and employment. Mostly, a woman's worth is measured in terms of her role in the home setting, as a mother and wife, for example. In urban areas, women are employed for domestic work, child bearing, food processing, and so on. In rural areas women are engaged in various activities in the home and the agricultural sector. However, their work has been erroneously documented as marginal, and they have been considered as consumers than producers.

As for its connection with the portrayals in the media, it varies according to each country's culture and attitudes toward women in society (Fullerton and Kendrick, 2000). In Ethiopia there are various social and cultural values, which play a great role in influencing the formation of differentiated images of men and women in the media. Looking into the situation of women in these areas would help us more keep track of their images in the media. Carter and Steiner stress, "Today feminist scholars assume that it is not enough to examine media texts in isolation. Media texts must always be analyzed within the contexts of both production as well as the wider cultural circulation of gender discourses in society" (2004:37). With this notion, Carter and Steiner have also pointed out that:

Representation in the media of people, events and relationships never simply appear from 'no place'. At some level, of course this assertion that media messages don't simply appear like Venus emerging from the sea is obvious, but often discussions of content either begin and end with that content, or acquire explanations that turn immediately to highly macro level societal conditions: patriarchy accounts for sexist content. Media organizations and the gendered issues attendant to those organizations are certainly responsive to social-political movements-and to the reactions against them as well as to broad economic and social changes (2004:15).

In the Ethiopian media, though there has been no detailed research conducted, women's portrayal in advertisements is believed to be shaped by the way they are presented in Western media about which much has been said.

Among the mass media in Ethiopia, Ethiopian television (ETV), which is the only TV station in the country, is most popular in its advertisements. Since it fully started broadcasting advertisements, it has brought us into contact with images of men and women advertising various products and services. In fact, women have been common ingredients in nearly all ETV advertisements. But the question is how are they portrayed? The following chapters make several points on this.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

This chapter presents the method, sampling, coding feature and coding procedures employed to examine ETV advertising portrayals of women.

#### **3.1 Method**

Content analysis is the most popular research method in the media of mass communication. It is a method widely used for analyzing messages in the media, including articles published in newspapers, speeches made on radio and television, health records, and various forms of images portrayed. Over the years many researchers have been employing this method in monitoring and analyzing television and other media images of gender, class, race, ethnicity, etc. One of the types of communication that has often been studied by content analysis is television advertising. Content analysis has, therefore, been chosen as a method of inquiry for this study.

##### **3.1.1 Method of Data Collection**

The study used videotape-recorded material as its principal source. It took nationally-run television ads as the unit of analysis. The ads, which were coded and analyzed to reveal information, were chosen for their gender positioned content. Obviously, whenever we look into women's images in the media, it is inevitable that we see them in relation to men's images. The research thus examined women's portrayal against men's as shown in each advertisement taken as a sample from the ETV evening Amharic prime-time programme, and Sunday daytime entertainment programme known as 'Meto- Haya'.

The sources of secondary information employed for this study have come from published materials. These are mostly books and journals that deal

with media depiction of women, particularly women in adverts. These sources helped to obtain theoretical insights pertinent to the subject. The major part of the discussions, however, has been devoted to the content analysis of secondary material - videotape-recorded advertisements, which led to generate a conclusion.

### **3.1.2 Sampling**

Advertisements from ETV evening prime-time Amharic language programmes and Sunday daytime entertainment programme shown between December and January were recorded. Prime-time, operationally defined for this study is from Monday to Sunday, 8:00– 9:30 p.m. This was chosen, as the period to be sampled since it is during this time the largest general audience is assumed to be available. This period, including the Sunday daytime entertainment programme, has also a relatively larger number of advertisements.

I chose December 1- January 15, 2006 as my entire sample-recording period after I failed to get a reasonable number of ads that could provide appropriate research materials during my first recording period, which was around the Ethiopian New Year (i.e. between end of August and end of October). This time was a period during which a large number of college ads were found to have no gender content and codable character and many other ads as well found to be devoid of character. This situation compelled me to drop all the recorded material as my sample. I had, therefore, to shift the data collection period to December 1- January 15, 2006

Taken as a whole, a one month and fifteen days of ads was recorded to ensure a wide sample of ads, particularly to include more ads that contain identifiable or codable characters. A pre-assessment of ETV ads indicated a

significant number of ads were devoid of character and most of them were repetitive.

The Amharic language programme advertisements were chosen because Amharic is a widely spoken national language and the programmes command the highest airtime and number of advertisements coming on ETV, and they reach a number of viewers in the country. It can be argued, thus, advertisers would like to get their advertisements aired when programmes in Amharic are being run. There are, of course, Tigrigna and Afaan-Oromo language daily programmes run everyday on ETV. However, almost all advertisements appearing in these programmes are quite similar as shown in Amharic programmes; only the language is different.

### **3.2 Coding Categories**

While looking at many studies on the advertising portrayal of women in other countries, I have come to realize that there are similar coding categories used by previous and recent researchers. Several of the categories were used in many studies, some with different operational definitions.

Researchers in the 1980s often used to utilize a coding scheme used by McArthur and Resko in 1975. Furnham and Thomson (1999), for example, make mention of Manstead and McCulloch's (1981) study conducted on 170 television commercials using a coding scheme closely adapted from a study conducted by McArthur and Resko. Furnham and Thomson contend that nearly all of the studies which came after 1975 have used a coding frame adapted from the study of these two researchers.

Recent studies have taken many of the 1970s and 1980s researchers' coding features for a content analysis portrayal of men and women. I can see quite similar coding categories used by Craig in his 1992's research

conducted on gender portrayal in drug commercials. Sakamoto et al (1999), and Fullerton and Kendrick (2000) also employed a compilation of categories and coding schemes from several different previous studies.

Due to the absence of an empirical content analysis study in this area in Ethiopia, it would be reasonable for me also to adapt a coding frame from these researchers and other recent content analyses. And most importantly, the specific coding categories I tried to adapt follow directly or indirectly from my research objectives or questions. Accordingly, the following eight coding features were used to study the portrayal of women in the Ethiopian television ads. Among the categories identified five of them: types of products and services, role, basis for credibility, setting and sexual imagery were features into which the primary figures were coded.

### **Character Mix**

To get a general view of the portrayal of men and women, each sample advertisement was coded into the sex and age of all characters who appeared. The categories were: all male adult, all female adult, all adults mixed sex, male adults with children or teens, female adults with children or teens, and a mix of sex and ages. Advertisements holding unidentifiable or uncodable characters or ads altogether devoid of characters were coded as 'no character or difficult to code'

### **Primary Character**

'Primary character' as defined by researchers like Bretl and Cantor (1988:599) is "the character with the greatest amount of on-screen time". However, since there are ads with only brief glimpses of many characters, a time limit is required. ETV ads are typically from 30 to 90 seconds of dramatizations, and/or announcements. For this study, thus, the one character who appeared on the screen the longest, but for no less than 6 seconds was taken as a primary character. Accordingly, primary character

was coded into an adult male, an adult female and a child/teen. Advertisements holding unidentifiable or uncodable primary character or ads altogether devoid of character were coded as 'no character or difficult to code'.

