A Gender Portrayal and Stereotypes in Television Advertisements: An Analysis of Three Channels in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ibrahim Abdulaziz Alibrahim

Department of Advertising and Marketing Communication,

College of Media and Communication,

Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University,

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Email: iaalibrahim@imamu.edu.sa

Abstract

Even though having numerous studies on gender role portrayals in television advertising, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia lacks studies about advertisements aired on TV. This paper endeavors a fresh study about gender stereotypes in television commercials on three Saudi Channels, viz. MBC, ART, and Al-Arabiya, using Hofstede's 6-D Model, comprising Masculinity Index and Critical Culture Theory, in order to determine gender roles as portrayed in media. Two hundred advertisements were recorded and those featuring prominent adult characters were coded in order to determine how gender is reflected in television commercials. The results indicate that gender role portrayals are stereotypical in nature cutting across channels, with air times making little difference in terms of the portrayals. Men were portrayed in huge proportion as the primary gender characters and primary narrators, and also found in work and professional settings, while women were depicted at home and without outside employment. Limitations and recommendations for the future are discussed.

Keywords: Gender Role Portrayals, Advertisement, Hofstede's 6-D Model, Masculinity Index, Critical Culture Theory, and Saudi Arabia.

Introduction

Saudi Arabia, being the second largest Arab state, is geographically the fifth largest Asian country and consists of the bulk of the Arabian Peninsula. There are roughly 20 million Saudi nationals and 8 million foreigners out of its 28.7 million populations. Being an absolute monarchy, it is governed by Sharia laws and all inhabitants follow Islamic traditions, wherein men and women are typically not allowed to mix together as it is believed to cause Fitnah, or temptation, from being alone together. However, they are allowed to mix together in Halal, or permissible circumstances, when in a group setting. In Islamic traditions, women, holding jobs, were able to travel freely in their city and were given rights that did not exist among any other religious group during that time period (El Guindi, 1981). However, Saudi Arabia has stringent laws, in the guise of Islamic laws, to control women for the sake of ideal societal order and mixing of men and women are staunchly prohibited. Here, most of the TV networks are privately owned, subject to heavy government regulations and censorship. Any programs or advertisements referring alcohol, sex and other taboo topics are completely prohibited. Article 39 of the "Basic Law" of KSA states that "mass media and all other vehicles of expression shall employ civil and polite language, which contribute towards the education of the nation and strengthen unity. It is prohibited to commit acts leading to disorder and division, affecting the

security of the state and its public relations, or undermining human dignity and rights" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011). Therefore, unlike a great deal of the literature on gender role portrayal, Saudi Arabian media does not typically have advertisements of the sexual nature.

Many studies revealed a great deal of gender stereotyping in media advertisements. Ashmore & Boca (1979) define gender stereotypes as "a structured set of beliefs about personality attributes of women and men" (P. 226). Many scholastic works have taken place to determine the correlation between gender and advertising, and how men and women are characterized in mass media. Stereotypes are defined as beliefs about a social category (Vinacke, 1957). Gender stereotypes are particularly prevalent. Stereotypes are only problematic when they restrict opportunities for one social category over another, or lead to unfair or unjust expectations about one social category over another (Landrenth & Zotos, 2016).

Gender is a primary segmentation variable in defining target groups and developing marketing strategies, thus making it very important for advertisers and marketers alike (Milner & Collins, 2000). Gender portrayals can also influence corporate branding and purchase intent of consumers and other tenets advertisements. Traditionally, individuals who believe in rigid gender roles are more likely to believe and accept a more restricted set of behaviors deemed acceptable for boys and men compared to men and women, especially compared to the opinions of nontraditional gender-typed counterparts (Matthes, Prieler & Adam, 2016). Thus, the advertisers should consider how gender roles, in a particular culture, are perceived in order to generate advertisements that have the best results for individuals in KSA.

Saudi Arabia is very traditional in gender roles, compared to the West. Thus, they are assumed to be more gender-typed as a society, and more likely to accept a restricted set of behaviors, which would then be more likely to have gender stereotypes dominant in television advertisements. However, there are limited studies about gender portrayal in Saudi Arabia.

Considering that dvertising in society reflects "the way people think, what moves them, how they relate to each other, how they live, eat, relax, and enjoy themselves" (DeMooij, 1998), it is probable that a society's state of gender equity and development will correlate to its advertising content. Gender-role portrayals in advertising may be influenced by gender equality in each country. Gender role portrayals in advertising may also give a better understanding of the particular society's ideas, rules, and norms. This can be important because if the media or advertisements favor one gender over another, then gender inequality can affect both genders alike because it will actually limit the socially accepted roles of men and women, thus contributing to inequality in society, which can harm society at the micro and macro level (Chavez, 1985).

This research seeks to contribute the body of knowledge regarding gender stereotypes in the media, as well as explore the relationship between society and the media; specifically, does media influence society, or does society influence media? Examining this will help to determine the mirror versus the mold debate that has been a growing part of the literature in gender in advertising. This research is unique because it suggests that mirror versus mold is actually not a debate at all, but is instead a continuum of sorts. Additionally, it can help to determine if the debate is relevant in the KSA, as most of the research that has supported mirror or mold has essentially be derived from the USA (Bickel & Taylor, 2015).

Additionally, this research will provide new contributions in the form of exploring gender portrayal in advertisements in the KSA. This research can also be helpful to advertising councils

and ethical committees, as well as policy regulators. Understanding how gender is portrayed in the media is essential to improvement of mass communication practice and improvement of gender relations.

Literature Review

Gender roles in Saudi Arabia

Gender roles are very imperative for a society, but these are very stringent in the KSA. Strict patrimonial and patriarchal culture, under the aegis of Islam, has caused extreme segregation of women in society. El-Guindi (1981) states that "one basic feature of Arab socio-cultural organization is the division of society into two separate and complementary worlds, the men's and the women's" (P.477).

