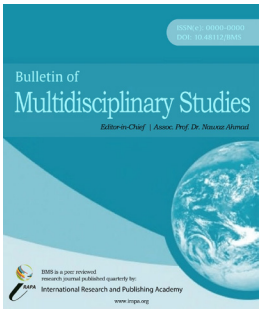
09-09-5444-BMS-1054

Bulletin of
Multidisciplinary Studies
Vol. 2 No. 1 | January – March, 2025 | 82-89
ISSN(e): 3007-0619 | ISSN(p): 3007-0600
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15251956



Original Article

Examining the Portrayal of Women in Advertising and Its Impact on Youngsters in Pakistan

Fatima Shahid *(Corresponding Author)*
Karachi University Business School
University of Karachi, Karachi – Pakistan
hussaini0333@gmail.com

Fouzia Sheeraz (Ph.D)
Department of Business Administration
Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi – Pakistan
fouzia.sheeraz@ssuet.edu.pk

Waheed Akram
Department of Business Administration
National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Lahore – Pakistan
waheedskp85@gmail.com

Zohaib Hassan Sain
Faculty of Business & Management Sciences
Superior University, Lahore – Pakistan
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6567-5963
zohaib3746@gmail.com

Muhammad Hanif Bhutto
Karachi University Business School
University of Karachi, Karachi – Pakistan
hanif.opth@yahoo.com

Article history:

Received: January 02, 2025
Revised: March 08, 2025
Accepted: March 10, 2025
Published: April 01, 2025

Authors' Biography

Fatima Shahid is currently a Research Scholar at Karachi University Business School, University of Karachi in Karachi – Pakistan. She received her Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Karachi in Karachi – Pakistan.

Fouzia Sheeraz (Ph.D) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Business Administration, Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology in Karachi – Pakistan. She obtained her Post-Doctorate in Business Administration from the University of Aveiro in Aveiro – Portugal.

Waheed Akram is a Research Scholar at the Department of Business Administration, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) in Lahore – Pakistan. He received his Master in Business Administration from the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) in Lahore – Pakistan

Zohaib Hassan is a Research Scholar at the Faculty of Business & Management Sciences, Superior University in Lahore – Pakistan. He received his Masters in Management Sciences from Superior University in Lahore – Pakistan.

Muhammad Hanif Bhutto is currently a Research Scholar at Karachi University Business School, University of Karachi in Karachi – Pakistan. He received his Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Karachi in Karachi – Pakistan.

JEL Classification: **M37**

How to Cite:

Shahid, F., Sheeraz, F., Akram, W., Sain, Z. H., & Bhutto, M. H. (2025). Examining the Portrayal of Women in Advertising and Its Impact on Youngsters in Pakistan. *Bulletin of Multidisciplinary Studies,2*(1), 82 –89.

https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15251956

Publisher's Note:

International Research and Publishing Academy (*i*RAPA) stands neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in the published maps and institutional affiliations.

Copyright:

©2025 | Bulletin of Multidisciplinary Studies published by International Research and Publishing Academy (*i*RAPA)

This is an Open Access article published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0)

Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY): lets others distribute and copy the article, to create extracts, abstracts, and other revised versions, adaptations or derivative works of or from an article (such as a translation), to include in a collective work (such as an anthology), to text or data mine the article, even for commercial purposes, as long as they credit the author(s), do not represent the author as endorsing their adaptation of the article, and do not modify the article in such a way as to damage the author's honour or reputation.

ABSTRACT

Advertisement is the fundamental way to introduce the newly formed products in the market as well as to increase the sale of exiting products. Portrayal of women in advertisements of Pakistani products becomes an important discussion now-a-day. This research paper elaborates the fact that how it portrays women in Pakistani advertising and its complete impacts on the young generation of Pakistan. The literature review of the paper mainly focusses on a peculiar point that women are mostly portrayed in advertisement in two different ways (i)as house wives and as (ii) attractive objects. In most advertisements of Pakistan women are put on stage as a decoration object to attract the viewers' attention which create a sense of modern culture. The conclusion of the paper shows that women are just like a decoration piece and therefore women are only portraying for the attention of the viewers which induce the products market. They only indicate the physical beauty of the women to enhance or introduce the product in the market to earn.