### **Types of Products or Services Advertised**

Primary characters were coded according to the types of products or services that they were depicted with to advertise. To this end, products and services were categorized as:

*Personal beauty and health care:* where the product or service involved bodily health, hygiene, and cleansing.

*Home:* where the product involved the home or housework including food and soft drinks; household cleaning agents and toiletries, etc.

*Auto/Technical/Occupational:* include electronics, all automotive vehicles ads, as well as gasoline, oil, maintenance and repair advertisements, accessories, and such other technical and occupational products like office and home building products, etc.

*Entertainment or leisure:* include music albums, bars and nightclub ads, alcoholic drinks and other entertainment products and services.

*Other:* includes clothing, all non-product public service advertisements.

### **Role**

Primary characters were coded for the roles through the following sub-categories:

*Professional:* primary characters portrayed as teachers, doctors, and others considered being a professional or semiprofessional nature. Other roles that



were to do with auto and technical, business and finance, and office-based work, etc were also incorporated in this category.

*Spouse/partner:* when primary figures were primarily portrayed as husband or wife, lover, or sexual partner. According to McArthur and Resko (1975), these are roles that define the character in terms of his or her relationship to others.

*Performing household chores:* when central figures were depicted with any type of domestic activity such as cleaning, serving food, cooking, caring for children, etc.

*Entertainer:* when characters were shown entertaining people by singing, and dancing, and performing any other activities to do with entertainment.

*Aesthetic:* aesthetic can be simply defined as primary characters depicted as deeply concerned with their physical beauty, or as they strive to look physically good by beautifying or displaying their body. Lazier and Kendrick (2003) have listed this out as one of the prevalent female roles in television studies.

*Other/unclear:* if all the above were not applicable.

### **Basis for Credibility**

The central figures were coded for credibility through the following situations:

*User:* when characters were depicted primarily as users of the advertised product or service.

*Authority:* when characters were represented primarily as sources of information concerning the product and service, or shown demonstrating decision making expertise or skills over the product or service advertised.

*Both:* characters portrayed as both user and authority.

*Other/no relation to the product:* characters featured as neither user nor authorities.

### **Setting**

Characters were coded according to the location they were depicted in. Under this, primary characters were coded according to the following sub-categories.

*Home setting:* where characters were shown at home and outdoor around the home.

*Occupational:* which includes places away from home, or places considered as such work settings like office, factory, laboratory, supermarket, etc.

*Leisure:* includes recreational places, bars and restuarants, etc.

*Other:* if none of the above categories was applicable.

When the setting changed within one advertisement, it was coded for its prominent location or primary setting, where characters were featured for a longer period of time in the ads airtime.

### **Sex Object (Sexual Imagery)**

Characters were categorized according to the sex appeal (i.e. visual and verbal sexual images and activities) they displayed in the advertisements. The following categories were used as indicators of this feature.

'Degree of dress' was used in this study as modelled by Fullerton and Kendrick (2000) from the study by Soley and Kurzbard (1986). These are:

*Fully dressed or clothed* - those dressed normally

*Suggestively clad* - those with open blouse exposing cleavage or chest or those extremely tight clothing or lingerie

*Partially clad* - those in bathing suits or with exposed breasts or midriffs

*Sex appeal movement, position and camera focus on a particular portion of the body* is another category constructed to measure sexual imagery. This includes a particular movement, such as sex appealing dancing or touching.

*Verbal sexual references* were also considered. This was coded when characters were heard forwarding any sexual content.

### **Voice-over Announcer (Narrator)**

This refers to on or off-camera announcer of the product or service advertised. The sex of the voice in each advertisement was examined according to whether a female or male voice was heard to announce or narrate. Where both were used cooperatively in the same advertisement, they were coded as 'both'.

### **3.3 Coding Procedure**

Recorded videotapes were reviewed and edited to include product service ads and non-product ads often known as public or social service advertisements. According to Joshi (2001), public service advertisements deal with the matter of public interest such as social changes, political ideas, developmental programmes, etc. Their focus is on educating people regarding social and development issues. In ETV case, ads educating family planning, campaigning against HIV, corruption, and bad practices are common ones.

All ads recorded during the sample period could not be coded. Repeats, ads in which the gender of the characters or the voice-overs could not be determined, and announcements which were not of public service content were eliminated. Animated characters were coded based on the sex and age they appeared to represent.

The final sample consisted of 140 ads. Among these ads coded, 46 ads just fell only on one category known as voice over announcer. That is to say, 46 ads had either no character at all or had characters difficult to code. And as a result, they failed to satisfy the coding features set except that they could be coded into only 'voice-over announcer' category. With this, the assessment of the frequency of male or female voice-over announcer indicated that there was no significant difference between the former 140 ads and the 94 ads identified as having identifiable or codable characters. This led to the decision to drop the 46 ads and consider a total of 94 ads featuring identifiable or codable primary characters that could be rated against the specific categories set.

As used in other studies, one or two primary characters were selected for each advertisement and when there was a group of characters in an advertisement, those (maximum of two) that had the most prominent roles were considered to be primary figures.

This procedure thus yielded a total sample of 94 ETV ads to be analyzed according to the sex of the primary character and the six variables of role, product type, setting, credibility, voice-over announcer and sexual imagery. All character mix in each advertisement was also coded and analyzed from the 94 ads.

I employed two graduate students, one male and one female to work on the coding. If I recruited two coders of the same sex, both might have the same perspective, and thus neglect aspects of ads that the opposite sex would be likelier to see. The actual coding involved repeated viewing of the advertisements by these persons. I gave them detailed instruction on the coding process. This included discussions of coding categories, familiarization with the definitions of the features to be coded, the coding sheet, and matters to do with the video equipment as well. Furthermore, I

gave out written descriptions of all variables and examples that illustrate how to go about the coding so that they would have similar constructs in mind as they did their job. I also gave the coders practice sessions in which they coded a set of ads that was not part of the study.

The two coders made independent evaluations of the ads that served as the data for the study. After the coding, the data were compared, disagreements were recorded and subsequently resolved by discussion, and a single set of data emerged for analysis.

### **3.4 Coding Reliability**

In order to check for coding reliability, the total samples coded independently by the two coders were taken and compared. Percentage of agreement for each of the coding categories were calculated and reported. For each category, the reliabilities were: 96.8% for character mix, and setting, 92.5% for coding of the primary character, 94.7 for product type, 89.4% for role, 93.6% for credibility and voice-over announcer; and 87.2% for sexual imagery. These agreement reliabilities are acceptable. The coders disagreed most on sexual imagery and the role category and relatively more agreed on character mix and setting sub-categories.

### **3.5 Procedure of Data Analysis**

After the coding stage, the data coded were entered into the database (SPSS) and analyzed statistically. Apart from generating frequencies for some of the categories, a chi-square test was run to check significance. The results coming from the analysis was presented and the discussion was accompanied by qualitative descriptions of some of the ads chosen to illustrate different kinds of portrayals.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study attempted to examine how women are depicted in ETV ads. The key findings of the study are presented and discussed in this chapter. The chapter is composed of two sections that deal with the presentation and discussions of findings. First, the findings of all character mix in the 94 ads sampled and the portrayals of the primary characters rated in terms of the specific categories are presented. Secondly, in a separate section, the findings presented are discussed in a greater detail based on the formulated research questions and in relation to previous findings.