Saudi Arabia has deep gender segregation existing outside home. Men and women are segregated at workplace. There are separate schools, universities, hospitals, stores, restaurant areas, parts of the mosque etc. for each gender and their co-mingling is forbidden except immediate family or through marriage. These gender divisions are legitimized in social and governmental parlance by Islam that is the majoritarian religion of the Kingdom. Additionally, gender divisions are also justified because of perceived mental, physical, social, and emotional differences between men and women (El-Sanabary, 1994). Unlike other Muslim-majority countries, Saudi women remain under the legal guardianship of their male relatives; first their father when they are single or divorced which then extends to their husband after marriage. The men in their lives essentially control women's ability to work, receive education, their mobility, and even their marriage (Al-Rasheed, 2013).

Society has slowly begun to change, though. Women are comparatively receiving higher education with fifty-eight percent of college students being women. They are entering the workforce in higher numbers unprecedently. Then too, there is limited participation of women in the public sphere and increasing gender inequality in Saudi Arabia. Women in neighboring Muslim-majority countries do receive better citizenship rights, more participation in the public sphere, higher degrees of economic equality and participation, and more empowerment than women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-Rasheed, 2013).

It is important to understand the gender inequality in Saudi Arabia on a global scale. To do this, the Global Gender Gap Report will be used, first published in 2006 by World Economic Forum, which measures 144 major and emerging economies in an index designed to measure gender equality. The report uses four overall areas of inequality, including political empowerment, health and survival, educational attainment, and economic participation and opportunity. According to the 2015 report, Saudi Arabia is ranked 134th out of 145 countries, with a score of 0.605 (Al-Rasheed, 2013).

State of gender inequality becomes important while discussing gender portrayal in television advertisements, as the current literature suggests that gender roles are highly stereotypical and can affect society and erode gender equality. The relationship between culture and gender portrayal is less clear. One can argue that a country's culture shapes gender roles in television advertisements (Huyang & Lowrey, 2015).

Gender role portrayals in Saudi Arabia

Research on portrayal of gender roles in the USA began primarily in 1970s, followed by Europe and Asia in 1980s and 1990s respectively. Limited studies exist in the Middle East.

Generally, research has been agreeable in the sense that multiple studies from many parts of the globe, regardless of culture, that gender roles are very stereotypical in television advertisements and media messages (Eisend, 2010). Research has been exhaustive in nature in the Western world, with the most common explorations analyzing the variables of the age of the primary character, setting associated with said character, the gender of the voice-over, and the gender of the primary character.

Quantitative content analysis is becoming increasingly popular in gender analysis in the literature for comparing messages about gender role portrayals of men and women (Fields et al, 2010). One of the most widely researched content that is analyzed in mass media research is the role of the men and women (Neuendorf, 2002). A great deal of studies compare attributes, roles, and behaviors of men and women in international mass media in a wide array of platforms, including film, television, and literature (Martins et al, 2009). Research on gender images in advertising has been very popular (Linder, 2004; Fullerton & Kendrick, 2000; An & Kim, 2007).

The literature has overwhelmingly found that the odds of women being shown at home, instead of at work, are three and a half times higher than for men (Eisend, 2010). Men are also shown much more frequently outside of the home, and, in particular, a work setting. A cross cultural study by Nassif & Gunter (2008) analyzed television advertisements from Saudi Arabia's Channel One, and ITV1 in the United Kingdom in 2000 and 2001. The analysis compared the representation of men and women. The authors determined that both men and women were equally visually represented as lead characters in advertisements in both countries, but voice-overs by men dominated on Channel One in Saudi Arabia more than in British advertisements. Women appeared more often in domestic settings, and much less often outside the home and in the workplace. Furthermore, women were more likely to promote household cleaning products, body care and beautification products. A study by Kharroub & Weaver (2014) analyzed the portrayal of women in Arabic television shows. While the research was limited to television shows rather than commercials, the literature does provide evidence that concurs with gender portrayal of women in media as noted by Nassif & Gunter (2008). The research analyzed 15 Arabic and 3 Turkish drama shows and an analysis of 743 characters determined that women were less likely to be shown in the workplace, more likely to be portrayed in sex-typed occupations, and were more likely to be under-represented. Furthermore, an analysis showed that when television shows had women writers, there were significantly less gender stereotypes. Conservative countries had more sex-typed portrayals than more liberal Arab countries.

An article by Bretl & Cantor (1988) summarized portrayal of men and women in U.S. television commercials over the course of fifteen years. They found that women are less likely to be depicted as employed outside home and they are more likely to be portrayed in the domestic advertising sphere using home cleaning, cooking and other domestic activities related products. Furthermore, they found that over ninety percent of all narrators and voice-overs are done by male actors, which is the largest gap over the past fifteen years. Recently, a quantitative analysis by Collins (2011) depicted that women are featured much less regularly than men. A study by Knoll, Eisend and Steinhagen (2011) examined gender role stereotyping in advertising. They determined that gender stereotyping existed in German television advertisements. They found

differences among the types of channels, but that in each channel men were likely to be pictured as authoritarian figures, older, and outside of the home in an independent role. Women were more likely to use domestic products, such as cleaning supplies and cooking products, and be portrayed at home in a submissive or dependent role.

A study by Craig (1997) found that women are presented in commercials typically in the domestic sphere, as well, portrayed typically as housewives obsessed with cleaning products for their home and cooking wonderful dinners. An additional stereotype was that women were portrayed as being obsessed with their beauty, appearing in commercials for beauty products. Additionally, Craig found that often women are displayed praising men's products, such as loving a particular cologne or body wash. The last stereotype that Craig found is that women in the commercials were very concerned about healthy lifestyles, shown promoting health products and, of course are very skinny and in shape, thus promoting the ideal of women beauty connected to her body type or size. Interestingly, Craig determined that these commercials mold women into having negative perceptions and thus buying products out of self-esteem issues, and harming women into buying products.