Keywords: *Advertising, Decoration object, Portrayal of women, Youngsters in Pakistan*

INTRODUCTION

When we talk about to introduce something new in the market or enhance the selling of existing products in the market, our first and foremost priority move towards advertisement. Nevertheless, the field of advertisement is vaster than our imagination. It includes multiple characters as well as unlimited features. The object of advertisement is conveying the specifications of considering product and advantage over the other one (Zhdanova, 2015). During advertisement, the role of beautiful young ladies attracts the consumer toward the relevant product. Every individual watch advertisement differently for example for some it is a way to announce consumers about inflating prices and some view it as not mandatory hard effort to sell products in the market. Advertisements have taken many shapes to communicate to their target individuals. Advertising has been revolutionized from past several decades especially in 2006 when YouTube was launched (Gupta & Singh, 2017). After this social media advertising became very recognized and companies started going all viral.

One of the active and most widely tool used by our telecommunication media is the use of charming ladies in advertisement regardless of social culture and our religion. They used the beauty of female as a price tag in the market of various products. Values of women importance that raised by Islam culture is once again going toward the era of illiteracy. Countless advertisements are conducted on daily basis in which women are used as passive, intellectual, deferential, shy, dreamy, gentle and much more (Sharma & Bumb, 2021). The temperament of exposure of women in the advertisements that whether their portrayal is according to the cultural and religious values or not and how stereotypical portrayals of Pakistani women in various sorts of advertisements significantly enhance perceptions of Pakistani people in interpersonal contexts. One can understand women portrayal in the media advertisement if he/she is capable to uncover the nature of Pakistani print media, the possible methods to study them and their potential to evaluate and construct the consumers.

Objectives of the Study

Identify the correlation between role of female in advertisement and its impact on young generation. The starting point for the development of this dissertation work in marketing, As Women in Advertising, was through a meeting with friends where one of them came up with the question of how they portrayed women in commercials, American rap clips and in funk. Brazilian and others, where many of them used women as an object of consumption or merely as a decorative object. At the time the question was asked, the only thing I could remember from the points mentioned were two ads in question that marked me negatively, one made by the SKOL beer brand in 2015, aired in Brazil, where your ad had as motto "Leave NO at home" - figure 01 - and the second was the campaign made by the world-famous company DOLCE & GABBANA in 2007, which suggested a rape scene - figure 02 - consequently, both campaigns were highly criticized and companies they had to portray themselves before their audience.

From this meeting on, I started to observe all the campaigns that appeared in front of me, whether in TV commercials, magazines or even in advertisements broadcast or distributed in the streets. Through this more critical look at existing campaigns, at the moment, I realized that most of them basically followed a pattern: the exposure of women as decorative, object, sexualized women, gender discrimination and prejudices existing in society and the way they use sex under the pretext of holding the attention of its consumers and / or possible consumers. That is, this was the second stage that made

me consider the process of this dissertation.

In ads and campaigns that show women negatively and subordinate to men, the body is exposed in a form that can be considered "infamous" in campaigns, full of messages and values that reflect the reality / thinking of our society, and which must be studied to allow an understanding of the social context in which they find themselves. The search to understand the way the female body is presented in the campaigns was the first stage of awareness for the development of this research; in order to better understand the process and why these campaigns use this form of dissemination, popularizing and incorporating it as a tool, thus perpetuating a negative way to the image of women.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Number of research papers as well as articles were published in past on the concerning topic of portrayal of women in the advertisements. In most recent studies, a homology has been found which indicated that role of women in today's advertisement and following the instructions of directors in the advertisement creating a sense of negativity in the memory of our youngster containing both gender male and female. Hashmi et al., (2018) argued that it's the fundamental right of women to work for advertisement but they should must understand the teaching of social aspects as well as cultural morals duties (Raza & Noor, 2016).