#### 4.1 Presentation of Findings

The data gathered were coded and statistically analyzed and the major findings are presented in this section.

**Table 1. Frequency of All Character Mix**

Characters	% of Ads	Frequency
All adult male	23.4	22
All adult female	19.1	18
Mixed sex/all adult	35.1	33
Mix of sex and age	13.8	13
Other	8.6	8
Total	100	94

$$\chi^2 (4) = 19.30, p = .001$$

Considering all characters irrespective of their importance to the advertisements or their time on-screen, 35.1% of the ads featured all adult mixed sex, followed by ads featuring all adult male 23.4%. Advertisements with only adult females made just 19.1% of the ads. 'Other', which was later

constructed due to the low frequency of ‘child/teen’, ‘male adult with child/teen’ and ‘female adult with child/teen’ sub-categories, comprised 8.6% of all ads sampled. Children or teens shown in the ads were very few and were mostly cast with adults, and the three sub-categories stated were later re-coded into the ‘other’ category.

**Table 2. Frequency of Adult Primary Characters**

<b>Adult primary Characters</b>	<b>Primary characters (n)</b>	<b>Primary characters (%)</b>
Adult Female	67	48.6
Adult Male	71	51.4
Total	138	100%

$\chi^2 (1) = .12, p = .73$

The 94 ads yielded a total of 153 identifiable and codable primary characters of adults, including child/teen. Due to the low frequency of primary figures in the ‘child/teen’ variable, male or female child/teen as a sub-category was not constructed and consequently not coded into the categories set in this study. That is to say child/teen as primary character was collapsed. Only 138 adult primary characters were considered.

In the 138 adults, therefore, men and women were close in regard to representation as primary figures in the advertisements, with men were slightly more portrayed. It is 51.4% male to 48.6% female. Women, as primary characters, achieved nearly equal representation through disproportionate depictions in product type and other features monitored.

**Table 3. Products and Services Advertised by Primary Characters**

<b>Product /service</b>	<b>Women %(n)</b>	<b>Men %(n)</b>	<b>Total % (n)</b>
Personal beauty /health care	29.9(20)	12.7 (9)	21(29)
Home	38.8(26)	28.2(20)	33.3(46)
Auto/technical/occupational	14.9(10)	36.6(26)	26.1(36)
Leisure/entertainment	7.5(5)	11.3(8)	9.4(13)
Other	9(6)	11.3(8)	10.1(14)
Total (n)	100(67)	100(71)	100(138)

$\chi^2 (4) = 12.94, p = .012$

Gender portrayal was significantly disproportionate within most frequent advertised product service categories. Personal beauty and health care products were frequently advertised by women characters. 29.9% of female primary characters were depicted advertising these products, while men in this category comprised 12.7%. On the other hand, gender representations during auto/technical/occupational ads, all traditionally associated with men, were significantly disproportionate in favor of men for primary characters. 36.6% of male primary characters were featured associated with this product category, while only 14.9% of female primary characters were portrayed in this category. A chi-square analysis indicated a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 12.94, p < .05$ ) in this distribution.

The above table indicates that male primary characters were overwhelmingly included in auto/technical/occupational products. There was a slight difference in the male/female representation with home products while there was still a disproportionate portrayal of characters in the roles played within these home product ads.



**Table 4. Roles played by Primary Characters**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Women %(n)</b>	<b>Men %(n)</b>	<b>Total %(n)</b>
Professional	6(4)	47.9(34)	27.5(38)
Spouse/partner	14.9(10)	19.7(14)	17.4(24)
Performing household chores	37.3(25)	2.8(2)	19.6(27)
Entertainer	4.5(3)	12.7(9)	8.7(12)
Aesthetic	22.4(15)	7(5)	14.5(20)
Other	14.9(10)	9.9(7)	12.3(17)
Total (n)	100(67)	100(71)	100(138)

$\chi^2 (5) = 52.40, p = .001$

Regarding the sex role category, it can be seen in the above table that there was a statistically significant difference in the distribution of sex of primary characters across the kind of roles they were given to play. 47.9% of the primary male characters were portrayed having a professional role, while only 6.0% of the female primary characters were featured in this sub-category. Women had higher scores in household work and in an aesthetic role. They comprised of 37.3% and 22.4% respectively, while men were 2.8% and 7% of all the male central figures. A chi-square test confirmed a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 52.40, p < .05$ ).

Men and women as primary characters were portrayed in a slightly different proportion in the 'spouse or partner' role. The entertainer role category was more of the domain of the male category in that during the recording period several music albums by men than women were touted showing them singing out some portions of the albums. A slightly greater number of female primary characters portrayed with roles cataloged under 'other' sub-

category. This can be attributable to some roles like modeling clothes, or a merely displaying of the body for the product, and simply on-camera appearing as spokesperson were often women’s roles and all these were classified under the ‘other’ category.

**Table 5. Basis for Credibility**

<b>Credibility</b>	<b>Women %(n)</b>	<b>Men %(n)</b>	<b>Total %(n)</b>
User	73.1(49)	50.7 (36)	61.6 (85)
Authority	7.5(5)	31(22)	19.6 (27)
Both	4.5(3)	2.8(2)	3.6 (5)
Other/no relation	14.9(10)	15.5(11)	15.2 (21)
Total (n)	100(67)	100(71)	100(138)

$\chi^2 (3) = 12.83, p = .005$

Most primary figures were depicted as the users of the advertised products and services. Women were overwhelmingly portrayed as primary figures for users of advertised products (73.1%), whereas a significantly greater number of men than women were portrayed as primary figures in the category of product authority. Only 7.5% of female primary figures were depicted as a product authority, while 31% male characters were in this category. The same percent of male and female characters were shown doing something different other than using the advertised products or being an authority over them. In a small number of ads were characters portrayed as both authority and user.

**Table 6 Setting of Primary Characters**

<b>Setting</b>	<b>Women %(n)</b>	<b>Men %(n)</b>	<b>Total %(n)</b>
Home	68.7(46)	29.6(21)	48.6(67)
Occupational	4.5(3)	35.2(25)	20.3(28)
Leisure	16.4(11)	22.5(16)	19.6(27)
Other	10.4 (7)	12.7(9)	11.6(16)
Total	100(67)	100(71)	100(138)

$\chi^2 (3) = 27.70, p = .001$

The table shows sex differences related to setting where primary characters were portrayed. As can be seen in table 6 a greater proportion of women than men were portrayed in a home setting. 68.7% of women as primary characters were depicted in a home environment as a primary location, while only 29.6% men were shown in this setting. Several ads where we see women advertising home and personal beauty and health care products often telecasted women in a home setting. By contrast, 33.8% of men as primary characters were presented in an occupational setting, while only 6% were women. This was found to be a significant disparity.

A slightly larger number of ads portrayed men than women in a leisure setting. This can be associated with a larger number of men as primary characters portrayed playing the role of entertainer that increased their depiction in this setting. 22.5% of male primary characters were presented in leisure settings while 16.4% were female. Other settings including the social setting were mostly the domain of male characters. These gender differences were found to be statistically significant with a chi-square analysis run ( $\chi^2 (3) = 27.70, p < .05$ ).