Cultural models and advertising

Cultural theories and models will help to determine if the stereotypes in the media affect culture or if the media operates primarily to support and justify the status quo at the expense of ordinary people throughout the society. This research will help to determine which theory is more applicable in gender portrayals in Saudi media and the effect it has on society and culture.

The 'Mirror' Versus the 'Mold' Debate

The "Mirror" versus the "Mold" debate is a long-standing debate about the role and social nature of advertising in terms of stereotypes within advertisements. The "mirror" side suggests that advertising reflects the dominant values in society. Specifically, it states that advertising simply acts as a "magnified lens which offers an extrapolated picture of a social phenomenon" (Landrenth & Zotos, 2016). This point of view contends that advertising is not significant and gender represented in advertising represents the dominant concepts of a society's accepted gender roles. The "Mold" side of the debate states that advertising can influence cultural norms by projecting a pre-established reality determined by the agenda of the medium and advertiser, which essentially solidifies the Cultivation Theory. According to the Cultivation Theory, television can actually affect an individual's reality. The primary proposition of the theory states that the more time people spend in the television world, the more likely they are to believe that social reality which was portrayed in television. When gender roles are stereotypical in nature, this can confirm the belief of strict gender roles or influence society to perpetuate gender beliefs (Signorielli, 2009). According to Huyang, advertising portrayal of men and women have the power to affect society either positively or negatively, thus suggesting that the relationship between media and a country's culture depends upon the reality seen in television, thus confirming the Cultivation Theory. However, it remains unclear if society affects media or vice-versa. Therefore, this research seeks to establish the link between culture and advertising messages.

Cultural differences play a large role in understanding gender-role portrayals. The most widely used model in advertising research is Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Model, which includes six dimensions in order to understand culture. These include power distance,

individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation, indulgence, and the masculine dimension (Hofstede, 2001).

Figure 1. Saudi Arabia 6-D Model (Hofstede, 2016)

A high score on the Masculinity dimension indicates that the society is usually driven by men asserted traits, viz. competition, achievement, and success. A low or feminine score on the dimension means that society is catering for others and quality of life. A feminine society asserts that the sign of success is quality of life and standing out in the crowd is not admirable. As shown in the chart, Saudi Arabia scores a sixty on this index, and thus is classified as a masculine society, which has key facets such as decisive and assertive authority figures, emphasis on work and competition, and being the best. The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension shows how society is geared towards gender roles. Saudi Arabia scored an 80 in this dimension, indicating its preference to avoid uncertainty and move forward with tradition rather than change. Cultures showing high Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) typically have strict codes of behavior, belief and ethics to guide society, which is one reason why traditional gender roles in Saudi Arabia prevail. Long Term Orientation on the index is also a facet of the 6-D model that can explain societal expectations on gender. This dimension describes how society or culture maintains links with the past in order to deal with both the current times, as well as the future. Saudi Arabia has a low score of 36, making it a normative society, which prefers to hold strong to traditions and societal norms and be suspicious of change (Milner & Collins, 1998).

These facets of the 6-D model help to understand gender portrayal. Hofstede's 6- D Model is the most widely used in advertising research (An & Kim, 2007). However, there have been some criticisms and of the research. There are mixed results in the literature in terms of the relationship

or positive association between the masculinity index and gender portrayals in various cultures (Milner & Collins, 1998). Several studies have produced mixed results, and still others have found that the Model did not successfully predict gender portrayal and norms in a given country.

One primary concern for advertising researchers is that the model is outdated and baring few exceptions, it has not been accurate in all studies. There has been a call to focus on the GLOBE Project dimensions (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010, Eisend, 2010), and the dimensions were indeed inspired by Hofstede's masculinity index. The project is the first large scale study dedicated to culture, leadership and organizational effectiveness, and how it relates to gender. These facets include Performance Orientation, Uncertainty Avoidance, Human Orientation, Institutional Collectivism, In-group Collectivism, Assertiveness, Gender Egalitarianism, Future Orientation and Power Distance. The facet of gender egalitarianism would be particularly helpful in terms of understanding Saudi Arabia, which is defined as "the degree to which a society minimizes gender role differences while promoting gender equality" (Eisend, 2010, P. 430). Societies, which have strong gender egalitarianism have less occupational sex segregation, more women in positions of authority and in the workforce and have a higher status for women. As of the date of this research, the GLOBE project does not have data on Saudi Arabia, however, there is published data from the World Health Organization and the Global Gender Gap Index which shows that Saudi Arabia scores very low in terms of offering equality for women. Hofstede's culture model is followed for the KSA due to non-availability of GLOBE Project Cultural Model.

The literature supports the idea that gender stereotypes are perpetuated by the media and that women are often shown in submissive and dependent roles, inside home, offering or enjoying a domestic product, and are shown less frequently than men. Men, on the other hand, are mostly shown in authoritarian positions that are independent in nature. Saudi Arabia, being less equitable than other major countries, particularly Germany, UK and USA, which are featured throughout this literature review. Thus, it is expected that gender stereotypes will be further perpetuated, as per the Mirror vs the Mold debate.

Research Questions

 – RQ1: How do three Saudi channels portray gender roles in television advertisements?
 – RQ2: Do the times of the advertisements correlate to different gender messages?

Hypotheses

 – HP1: More men characters will be shown outside of the home in work and/or recreational activities; more women characters will be portrayed in the home.

 – HP2: Women characters will be shown at a much lower rate than that of men predominant characters in advertisements.