Female are used for the sake of glamour to get attention of the audience; their purpose is not to give them fame but to sale their products so women are used as attention grabber. Female are used to give various sorts of un-respective expression like smiling and seducing through which various Pakistani women with the passage of time get stuck in this modernized era. Women are showing sexual appeals to increase the products marketing (Liu et al., 2009). Ali et al., (2012) argued that Pakistani advertisement is not showing the equality of gender but actually it is borderline offense. He said culture and society play decide which is acceptable and which is not. He argued that Pakistani commercials showing horrible picture of our society by the use of female in advertisement.

According to Byarly and Ross (2008), traditionally media advertisements have positioned women as passive and submissive. At the same time, Grabe et al., (2008) stated that this prescribe role for women in media is being changed at the moment, however certain limitation still exists. A qualitative study arranged by Fahim (2018) observed and analyzed that, roles present in Pakistani advertisements are elaborating the sensitive image of women, these advertisements show the portrayal of a woman as the misconceive object that epitomizes the social aspects of Pakistani society regarding gender stereotypes leads to allocation of daily day roles and responsibilities. By the help of semi analysis, researcher concluded that advertisement of women in TV ads, that defines the traditional way of performing daily duties by women like, advertise a washing powder while washing clothes in houses, advertising a cocking oil while preparing meal in the kitchen, etc. (Jamil, 2018). A content analysis on 150 Pakistani channels showed that, the use of women in TV advertisement are mostly based on domestic tasks like cocking, kitchen work, child caring, domestic maintenance, etc. (Ali & Shahwar, 2011), and these targets are depicting the conceptualization of women duties in Pakistani society.

Ullah (2014) concluded that women of Pakistan working in ads just to expose their bodies which lie in the categories of seduction among the youngsters or bachelors of universities. As previously explained, the Industrial Revolution, together with the new system that was shaping at the time, Capitalism, were necessary to create new techniques within the tools that improved as required by the demand for products. These techniques, better known as advertising communication, were intended to improve the model that this new consumer market required.

The advertising communication technique is a tool stimulated by marketing campaigns, where desires and needs are developed for all who encounter it, as they work as mediators between the new existing market and consumers. Creating, in addition to desire and need, a strand of memorization joining information with images of the product and / or services offered, in graphic form, to better attract customers. Leiss et al., (2018) argued that advertising communication as an activity is linked to communication that articulates, in an aesthetic dimension, different languages (imagery, verbal, etc.) in a message - the advertisement - conveyed by the media. These languages adapt to the possibilities and resources, to the restrictions and impositions of the types of media that transmit them". Therefore, it is noted that advertising handles ways to awaken actions in its audience, with the attempt to convince, for that Gurrieri et al., (2022) describe that this process has three alternatives, being the order, what makes the person act; persuasion, what makes us believe and the seduction that comes down to the search for pleasure, that is, for the writer, advertising is the mentor of the behavioral transformations of society - not only sells the product in question, but ideas, values, fantasies and

ideologies. Advertising reinforces sociocultural values pre-established by society.

According to Pedros-Perez et al., (2019), advertising is a factor that we must inevitably take into account when explaining the mentality of a society". Vanni Codeluppi explains that advertising communication can be considered one of the most powerful actors that act in the process of producing the culture of contemporary society (Pedros-Perez et al., 2019). Pedros-Perez et al., (2019) point out that advertising creates a "Ideal world" where it directly influences society, being considered a powerful tool for the promotion and legitimization of consumer culture, capturing meanings already pre-established in society, adapting to its products and / or services offered. article states that advertising is an important vehicle for transmitting these ideas, whether to reinforce existing values or to improve or disseminate new ones, especially if we consider that creative imaginations can stop in traditional stories as a main workhorse for access consumers, or even new ways to remember childhood stories.