**Table 7 Sexual Imagery (Sex Object) Role of Primary Character**

<b>Sexual Imagery</b>	<b>Women %(n)</b>	<b>Men %(n)</b>	<b>Total %(n)</b>
Fully/normally dressed	67.2(45)	94.4(67)	81.2(112)
Suggestively clad	17.9(12)	-	8.7(12)
Partially clad	9(6)	4.2(3)	6.5(9)
Sex appeal movement	6(4)	1.4(1)	3.6(5)
Verbal sexual reference	-	-	-
Total	100(67)	100(71)	100(138)

$\chi^2 (3) = 19.02, p = .001$

Regarding ads portraying men and women primary characters with some kind of sexual image including verbal sexual reference, the study did not find a significant number of ETV ads showing both characters used as sex objects, except in some cases more women were featured being suggestively clad (17.4%), partially clad (9%), and with some kind of sex appeal posture, position and movement and camera focus on part of their body as well (6.5%). Men were hardly portrayed this way. Otherwise, the dress of the majority of men and women primary characters was coded as 'normal' (67.2% female and 94.2% male). No single woman or man was presented giving a verbal sexual message. In other words, there was no verbal sexual reference made by either of the sexes in any advertisement.

It could be because the majority of roles portrayed were household tasks for women and professionals for men that most of the characters appeared fully or normally clothed or not sexually suggestive. However, in the ads where women were shown beautifying, and sometimes displaying their body just to sell a product, like in advertisements of Wasline hair oil, Volare car, etc, their dress was mostly suggestive and their pose, movement and all that was sexually alluring.

**Table 8 Frequency of Voice-over Announcer**

<b>Voice-over Announcer</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	65	69.1
Female	10	10.6
Both	19	20.2
Total	94	100

$\chi^2 (2) = 55.55, p = .001$

A chi-square test was done to find differences in the percentages of men and women voiceovers. Results indicated that men tend to dominate the voice-over announcer role. Even in adverts where women were shown advertising women's products, a male voice-over often backed them up. Of the 94 advertisements sampled 69.1% had a male voice announcer and only 10.6% had female. Women and men made 20.2% of the voice-over cooperatively.

This disparity found between male and female voice-overs in the 94 selected ads was also presented in the original 140 ads statistically examined only for voice-overs. Here as well male narrators were overwhelmingly heard in the majority of ads, 75.7% (106), while females as a voice-over announcer were only 9.3% (13), with 12.9%(18) ads were narrated by both men and women (See Appendix). As it has been indicated earlier, for the analysis of the other variables constructed and coded above, only the 94 ads were chosen among the 140 ads originally identified since the rest of the 46 ads were excluded due to the absence of codable or identifiable primary characters.

## **4.2 Discussion of the Findings**

In the advertising industry worldwide, gender portrayal has become the concern of many advertisers, practitioners and media analysts. Many studies have examined visual and verbal images of men and women featured particularly in television advertisements in great detail. This study, most probably the first television advertising gender portrayal empirical study in the country, has come up with results that indicate ETV advertising portrayal of women, in comparison with men. The results are examined in the context of the findings of other gender portrayal studies discussed in the literature section.

The results of the study indicated that ETV ads often depict adult male and female characters together, and both sexes appear nearly equally as often as primary figures, with, of course, several differences in their portrayals.

Examining the primary characters rated against the specific categories, the study found out that gender stereotypes are increasingly widespread in ETV advertisements. The stereotypes have been manifested in various ways. They occur in relation to products and services men and women are portrayed with, and their relation to them. They also occur in the sex roles they are given to play, settings, voice-overs, etc.

Looking into all the categories constructed, the study revealed that in ETV advertising personal beauty and health care and home products advertised are to a great extent associated with female characters. There is a statistically significant difference that women are overwhelmingly portrayed with such products as cosmetics, food and related products while men are often depicted touting auto, technical and occupational products ( $\chi^2(4)=12.94, p < .05$ ). Several studies on gender biases reported nearly similar findings concerning types of products and who advertised them. By

examining gender role stereotypes in prime-time television advertisements from Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan and the United States, Bresnahan et al. (2001) have reported that in Japan females were more likely to appear in the ads for food and soft drinks, personal care and household furnishing products than males, but they were less likely to appear in technology or technical product advertisements. Adding to this, a comparative ads study between U.S. and Korea indicated in both countries' ads, women were portrayed more often in body/home/food products, and occupy lower percentage in auto/business products and services than men (Parker, 2002). This would seem to show that women across many countries are stereotyped to advertising specific products and services.

With the prevalent existence of the gender biases in the types of products and services advertised, the study also revealed that sex role stereotype is prevalent in the ads to a greater extent. It can be alleged that portraying women in domestic roles and men in professional roles is a common phenomenon in ETV ads. The finding with a chi-square analysis indicated a statistically significant sex role difference portrayed for primary figures ( $\chi^2 = 52.40$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The ads often featured more women (37.3%) than men (2.8%) in the household chores, while only 6% of women primary characters were depicted in professional roles, the roles that are dominantly played by men characters (47%). Advertisements of Selam Baltina, Wolayita Kibie, Sunlight soap and a lot of other ETV ads where we see women happily doing stereotyped domestic activities are cases in point.

In the advertisement of Selam Baltina, for example, a husband and wife with a child were shown having lunch. In the middle an appreciation came from the man: 'your 'wot' (sauce) is pretty special'. Here after the ad showed dozens of men circling a dish served, happily eating and drinking. In a brief shot also shown was a woman only serving the men. Similarly, in the

advertisement of Wolayita Kibie, a man was shown coming home with guests to eat. Upon their arrival, the man holding a can of butter being advertised rushed to his wife and was heard saying: 'Your cooking is liked and I have brought you guests to be invited'. Her reaction was a kind of surprise, but with a wide smile she shouted: '(you have brought guests) today as well?' implying that she had been cooking and serving many invited guests he brought home day in and day out. In a Sunlight soap advertisement also, two women were shown happily washing family clothes and then looking at the washed clothes waving from the clothesline. A male voice over announcer forwarded a statement: 'Mothers over the years have been using this soap and really are proud of it', which apparently advocates that mothers and washing are inseparable.

In such ETV ads as Lix washing powder, Ethiopia Insurance Company, and most public service ads, like the corruption campaign, on the other hand, men were frequently depicted playing professional roles, like demonstrating technical expertise, being serious minded, discussing office responsibilities or busy doing other professional jobs.

In an Ethiopian Insurance Company advertisement, for instance, we viewed a shot of a terribly tired man holding a briefcase, walking to home from work. At home the man still appeared serious minded and was shown in a close-up doing something over a work report. The ad then showed that the man looked tired as he seemed to work hard all day. He then walked to the bedroom, where his wife was only briefly shown standing before a mirror. It seems that she was just a wife. The closing scene showed the man constantly suffering from a bad nightmare that involved a fire damaging his precious property, which made him mad that night, while his wife, depicted as if she were not concerned about this business, slept half dead beside him.



A further analysis of role category confirmed that many ETV ads also use more traditional appeals either to women's concern about their families' well-being and caring images of wives and mothers. Ads of Geisha body cream and Wabel soap are best to illustrate this kind of role played by women.