 – HP3: Commercials featuring voice-over actors will predominantly be that of men characters.

Methodology

In order to answer these questions and test the hypotheses, 200 commercials were recorded and those with an adult character were coded for analysis. Commercials were recorded from 11 AM- 1 PM and at 9 PM to 12 AM Saudi time on three most watched Saudi channels viz. MBC, ART, and Al-Arabiya.

The codebook was adapted from previous research, including Nassif and Gunter (2008), whose was the only study of this nature to do cross cultural analysis including the KSA. Topics for analyses included gender and age of the primary character, gender of voice-over actors, product category, working role, and dominant setting that the advertisement takes place in.

Sample

TV advertisements, shown on major networks of the KSA, during the same part of the day, including morning and evening times, were collected over the Spring Semester in 2017. The specific dates that they were recorded were Monday, January 23, 2017, Tuesday, January 24, 2017, Thursday, January 26, 2017, and Friday, January 27, 2017. Each channel also has advertisements for top global and national brands. The advertisements were collected over the course of three weekdays and one weekend day for each channel, averaging about 9 hours for each channel. Prime-time was considered to be from 9:00 PM until 12:00 AM based on KSA time zone. This was accounted for cultural differences that people tend to stay up late in KSA, which meant that prime time was typically in the late evening hours. The time chosen during the month of January also indicated regular scheduling, since there were no national, religious or federal holidays during the sampling time, thus reflecting everyday life in advertisements.

Coding Procedure

Pretesting was done in order to ensure that the variables were well understood. Small portion of the sample was coded and analyzed to create the variables and categories to be coded. From the pretest, coders were able to revise the coding instructions and categories in order to ensure that it was unambiguous and agreeable. This ensured that the categories were highly specified in order to increase validity and reliability, as well as to ensure that the coding instructions were adequate and the coders understood the variables to be coded. This helped towards consistency in coding methods and decisions as well as increasing reliability. After this step, the codebook was edited and more fully developed.

Two coders, both from graduate school and proficient in Arabic and English, were included in this study. Thus, they were able to effectively understand each advertisement, communicate clearly and have a deep understanding of gender, as it relates to linguistics; this was imperative since language in Arabic is highly influenced by gender and every word is either masculine or feminine, thus necessitating a strong understanding of the Arabic language. Both coders were trained to code for the project and engage in discussions about the operational definitions and to assign commercials. If there were disagreements in definition or the advertisements, the coders re-examined the advertisement, in question, to arrive at an agreement. The additional coder did not receive any cash payment for the work, but instead, agreed to work together on the second coder's future research.

The coding model included the number of characters in role portrayals and the types of products being advertised. The product category started from a list of 22 categories and was divided into gender, similar to other content analysis work (Jim-Pack, Nelson, & Videla, 2010 and Nassif & Gunter, 2008). For gender-role portrayals, the coders coded the following: (1) prominent character's gender; (2) prominent character's occupation; and (3) gender of the voice-over, completing an operational definition for inter-coder reliability (see Table 1). This helps to examine gender differences among prominent character and prominent occupation that are similar to the concepts determined by Hofstede's MAS cultural value dimension for cross-cultural advertising research. It was also important to note regarding prominent character's

gender in the commercials that the Saudi Arabian media is often accused of using "the invisible woman" syndrome, which explains that women are shown at a significantly less rate as compared to men.

Inter-coder reliability

To calculate inter coder reliability, Krippendorff's alpha reliability estimate (KALPHA) was used, which estimates for judgments made at different levels of measurements in order to determine the inter coder reliability, which is an important part of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004, Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). The index is known to be relatively rigorous and to take chance agreements into account (Rust and Cooil 1994). To test inter-coder reliability, the coders used a sub-sample of the data to be independently coded by coders involved in the complete data set. Each coder was typically asked to use the subset of 10% to compute inter-coder reliability; however, with small samples, it is better to use a higher value to reduce chance occurrence. Thus, 15% was used in order to calculate the inter-coder reliability. The inter-coder reliability came to be 0.9247, which is very high, with 1 as the maximum possible value. This implied very high degree of reliability, thus making the results more reliable and valid.

To ensure variables remain constant among coders, operational definitions of each variable was completed in order to ensure accuracy in coding. Table 1 shows inter-coder reliability operational definitions of the variable. Inter-coder reliability was done by analyzing the variables based on the hypotheses, primary characters' occupation and their gender. These were done in three data-sets under the variables of the coders names.

Table 1. Interceder reliability operational definitions

Variable	Operational Definition
Prime time	Accounts for cultural differences; defined as from 9 PM-12 AM
Product Type	Product type was classified from the coded 22 product categories into Men's products: office supplies/stationeries, automobile, business/finance/insurance, computer, telecommunication, Internet companies and Women's Products: household cleaning supplies, fashion products, beauty and hygiene products and Neutral products which include Favorites/hobbies, education/publication, health/medicine, hotel/airlines/ travel, electronics/home appliances, home/office furniture, entertainment, miscellaneous
Product Character Gender	A character who is the most prominently displayed, or who is commenting on the product, or holding the product.
Supporting Character Gender	A character who is supporting the major role. These characters are not spotlighted in the advertisement and do not hold the product

Variable	Operational Definition
Prominent Character Occupation	1-Professionals: e.g., lawyer, doctor, musician, professor 2-Office workers 3-Homemaker- portrayed in home setting or doing house-work
Gender Voice Over Commercials	The sound of a human voice (or voices) over images shown on the commercial 1-Men 2-Women

Analysis Strategy

An ANOVA test was performed in order to determine if there are differences among the variables (prominent characters' occupation, gender, and voice-over gender) across television networks and to assure that the analysis is indicative of gender across all three channels. It was determined that no difference in these variables existed and they were the same across the channels, thus confirming the validity of using the three networks.

Next, the coders analyzed all of the ads that featured human models related to prominent characters' gender and occupation and voice-overs, testing the gender differences in portrayal across product types classified as for men and women or neutral using a one-way ANOVA. Following this, a multinomial logistic regression analysis was used. This analysis was the best course of action using categorical dependent variable (gender portrayals) with more than two categories on a set of categorical and interval independent variables (types, character, character occupation, voice over).

Results

To determine the relationship between gender and occupation, a one way ANOVA test was ran, which was significant, showing gender role portrayals and a strong relationship between occupation. This analysis addressed the Research Question "How do three Saudi channels portray gender roles in television advertisements?" Hypothesis 1 was proven because more men were shown outside of the home in work settings, whereas more women were shown as homemakers or portrayed inside of the home.

Table 1. One-way ANOVA

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.509	1	.509	.803	.371
Within Groups	153.343	242	.634		
Total	153.852	243			

Next, a Pearson's Correlation was run to determine the correlation to the gender of the prominent character and the occupation of the primary gender character. The correlation was very strong, as shown in the data, P=1, with occupation of P= .794, showing a strong significance.

Table 2. Pearson's Correlation

Correlations			
		Gender of Prominent Character	Occupation of Primary Gender Character
Gender of Prominent Character	Pearson Correlation	1	.794**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	244	152
Occupation of Primary Gender Character	Pearson Correlation	.794**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	152	152

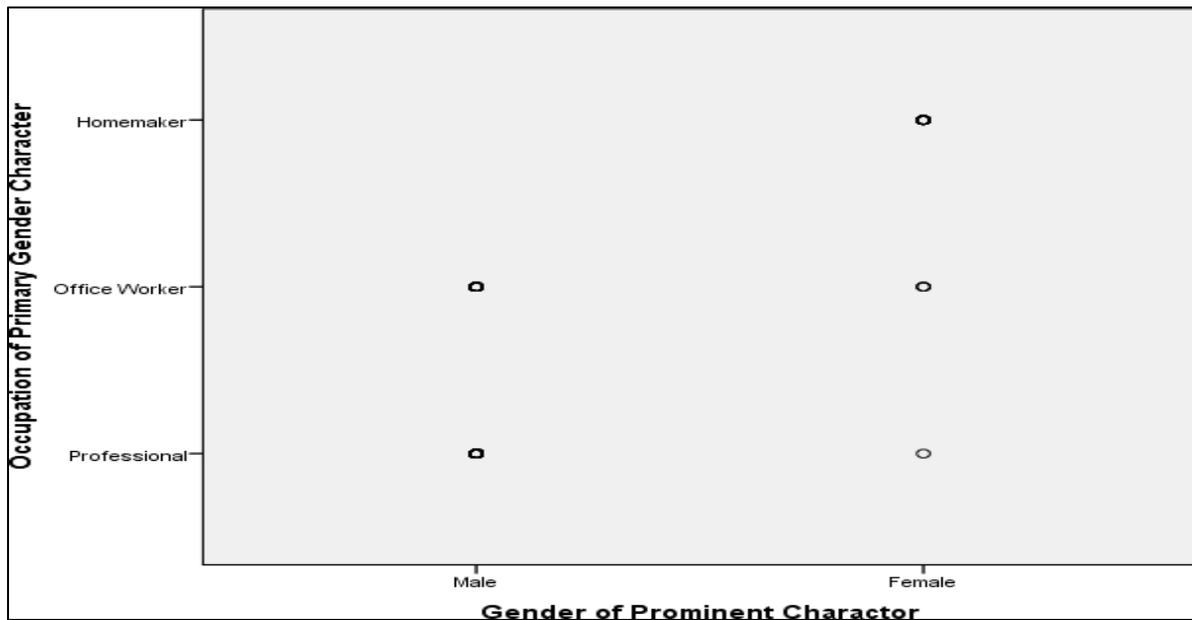**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 2. Visual Depiction of Pearson's Correlation

The above scatter-plot shows a visual depiction a positive correlation between gender of prominent characters and the occupation of primary characters. Statistically, professional males

are shown at a far greater rate in commercials, whereas females are primarily depicted performing household chores. While women were occasionally to rarely portrayed as professionals, they were more often portrayed as involved in household activities.   A linear regression analysis was run to determine the prediction of the relationship between the two variables of gender and occupational role and again found a significant relationship, showing that gender role stereotypes among men and women in terms of occupation are strong in the commercials that were coded.

Table 3. Model Summery of Regression

Model Summary			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.794a	.630	.627	.24674

a. Predictors: (Constant), Occupation of Primary Gender Character

Table 4. Regression ANOVA

| ANOVAa					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	15.546	1	15.546	255.358	.000b
Residual	9.132	150	.061		
Total	24.678	151			

a. Dependent Variable: Gender of Prominent Charactor
b. Predictors: (Constant), Occupation of Primary Gender Character

Table 5. Regression Coefficients

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.520	.047		10.995	.000
Occupation of Primary Gender Character	.418	.026	.794	15.980	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Gender of Prominent Character