In a Geisha spot, a mother, who appears deeply concerned about the families' well-being, was featured happily taking care of her son and her husband by providing them with the Geisha body lotion being advertised and applying it to their body. Doing so we can see the mother became happier than any other members of the family. Similarly, in the Wabel washing soap advertisement, a mother was shown being persistently nagged by her son who was badly in need of well-washed and clean clothes to put on. We see then a shot of the mother tirelessly looking for the clothes demanded. Eventually, she got the clothes washed with Wabel soap and was heard promising that she would bathe him with the same product, suggesting that it is her invariable role to do so. Immediately the advertisement showed the mother being busy bathing the son.

Several other studies recorded a similar depiction of men and women. Tallying with the results of fourteen studies carried out in various countries, Furnham and Mak (1999) found women stand out in ads as being in charge of housework, childcare, etc. while the professional role is allotted to men.

In the ETV advertising very few specific incidences of sex-roles where men were portrayed cooking (girl ghee spot) and purchasing products stereotyped for women (Abisinia Baltina ad) were shown. This comprised only 2.8% of male primary characters shown in these kinds of roles, which is totally negligible. Even here what we see is not sex-role reversal or sex-role equivalence, rather the usual male dominance seems to have been reflected.

In the Abysinya Baltina spot, for instance, a man wearing a suit was shown coming home with a pile of Abysinya Baltina products (all food products). This shot showed the wife first appeared smartly dressed with white, neat clothing while she warmly welcomed her husband, who upon his arrival gave her a kiss and handed over the product he purchased. In the second shot the woman was shown being busy cooking in the kitchen and was heard suggesting the value of the product. The last shot telecasted the man once more, but while eating. Here still the ad featured the woman being burdened with household tasks while the man was only once shown doing housework, but with a closing shot of him eating what his wife served.

These and other similar portrayals presented in the content analysis would seem to confirm that women in ETV ads are confined to the domestic roles of the washing and cooking, caring for children, etc, and men mostly to professional roles.

Closely tied with the above aspects of portrayal is the setting. Data analysis for this study revealed that in ETV ads women are portrayed mostly in home settings (68.7% vs. 29.6%), whereas men are portrayed more often in occupational settings (35.2% vs. 4.5%). Here ETV would seem to reinforce the stereotype that women's place is in the home. This is also a consistent finding with previous studies carried out in other countries like U.S.A, Portugal, Japan and Kenya (Gilly, 1988, Neto and Pinto, 1998, Sakatoma et al, 1999, Furnham and Mak, 1999). The Kenyan study, for instance, suggested that females were consistently portrayed at home (79.4%), in contrast to males (20.6%), while males were frequently depicted at work, in leisure activities, and in places other than the home (Mwangi, 1996 cited in Furnham and Mak, 1999).

On ETV one of the HIV anti-retroviral spot that showed a woman at one time in the kitchen baking 'injera' (traditional Ethiopian food), and after a while in another room stirring 'wot' (sauce) and a lot of other ads with similar depictions are intriguing evidences. Even when the women are sometimes shown in two locations (home and occupational or else), like for example in the Beza Honey advertisement, women's prominent (primary) setting, where they are shown for a longer time on the screen, is home setting. In Beza advertisement, a quick shot showed some two women in a laboratory where the advertised product being processed. They were presented in an activity to do with the laboratory. The ad, however, featured another woman feeding her children at home for relatively longer duration in the ads time on the screen. This suggests that much of women's time is devoted to home and home environment.

The finding from the content analysis in general is evident enough that significantly women in the ads are mostly portrayed in family environment and less in a work environment ( $\chi^2 = 27.70$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It highlights the fact that despite a close proportion of male and female primary figures in the ads, men often stand out as being professional expert shown in diverse settings, particularly settings away from a home environment, while women are more often confined to a domestic setting, often performing household chores.

If one or a mixture of the domestic activities is absent in any one of ETV ads, the second widely depicted stereotyped role of women next to housework is the aesthetic role as prevalent women's role in the ads. Women, being at home here as well, are shown equipping themselves to beautifying their body. Related with this is the sex object portrayal of women.

Although the overall examination of the data revealed that sexual imagery happens to a lesser extent in the ETV ads, in the ads of cosmetics in most cases, and in few other ads the women are depicted as decorative or sex objects. Few of these ads showed young women, some suggestively or partially clad (or it can be claimed sexually suggestive) spending too much of their time titivating their body for the excessive strive to look beautiful and catch males' attention than to look intelligent or wise.

In the advertisement of Tcb natural hair oil young women were in a cafe. One of them was shown covering her hair with a scarf, which (as the ad seems to want to show) made her appear unattractive before her friends. Stretching her hand to take off the scarf from the head, one of her friends promised to keep the covered hair fine-looking. Immediately, the advertisement backed by a male voice-over announcer showed a long shinning hair waving around her back. Another spot was Elizabeth nail polish advertisement, which featured a woman being busy polishing her nails. She was shown putting her feet on a sofa before a small table full of cosmetics. After a successful polish with the advertised product, the lady was shown acting as if she were extremely thrilled with her nails and singing out that she made it.

Few ads go further to the extent that they simply display sexual seductiveness even when women have no real function involving the advertised product. An advertisement of Volare car could best illustrate this. In the Volare car spot a gorgeous, impossibly slim, sexy young woman wearing light low cut dress baring her cleavage, was shown seductively striding to the car she was made (by the advertiser) to be extremely impressed with. Two men there around the car were shown feeling crazy about her alluring, sexually seductive look and titillating movement. They were here depicted like they could not help ignoring their business and intensively gazing upon her with some sort of sexual interest. The lady

passing by the guys began in a sexual way touching the car from the rear to the front. It seems that she was warming somebody up for sex rather than warming the audience towards the advertised car. She was shown doing nothing with the product; she was not even shown using the car, either as a driver or a passenger. She was only made to display her body to sell the product. There was no particular reason that a sexy beautiful female model walking around was needed to be shown. Such blatant abuse of women's bodies as way of attention-grabbing to sell these kinds of products is the most common phenomena in other countries.

No matter how small in the number of primary characters presented in these ways in the ETV advertising, the above specific examples would still mean a lot about women's stereotyped depiction in relation to sexual image. Such ads degrade women by reducing them to sex or decorative object, which is, as Joshi (2001) tries to emphasize, equated with sex appeal beauty ignoring the qualitative aspects like intelligence, maturity and wisdom. This all would seem to suggest women simply devote their primary time and energy to improving their appearances, and looking only beautiful and sexually seductive.

Along with all these gender depictions in ETV ads, a chi-square analysis also showed significant differences between men and women in terms of basis for credibility, where a greater number of female primary characters are featured using the products and services they advertised rather than being portrayed as authorities. This happens when most male primary characters are portrayed as authorities over the product. Although the findings for this study indicated that the ads comprised mostly primary characters as users of products, both males and females appear more as users, men with significant differences with women, are depicted as product authorities. The contrast can be shown in the percentage as men presented as authority 31% and women only 7.5%.

Many researches in the 1970/80s and recent follow up studies in most television advertisements, with some changes recorded, have revealed a similar result. Furnham and Mak (1999) also claimed that in America, Europe, Mexico, Australia, and Asia there is overall remarkable consistent finding that females are frequently depicted as users of the advertised products, whereas males are shown more likely to be the authoritative primary characters. This appears, however, in contrast to Furnham and Skae (1997) study that most of the advertisements in the United Kingdom consisted of authoritative central figures, and both sexes were equally represented as the authority (83.5% for men, 84.6% for women), which is a follow up study that confirmed improvement after the 1993 study by Furnham and Bitar.

It can be claimed, therefore, that women in ETV ads are often shown using the products that male characters have produced, fixed and professionally explained their importance.

Regarding the voice-over announcer, a significant difference is found in ETV ads, where male voices are much more frequent than female voices in voice-overs. Although there are in some cases the women are depicted as on-camera spokesperson touting products and services, they are frequently backed by authoritative male voice over announcers.

Using male voices more frequently than female voices is consistent in all kinds of ads, including ads devoid of characters. Female voices are heard mostly when they visually appear particularly as they advertise cosmetics and food products. Otherwise men voices significantly dominate the voice over announcer (65% vs.10%). Even in the ads where women are shown advertising women's products, a male voice is often used to explain the value of what is being sold. As reported by Mulikita (1999) in the ads of

electronic media in both Zambia and Malawi the male voice over of authority that gives approval to the product advertised is very pervasive.

This male domination of television ads voice-over is also the findings in Australia, Asia, USA and Europe. In the findings of the studies tallied by Furnham and Mak (1999), in these countries males are consistently more likely voice-overs of an advertisement, while females are often visually portrayed. The same trend was observed in the Indian television. As studied by Shrikhande (2003) as of the 44.7% of the advertisements that did have voice-overs 31% were done using a male voice. According to Gilly (1988), the continuing gender bias with regard to the voice-over announcer has been explained by the advertisers' belief that a male voice sounds more confident and authoritative than a female voice.

On the whole, the study has discussed interesting findings that reported the various stereotyped and often degrading images of women in ETV advertisements. The ETV editorial policy is silent about these portrayals, except that the editorial policy document of the government mass media (2002) only says in few words that there would be the necessary control over 'bad' language use and unacceptable exposure of human bodies in the ads. Otherwise, there are no any other specific guidelines that either promote a balanced and positive representation or restrict stereotyped, degrading, and negative portrayal of women in ETV ads. Even the ETV advertising working manual document (2003) says nothing about women's depiction even while it discusses the ethics of advertising in one of its pages.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This chapter concludes the major findings discussed earlier. In concluding, it also makes mention of the possible implications of and reasons for the portrayals found out. Along with this, the chapter, based on the findings in this study, presents some recommendations and suggests some topics for further research.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

Focusing on examining the portrayal of women in ETV ads, in this study 94 ads which featured 138 adult males and females as primary characters were observed and analyzed in terms of the six categories, such as roles, settings, product types, credibility bases, and sexual images, and voice over announcers. The findings have been discussed so far in light with other studies conducted on gender portrayal in the media in general and particularly women's portrayal in television advertising.

Overall, the results have shown that stereotyped portrayals of women and men are predominantly found in Ethiopian television ads. While some aspects of stereotyping have been more pronounced (e.g., roles, product type, location), than others (e.g., primary character, sexual imagery), in most ads, men and women are presented differently, with the largest number of women portrayed in a degrading and negative way.

The similar trend of depicting women and men with stereotyped roles and positions, products and settings, which are traditionally earmarked to them has been overwhelming in ETV advertising. The findings confirmed that housework and mothering are non-negotiable women's work while



professional roles are left to the men. Statistically, significant differences stated in the analysis and several ads qualitatively presented as illustration could be evident enough that this gender bias is widespread.

Along with a larger percentage of women in the ads of home products, in the ads emphasizing physical beauty women also outnumber men and they are frequently shown as decorative, beautiful objects. Men are mostly shown advertising auto, technological and occupational products, which are invariably featured as men dominated. The ads that focus on women's physical beauty suggest the value of women's physical self rather than intellectual self. This kind of portrayal may come to be pervasive in the ETV advertising scene as ads of beauty enhancing products have become increasingly telecasted.

Apart from the association of women with food, personal and beauty products and men with auto, technological and occupational products, the relations that these characters have with the advertised product and services are another important manifestation of gender bias as indicated in the study. The finding in this study revealed women are often portrayed as users of these products and men as figures of authority demonstrating objective decision making skills or expertise. Above all, the stereotype in the aspect of the voice over is an intriguing finding that indicated male voices overwhelmingly used to explain the use of the products being advertised. These findings would seem to show the traditional gender stereotype that men are authorities, producers, etc, while women are dependent consumers of products produced, explained and ordered by men. ETV seems to perpetuate this situation.

Except in a few ETV advertising spots that we hear women voices, see men in the kitchen performing household work, women in occupational settings, men advertising home and beauty products, and women advertising auto,

technological or occupational products, the overall portrayals can be explained as biased and unbalanced, with women often depicted in stereotyped and degrading way.

The discrepancy found in the results between men and women portrayals in the aspects examined might be due to differences in their education, occupation and social status they have in various social sectors. It might be also that the cultural division of labor, that is to say traditional womanly and manly roles and behaviors, which are culturally and socially assigned and practiced in the society, would seem to have an impact on the advertising practice on ETV to have had such a strong stereotype. According to Neto and Pinto (1998), it is not astonishing that researches conducted in more traditional societies reveal that stereotyping in connection with sex role is stronger. In support of this argument is a study by Furnham et al (1999) that revealed sex-role differences in 90% of the coding categories in both Hong Kong and Indonesia commercials.

Women's status changes in some countries are believed to curb the stereotyped portrayals in television advertisements over the years. According to Sakamoto, et al, (1999), changes in women's employment status, for example, are likely to be linked with a decrease in stereotyped portrayals with respect to occupation, location and basis of credibility. Changes in education status are also likely to be associated with the reduction in stereotyped depictions.

The Ethiopian society can be characterized as one of the traditional societies, where, as discussed in the literature review, for the past many years women have traditionally suffered from socio-cultural and economic discrimination and have had fewer opportunities than men for education, and employment, etc. It may thus be argued that ETV ads do operate in accordance with what has been practiced in the culture and society

particularly in the past years. Consequently, the gender stereotype has become significantly stronger. As noted by Scheneider and Scheneider (1979), media advertising is the manifestation of the fundamental value system of the society in which it operates.

Another possible reason as to why these portrayals have been common in the ads may lead us to the marketing issue. Although a critical study is needed, in some cases marketing results or benefits from the ads with these kinds of gender portrayals, for instance, ads with a beautiful decorative woman shown to advertise or a caring mother at home or a gentle man in the office may cause advertisers to exploit women by portraying them in stereotyped roles and behaviors.