Positive regression between occupation and gender-role portrayal, show men more likely to be in a more powerful work role or in a setting outside of the home, and that woman were more likely to be portrayed as housewives. This proves the hypothesis that men would be showed in outside settings and women would be displayed as homemakers, which answers Research Question 1 and proves Hypothesis 1.
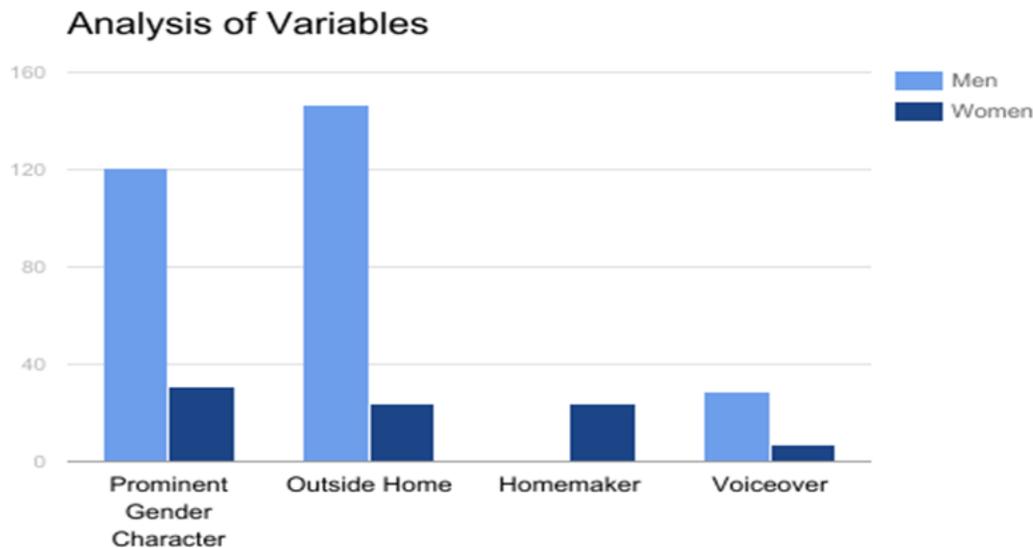
Figure 3. Analysis of Variables According to Gender

This graph shows that across all channels and time slots, male constituted a large portion of the primary gender characters at 79.6%, whereas female made up 20.4% only, thus, proving the hypothesis that men will be featured more often than women in advertising in the KSA. Time slots did not make a difference on how men and women were portrayed across all variables, thus answering the second research question "Do the times of the advertisements correlate to different gender messages?"

Supporting characters consisted of men making up 70.7% and were shown in the office or recreational setting, primarily. Women were usually a supporting role at home. Women were only counted as supporting roles if their face or frontal body was shown; many commercials had women doing things in the background and did not show her face, and so those were not counted in this analysis. The Hypothesis 2 that men will be shown at far greater rates than women was proven.

Voice over gender consisted of an unseen narrator only. This was not a popular method of commercials, and so the missing values were quite high. 85.4% percent of the commercials did not have voice-overs and thus, consisted mostly of the primary character roles serving as their own narrators. However, the men's narration overwhelmed women narration, with only 2.8% of the voice-overs being women, thus answering Research Question 1, and proving Hypothesis 3.

Discussion

This is the only study that completed a commercial content analysis regarding gender role portrayals in advertising, using comparable television programs to show the effect which culture has on gender roles in the KSA. It is the first known study in English to compare across three different channels for sample equivalence that focuses singularly on the KSA, as opposed to similar cross-cultural studies.

The study had several key findings. Women were shown more often in the home setting. Something interesting that was not a predetermined variable was lack of frontal body being shown of women in commercials. This was not anticipated as such a large variable, but in many commercials, it was observed that the women were shown as supportive figures. Many times, these women would be wearing hijab and would be doing dishes or other activities in the background. Findings indicated that the Meta-analysis results on gender stereotyping in advertising did relate to Hofstede's model, thus concurring with research by Einsend (2010), showing that stereotyping in advertising depends on developments related to gender equality. As discussed, Saudi Arabia lags far behind the Western world in terms of gender equality, on both Hofstede's model, showing it is a masculine culture, and on the Gender Gap Index. The results indicated that traditional gender role portrayals existed across all variables. Women were featured much less than men, in both the actual commercial setting as the primary character, and as the narrator or voice-over for the commercial. A great deal of commercials featured more than five primary gender characters, all of which were men. Many commercials featured men in outside settings, such as in a coffee shop or playing soccer. Women were shockingly absent in most of the commercials, validating the argument of the "invisible woman" in Arabic culture and in Arabic mass media and advertising.

Invisible Women Syndrome

Females are portrayed in the public sphere in Arabic countries at far lesser rate than their male counterparts. The term "Invisible Woman Syndrome" is used in order to describe the phenomenon of the lack of women in both media and society in Arabic countries, particularly in the KSA. The Middle East media has changed a great deal in the past two decades; women have been featured in greater numbers than in generations past, however, women's voices are still heard at a far less frequent rate than men (Newsom & Lengel, 2012). The first edition of the Arab Human Development Report, released in 2002 under the guidance and support of the United Nations, addressed several deficits in the region, including "freedom deficit," "voice and

accountability," and "women's empowerment deficit." The report found that Saudi Arabia in particular was less likely to discuss women's rights in the public sphere (Sakr, 2004). Recently, a conference was held at the University of Qassim and was attended by representations of 15 Arabic countries on the subject of "women in society". This is notable and an effort to improve the status of women in Middle Eastern countries. However, this conference was remarkable for more than just its intentions: there were no women in attendance.

Though implementation of these changes has been slow, women in the Arab world have started to change due to transformations of social and political nature. Women are impacting, shaping, and redefining the public sphere all over the Middle East, with women activists seeking to add new ideals about women in society, citizenship and public participation. Women are increasingly entering the media field and using new and old media alike to participate in social change (Skalli. 2006).

The idea of the "invisible woman" relates to the mirror versus the mold argument, upon which it is proposed that mirror versus mold is not so much as a debate as a continuum of sorts and that mirror and mold work together in order to perpetuate stereotypes and ideal cultural norms. This can be seen by the lack of depiction of women in commercials, compared to their male counterparts; the advertising media mirrors society because it depicts women more in the home and not in the public sphere. At the same time, this molds society by promoting the ideal that "respectable" women take care of their homes, do not sit outside with men, and largely shield themselves from unknown men and the public sphere (Napoli, Hussein, & Boylan, 1995). Most of the satellite channels were created by Arab politicians and government in an effort to promote Arabic and Islamic traditions and stress the ideals of environment and create a sense of unity; not to challenge the status quo or express dissent. (Sakr, 2001). Particularly, governments instill heavy regulation on media. Any material that criticizes' beliefs, traditions, the state-national system, religion, threatens family ties, and creates social confusion is banned from media (Napoli, Amin, & Boyland, 1995). This continuum promotes the idea that mirror and mold are not at odds and work together in order to perpetuate the status quo and society. Polce-Lynch et al, 2001 determined that media can negatively harm the public, especially for adolescents' self- esteem, which is connected to overall well-being and happiness. Phipher (1996) found that mass media is such a large part of children's and adolescents' lives, and that they are constantly bombarded with advertisements that can set unrealistic expectations, especially for girls and boys alike. Furthermore, advertisements in media can cause youth to have negative gender stereotypes (Currie, 1997). This serves to perpetuate stereotypes and gender roles in order to preserve the social norms and cultural ideals of the society at hand.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future

This paper, like every research project, has some limitations. First, a relatively small sample size of 200 commercials was used and those not featuring a primary adult gender character were eliminated. Second, only three channels were recorded due to lack of access from outside. Future researches may strive to work on samples which represent complete advertising in the KSA. This research lasted only over the course of few days. To depict lags that might occur from realities of society to portrayal in the media, a longitudinal study is recommended to most accurately determine not only the gender role portrayal in the media, but how the mirror versus the mold debate is implicated by the portrayals.

Another limitation has been the lack of variable for women, featured as a secondary character,

but without face or narration. It was not anticipated that this would be a frequent occurrence till the coding process, and as such this variable was not defined or analyzed statistically.

Given its uniqueness that, this research is one of the first of its kind to decode commercials from three different channels in Saudi Arabia, it lacks the audience perceptions as to how Saudi viewers see gender in the context of advertisements, which remains a future research area. This is especially important, as emotion plays a large role in how consumers view advertising. Attitudes towards advertisements and responses evoked by said advertisements can have a large effect on consumer beliefs (Holbrook, 1987). Understanding how viewers determine gender role portrayals can help to give weight to the mirror versus the mold argument.

This research also found that women are shown at a shockingly disproportionate and decreased time-length compared to men in commercials, thus giving weight to the "Invisible Woman Syndrome" prevalent throughout Arabic media and elaborate research is required thereof.

Further, if more than two coders are used in future, inter-coder reliability could be increased and the risk of chance occurrence could be reduced. Finally, the last limitation in and of itself is the methods for content analysis. Many studies, including this one, do not employ rigid methodological standards simply because of the nature of content analysis research (Neuendorf, 2009). Content analysis, not being reliable when compared to other approaches, should be replaced by some reliable and valid measures to determine more concise standards for assessment. Perhaps by employing additional coders, study could be repeated, preferably blindly, in order to ensure testability and validity of the study.

Conclusion

This study determined that there was a pattern of gender stereotyping, particularly in terms of showing women at a much lower rate than men in the commercials in the three Saudi channels. This was true across all the time slots, with similar messages, regardless of the time of day, which was initially not anticipated. This finding was significant because it has been well established that gender stereotypes in advertising and mass media can influence stereotypes as seen in society. This can further enhance the gender roles and continue to cause an unequal environment.

This research shows that women are still largely absent from Arabic media and television commercials in comparison to their male counterparts, which is stereotypical and reflection and ideal of Arabic culture. This has significant effect on the idea of "the invisible woman" in Arabic media and society alike, and can help to explain gender bias in the KSA. Though this is starting to change, it will take a great deal of influence from the media, as well as grassroots efforts to create a more equitable society for women, which is imperative to the improvement of the country as a whole.

The author hopes that this research can be part of the literature in order to create open dialogue and discussion among advertisers, regulators and scholars on gender stereotyping in advertising and the negative effects, it can have on gender roles in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. More dialogue and open communication is needed in order to continue the growth of women's equality in Saudi Arabia. While the Kingdom has made a lot of progress in terms of women's issues, there is still a lot to be done, and media can affect the perceptions of women and gender roles, thus lending a more equitable vision to society at large.

References

Al-Rasheed, M. (2013). *A most masculine state: Gender, politics and religion in Saudi Arabia* (Vol. 43). Cambridge University Press.

An, D & Kim, S. (2007). Relating Hofstede masculinity dimension to gender role portrayals in advertising. International Marketing Review, 24, 181-207.

Ashmore, R, & Boca, F.D> (1979). Sex stereotypes and implicit personality theory: towards a cognitive-social psychological conceptualization. Sex Roles, 5(2),

Berelson, B. (1952). Content Analysis in Communication Research. Glencoe, Ill: Free Press

Bickel J., Taylor R.K. (2015) The Role of Women in Television Advertising in Great Britain: A Content Analysis. In: Wilson E., Black W. (eds) Proceedings of the 1994 Academy of Marketing Science (AMS) Annual Conference. Developments in Marketing Science: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science. Springer, Cham.

Bretl, D.J. & Cantor, J. Sex Roles (1988) 18: 595. doi:10.1007/BF00287963 Collins, R.L. Sex Roles (2011) 64: 290. doi:10.1007/s11199-010-9929-5.

Currie, D. H. (1997). Decoding femininity: Advertisements and their teenage readers. Gender Soc. 11: 453–477.

Das, M. (2011). Gender role portrayals in Indian television ads. *Sex Roles*,*64*(34),208-222.

De Swert, Knut. Calculating inter-coder reliability in media content analysis using Krippendorff's alpha. University of Amsterdam. Retrieved 12 March 2017 from http://polcomm.org/wp-content/uploads/ICR01022012.pdf

Eisend, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 38, 418 –440. doi: 10.1007/s11747-009-0181-x.