Above all, women's low employment position in ETV workforce may have contributed to the current stereotyped portrayals in the ads. Media organizations where the absence of women in senior management positions or in top decision making positions is evident, degrading depiction of women is likely to be enhanced. Some researches indicate that there is a link between employment statuses in the media with women's portrayal. According to FWCW (1995:4), "More women are involved in careers in the communication sectors, but few have assailed positions at the decision making level or serve on governing bodies that influence media policy. The lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidenced by the failure to eliminate the gender-based stereotyping." In her article in the Ethiopian Journalist Review (2004) Haimanot indicates that women in ETV workforce are totally absent from such managing director and editor-in-chief positions. Women's participation even in middle positions is insignificant. They make up less than 15% of the total workforce in the editors, deputy editors and senior editor's positions. This would seem to imply that selecting stories, choosing issues to be covered and ads to be aired are likely to be judged from male's perspective.

Although this study monitored the portrayal of women and men, it is important to consider the effects these portrayals have on people. In other words, what the portrayals say about the way we view men and women in the society could be an issue of importance. The content analysis used in the study has limitations in this regard. However, the fact that the results from the content analysis proved that ads on ETV engage in stereotyped depiction of women with various degrading and negative images, these portrayals, as feminists and researchers on media effect have suggested, may have adverse effects on the viewers. Karam and Fourie (2005:503) note “Feminists have expressed concern about the limited and generally negative portrayal of women in the media because they believe that it has a negative effect on attitudes towards the status of women.”

The messages that the portrayals send to viewers have been a crucial area of concern and many researches have documented findings in connection with different aspects of influence. Parker (2002) argues considering the omnipresent feature of advertising, existing anytime and everywhere, the impacts of gender portrayals in advertising on the audience are beyond debates. Particularly, reinforcing or perpetuating power of the ads could be beyond the debate.

Given television a truly powerful medium, which in fact gives its audience great opportunities for observational learning experiences through role models (Singnal and Rogers, 1983), and its ads daily showing long repetitive images and roles, ETV may not escape from taking the blame for conveying and reinforcing the stereotyped images discussed earlier. By repeatedly depicting stereotyped roles, product types, settings, sexual images, etc, ETV ads may make these things appear natural for women and men to comfortably live up to. It can be alleged that ETV still does open up a whole new door for people to gaze through these images portrayed in the everyday ads and tend to take them as natural and normal. As it has been discussed

earlier it seems that there is a lack of effective media policy to limit stereotyped coverage and negative images of women and to promote positive ones in the ads. The various aspects of biased gender portrayals are not well considered or articulated in the ETV editorial policy.

Although the ads studied are not by any means representative of all kinds of ETV ads, and the gender features chosen as coding units for this study cannot be also representative of all kinds of images of men and women portrayed in the ads, the results in this study may suggest several points to consider in making and conveying non-gender bias ads. Considering all the issues discussed, the study also makes some recommendations and suggests several areas for further study.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

It has been discussed so far that disparity in the portrayal of men and women exists in nearly all features analyzed, with women are overwhelmingly confined to home setting engaged in narrowly defined roles and positions, advertising products limited to home and beauty, and often presented as users backed by men voice-over announcers. Even though the results came out this way and, as some might argue, are consistent with what is in the society and culture, presently however, women are not simply confined to narrower roles and positions in many sectors of the society. Their living and working conditions seem to have shown some improvement. It can be argued, thus, women's portrayal in the ETV Ads is still very stereotyped, and detrimental than their situation in the society now. The Ethiopian media altogether should, therefore, reflect the balanced and realistic portrayal of women. To this end, thus, the following specific recommendations are made based on the findings in this study.

ETV ads should be able to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women. There are lots of ways this can be done.

- Portraying women in diverse ways of life, in multiple roles they have in various social and economic sectors, as their roles now are not the way it was some years back. For example, portraying their participation in management, decision-making roles, life style achievements, etc.
- Showing women being active and engaging in activities outside the home. In other words, showing women working in a wide variety of career settings.
- Depicting more women as working professional experts rather than only product users.
- Avoiding a non-functioning women's body portrayal which depict women only as a non-thinking decorative objects.
- Giving equal consideration to women in the area of voice-overs. In particular, increasing the use of female voice-over announcers for products that are not home and appearance related.

By doing so, ETV can take advantage of the power of advertising to show viewers a broad range of roles, behaviors and potentials women do have, can have and should have.

Further recommendations are what media organizations and media policy makers can do:

- People of different sex and sexual orientation, a mix of staff in the media organizations, advertising agencies and ETV itself can counter-balance stereotyped representations and one-sided media values and practices.

- Policies can be introduced to reflect planned, balanced representation or portrayal. Policy, for example, could direct the inclusion of diverse roles and behaviors of women, inclusion of as much voices of women as men, or exclusion of biased, sexist or stereotyped portrayal regarding all aspects of gender, etc.

In general, to reduce the existing gender stereotyping in ETV ads greater efforts are recommended.

### **5.3 Directions for Further Research**

It can be alleged now that there is gender portrayal study presented in a documented way as this study has examined and showed a picture of the portrayal of men and women in ETV advertising. One of the contributions the study may make is that it serves as a baseline for further comparative study. After a couple of years or so, one may want to examine if there is a noticeable change in the ETV ads gender portrayal by comparing back to this study. Print ads can also be compared with the findings in this study, or can be independently researched since this study is limited to television ads.

Besides, as the study did not collect information on consumer responses towards the existence of the stereotyped depictions found out in the ETV advertisement, further research in this area is suggested. This could be useful as it may provide more clear directions for advertisers in terms of the way they should depict men and women.

Apart from this, other further studies that address some of the possible limitations of this particular study could be conducted. Potential areas may include whether:

- Gender portrayals have influenced viewers to acquire some kind of behaviors or roles.
- Viewers recognize these portrayals and their reactions to the portrayals are negative or positive, or whatever.
- Advertising portrayal in other programming segments is consistent with this study.
- Women's employment position in the media organization affects their depiction in advertisements.
- Cultural values and practices influence women's portrayal in television ads



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## Appendix B

**The percentage of coding reliability agreement for each category in the  
94 ads**

Categories	Ads agreed upon (agreement)	Ads disagreed (disagreement)	Percentage of Agreement
Character mix	90	4	96.8
Primary character	87	7	92.5
Product type	89	5	94.7
Roles	84	10	89.4
Credibility	88	6	93.6
Setting	91	3	96.8
Sexual imagery	82	12	87.2
Voice over	89	5	93.6

## Appendix C

### Chi-Square test Frequencies for character mix in the ads

Characters	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
All adult male	22	13.4	8.6
All adult female	18	13.4	4.6
Mixed sex/all adult	33	13.4	19.6
Children/teen	1	13.4	-12.4
Male adult + child/teen	3	13.4	-10.4
Female adult + child/teen	4	13.4	-9.4
Mix of sex and age	13	13.4	-.4
Total	94		

#### Test Statistics

	Characters in the ad
Chi-Square	61.787
Df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 13.4.