EL GUINDI, FADWA (1981) Veiling Infitah with Muslim ethic: Egypt's contemporary Islamic movement, Social Problems, 28(4), p.477.

El-sanabary, N. (1994). Female education in Saudi Arabia and the reproduction. Gender & Education, 6(2), 141.

Fields, A.M, Swan, S, & Kloos, B. (2010). What it means to be a woman: ambivalent sexism in female college students' experiences and attitudes. Sex Roles, 61, 85- 100.

Fullerton, J.A, & Kendrick, A. 2000. Portrayal of men and women in US Spanish-language television commercials. J&MC Quarterly, 77, 128-142.

Furnham, A., & Paltzer, S. (2010). The portrayal of men and women in television in advertisements: An updated review of 30 studies published since 2000. Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 51, 216 – 236. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9450.2009.00772. x.

Grau, Stacy Landreth & Zotos, Yorgos, C. (2016). Gender stereotypes in advertising; a review of current research, International Journal of Advertising, 35:5, 761-770.

Hayes, A. F., & Krippendorff, K. (2007). Answering the call for a standard reliability measure for coding data. Communication Methods and Measures, 1, 77-89.

Hofstede, Geert. (2016). Saudi Arabia. Retrieved 11 January 2017 from https://geert-

hofstede.com/saudi-arabia.html

Holbrook, M. B. (1987). Mirror, mirror, on the wall, what's unfair in the reflections on advertising? *The Journal of Marketing*, 95-103.

Holsti, O.R. (1969). Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Huang, Y., & Lowry, D. T. (2015). Toward Better Gender Equality? Portrayals of Advertising Models' Occupational Status in Chinese Magazines. *Journal Of InternationalConsumerMarketing*,27(1),69-8doi:10.1080/08961530.2014.967904

Kharroub, T., & Weaver, A. J. (2014). Portrayals of Women in Transnational Arab Television Drama Series. *Journal Of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *58*(2), 179-195. doi:10.1080/08838151.2014.906434

Knobloch, L.K. (2008). The content of relational uncertainty within marriage. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 25, 467-495.

Krippendorff, K. (2004). Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lee, Y.K. 2014. Gender stereotypes as a double-edged sword in political advertising: persuasion effects of campaign theme and advertising style. International Journal of Advertising 33 (2).

Lindner, K. (2004). Images of women in general interest and fashion magazine advertisements from 1955 to 2002. Sex Roles, 51, 409–421.

Lorfing, Irene. Women, Media and Sustainable Development. Beirut: Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, 199.

Martins, N, Williams, D.C, Harrison, K, & Ratan, R.A. (2009). A content analysis of female body imagery in video games. Sex Roles, 61, 824-836.

Matthes, J., Prieler, M., & Adam, K. (2016). Gender-Role Portrayals in Television Advertising Across the Globe. *Sex Roles*, *75*(7/8), 314-327. doi:10.1007/s11199- 016-0617-y

Milner,L.M.& Collins,J.M.(2000).Sex-role portrayals and the gender of nations. Journal of Advertising, 29, 67 –79. doi:10.1080/ 00913367.2000.10673604.

Milner, L. M., & Collins, J. M. (1998). Sex Role Portrayals in Turkish Television Advertisements: An Examination in an International. *Journal Of Euromarketing*, *7*(2), 1.

Morrison, M. M., & Shaffer, D. R. (2003). Gender-Role Congruence and Self-Referencing as Determinants of Advertising Effectiveness. *Sex Roles*, *49*(5-6), 265-275.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2011 Nov 20). The Basic Law of Governance. Retreived from www.mofa.gov.sa/sites/mofaen/ServicesAndInformation/aboutKingDom/SaudiG overnment/Pages/BasicSystemOfGovernance35297.aspx

Pipher, M. (1996, March). Media and adolescence. Symposium conducted at St.Catherine's School, Richmond, VA.

Polce-Lynch, M., Myers, B. J., Kliewer, W., & Kilmartin, C. (2001). Adolescent self- esteem

and gender: Exploring relations to sexual harassment, body image, media influence, and emotional expression. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *30*(2), 225-244.

Pollock, J. C., & Yulis, S. G. (2004). Nationwide newspaper coverage of physician- assisted suicide: A community structure approach. Journal of Health Communication, 9, 281–307.

Potter, W. J. (2014). A Critical Analysis of Cultivation Theory. *Journal Of Communication*, *64*(6),1015-1036. doi:10.1111/jcom.12128

Napoli, James, Hussein Amin, and Richard Boylan. "Assessment of the Egyptian Print and Electronic Media." Report submitted to the United States Agency for International Development. Cairo, 1995.

Nassif, A., & Gunter, B. (2008). Gender Representation in Television Advertisements in Britain and Saudi Arabia. *Sex Roles*, *58*(11-12), 752-760. doi:10.1007/s11199-008- 9394-6

Neuendorf, K. (2002). The content analysis guidebook. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Rahbani, L. N. (2010). Women in Arab media: present but not heard. *Standford University-California*.

Sakr, N. (Ed.). (2004). *Women and media in the Middle East: Power through self- expression.* IB Tauris.

Sakr, N. (2002). Seen and Starting to be Heard: Women and the Arab Media in a Decade of Change. *Social Research*, 821-850.

Signorielli, N. (2009). Race and sex in prime time: A look at occupations and occupational prestige. Mass Communication and Society, 12, 332–35

Skalli, L. H. (2006). Communicating gender in the public sphere: Women and information technologies in the MENA. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, *2*(2), 35-59.

Vinacke, W.E. 1957. Stereotypes and social concepts. Journal of Social Psychology 46: 22943