**Appendix D**  
**Primary character \* product advertised Cross-tabulation**

			Product advertised					Total
			Personal beauty care/health	Home	Auto/technical/occupational	Leisure/entertainment	Other	
Primary character	Female	Count	20	26	10	5	6	67
		Expected Count	14.1	22.3	17.5	6.3	6.8	67.0
		% within primary character	29.9%	38.8%	14.9%	7.5%	9.0%	100.0%
		% within product advertised	69.0%	56.5%	27.8%	38.5%	42.9%	48.6%
		% of Total	14.5%	18.8%	7.2%	3.6%	4.3%	48.6%
	Male	Count	9	20	26	8	8	71
		Expected Count	14.9	23.7	18.5	6.7	7.2	71.0
		% within primary character	12.7%	28.2%	36.6%	11.3%	11.3%	100.0%
		% within product advertised	31.0%	43.5%	72.2%	61.5%	57.1%	51.4%
		% of Total	6.5%	14.5%	18.8%	5.8%	5.8%	51.4%
Total		Count	29	46	36	13	14	138
		Expected Count	29.0	46.0	36.0	13.0	14.0	138.0
		% within primary character	21.0%	33.3%	26.1%	9.4%	10.1%	100.0%
		% within product advertised	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	21.0%	33.3%	26.1%	9.4%	10.1%	100.0%

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.939	4	.012
Likelihood Ratio	13.299	4	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.663	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	138		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.31.

**Appendix E**  
**Primary character \* role played in the ads Cross-tabulation**

			Role played in the ads						Total
			Professi onal	spouse/ parent/ lover	perform ing househ old chores	entertai ner	aestheti c	other	
Primary characte r	Fema le	Count	4	10	25	3	15	10	67
		Expected Count	18.4	11.7	13.1	5.8	9.7	8.3	67.0
		% within primary character	6.0%	14.9%	37.3%	4.5%	22.4%	14.9%	100.0%
		% within role played in the ads	10.5%	41.7%	92.6%	25.0%	75.0%	58.8%	48.6%
		% of Total	2.9%	7.2%	18.1%	2.2%	10.9%	7.2%	48.6%
	Male	Count	34	14	2	9	5	7	71
		Expected Count	19.6	12.3	13.9	6.2	10.3	8.7	71.0
		% within primary character	47.9%	19.7%	2.8%	12.7%	7.0%	9.9%	100.0%
		% within role played in the ads	89.5%	58.3%	7.4%	75.0%	25.0%	41.2%	51.4%
		% of Total	24.6%	10.1%	1.4%	6.5%	3.6%	5.1%	51.4%
Total		Count	38	24	27	12	20	17	138
		Expected Count	38.0	24.0	27.0	12.0	20.0	17.0	138.0
		% within primary character	27.5%	17.4%	19.6%	8.7%	14.5%	12.3%	100.0%
		% within role played in the ads	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	27.5%	17.4%	19.6%	8.7%	14.5%	12.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	52.401	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	59.735	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	17.902	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	138		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.83.

## Appendix F

### Primary character \* bases for credibility Cross-tabulation

			Basis for credibility				Total
			user	authori ty	both	other/no relation	
primary characte r	femal	Count	49	5	3	10	67
		Expected Count	41.3	13.1	2.4	10.2	67.0
		% within primary character	73.1%	7.5%	4.5%	14.9%	100.0 %
		% within bases for credibility	57.6%	18.5%	60.0%	47.6%	48.6%
		% of Total	35.5%	3.6%	2.2%	7.2%	48.6%
male		Count	36	22	2	11	71
		Expected Count	43.7	13.9	2.6	10.8	71.0
		% within primary character	50.7%	31.0%	2.8%	15.5%	100.0 %
		% within bases for credibility	42.4%	81.5%	40.0%	52.4%	51.4%
		% of Total	26.1%	15.9%	1.4%	8.0%	51.4%
Total		Count	85	27	5	21	138
		Expected Count	85.0	27.0	5.0	21.0	138.0
		% within primary character	61.6%	19.6%	3.6%	15.2%	100.0 %
		% within bases for credibility	100.0%	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0%	100.0 %
		% of Total	61.6%	19.6%	3.6%	15.2%	100.0 %

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.834	3	.005
Likelihood Ratio	13.684	3	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.386	1	.239
N of Valid Cases	138		

a 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.43.

## Appendix G

### Primary character \* setting primary characters portrayed Cross-tabulation

			Setting				Total
			home	occupatio nal	leisure	other	
primary characte r	female	Count	46	3	11	7	67
		Expected Count	32.5	13.6	13.1	7.8	67.0
		% within primary character	68.7%	4.5%	16.4%	10.4%	100.0%
		% within setting primary characters portrayed	68.7%	10.7%	40.7%	43.8%	48.6%
		% of Total	33.3%	2.2%	8.0%	5.1%	48.6%
	male	Count	21	25	16	9	71
		Expected Count	34.5	14.4	13.9	8.2	71.0
		% within primary character	29.6%	35.2%	22.5%	12.7%	100.0%
		% within setting primary characters portrayed	31.3%	89.3%	59.3%	56.3%	51.4%
		% of Total	15.2%	18.1%	11.6%	6.5%	51.4%
Total		Count	67	28	27	16	138
		Expected Count	67.0	28.0	27.0	16.0	138.0
		% within primary character	48.6%	20.3%	19.6%	11.6%	100.0%
		% within setting primary characters portrayed	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	48.6%	20.3%	19.6%	11.6%	100.0%

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.697	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.372	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.391	1	.007
N of Valid Cases	138		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.77.

## Appendix H

### Primary character \* sexual image of primary characters Cross-tabulation

			Sexual image of primary characters				Total
			fully/normally dressed	suggestively clad	partially clad	Camera focus on part of body +sex appeal movement	
primary character	female	Count	45	12	6	4	67
		Expected Count	54.4	5.8	4.4	2.4	67.0
		% within primary character	67.2%	17.9%	9.0%	6.0%	100.0%
		% within sexual image of primary characters	40.2%	100.0%	66.7%	80.0%	48.6%
		% of Total	32.6%	8.7%	4.3%	2.9%	48.6%
	male	Count	67	0	3	1	71
		Expected Count	57.6	6.2	4.6	2.6	71.0
		% within primary character	94.4%	.0%	4.2%	1.4%	100.0%
		% within sexual image of primary characters	59.8%	.0%	33.3%	20.0%	51.4%
		% of Total	48.6%	.0%	2.2%	.7%	51.4%
Total		Count	112	12	9	5	138
		Expected Count	112.0	12.0	9.0	5.0	138.0
		% within primary character	81.2%	8.7%	6.5%	3.6%	100.0%
		% within sexual image of primary characters	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	81.2%	8.7%	6.5%	3.6%	100.0%



### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.021	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	23.816	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.163	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	138		

a 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.43.

## Appendix I

### Chi-square test frequencies for voice over announcer of the 94 final sample ads

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Male	65	31.3	33.7
Female	10	31.3	-21.3
Both	19	31.3	-12.3
Total	94		

### Test Statistics

	Voice over announcer of the ads
Chi-Square	55.553
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 31.3.

## Appendix J

### Frequency of voice-over announcer in the 140 ads coded

Voice-over announcer	Frequency	Percent
male	106	75.7
female	13	9.3
both	18	12.9
Total	137	97.9
System	3	2.1
	140	100.0

Chi-square test frequencies for voice-over announcer of the 140 ads

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
male	106	45.7	60.3
female	13	45.7	-32.7
both	18	45.7	-27.7
Total	137		

Test Statistics

	voice over announcer
Chi-Square	119.839
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 45.7.