Thus, we conclude that advertising is a tool with a greater degree of effectiveness with regard to identifying the attitudes and behaviors of a society and that it is therefore very important to study and analyze the way ads influence society. In this case, how they portray the image of the woman, as a form of image-show (Asemah et al., 2013). As well as analyzing the reason why advertising uses more and more sexual scenes every day as a way to hold the attention of its consumers with naked bodies and poses that explain sex. The advertising image is an instrument that intends to operate on consumers as a form of psychological action in order to generate a change in the behavior of those who see them, that is, as a persuasive social practice, it seeks the conditioning of man to a certain action, organizes his texts mainly through images, sounds and texts, among which certain meanings circulate. In other words, the spectacle images are coated with intentionality through representations of social values rooted culturally in society. Advertising images are cent r al pieces in the construction of identity relati o nships that are established from the body. And advertising itself becomes a territory for the demarcation of identities.

De Lenne et al., (2021) indicate that the image of the ads, carrie s within itself a huge range of values that through th e combination of the image and the speech create fantastic worlds where products and / or services earn much more than their use value. This is because the image serves as a great lever, loaded with ideologies and values that flood culture, worldviews, lifestyles. Concomitantly, symbolic images tend to gain importance by c r eating l inks between the products offered and des i rable c h aracteristics, ceasing to be just a support e lement i n the advertising campaign and associating with th e recipient through images and behaviors, establishing a relationship of empathy with whom see. In other words, the images found in advertising campaigns have the strength to reinforce and reaffirm the relationship that the individual sees the world in a visual way, as it is from this consensus that he recognizes and identifies himself with the real world.

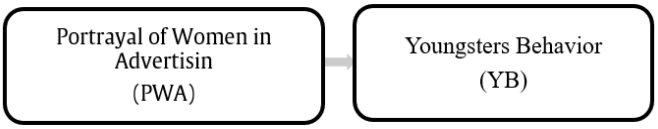


Fig. 1. Research Framework

Hypothesis

H_1: Portrayal of Women in Advertising has a significant impact on the Youngsters Behavior

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was organized keeping in view the recent research to evaluate the portrayal of women in advertisement of Pakistan and its impact on upcoming and existing young generation. A survey was conducte ed on the base of this questioner among the 6 most famous universities of Karachi including 2 medical colleges. The questionnaire was distributed in these universities to interview the maximum candidates with their final judgement about the role of women in advertisement and their impacts on young existing era. In this period only the individuals having age 18-26 were interview by the help of questioner. 5 most watching advertisement from various Pakistani channels were collected, the purpose of this selection is to interview the candidate keeping in view of these advertisements.

Approach of Study

Two major approaches to making choices are generally considered in the research. First, the inductive approach decides the kind of conclusion based on real details — one or two, which offers data that finds less firm the relation between reason(s) and assumptions. Second, the deductive approach

in contrast, adopts these explanations and indicate a process of reasons. In this study, a deductive method is considered to determine whether our hypotheses explain the association between the independent and the dependent variable. About 300 individuals take part in this question. The respondent's answers were organized as confidential and check the data twice to ensure error and omissions during survey. Given are the respondents answers.

Data Analysis

The statistical analysis is carried out using the SPSS software to determine the relationship between an independent variable after the data have been collected. In this study, Pearson correlation analysis, descriptive analytics, and regression analysis were used to characterize statistical evidence to help the hypotheses. Pearson correlation measures the sensitivity and direction of the two factors. The power scale from +1 to -1 where +/- shows the interaction and correlation orientation. Descriptive analysis is also conducted to demonstrate the data collection functionality.

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Descriptive Statistics of Participants

Table 1 shows that demographic characteristics of the participating individuals to this study. From this perspective, it demonstrates that among the total number of participants (n = 203) 70 (38.9 %) were female and 124 (61.1 %) were male. The significant number of participants was from the age group between 20 and 30.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Participants

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	79	38.9
	Male	124	61.1
Age Group	20 - 30	136	67.0
	31 - 40	53	26.1
	41 - 50	11	5.4
	51 - 60	2	1.0
	60+	1	.5
Employment Status	Unemployed	42	20.7
	Employed	161	79.3

Descriptive Statistics of Responses

Table 2 describes the received responses. In this way, the mean score of the variable Youngsters Behavior was 3.71 having .540 as standard deviation and .292 as variance. The variable Portrayal of Women in Advertising was 3.81 having .571 as standard deviation and .327 as variance.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Responses

	YB	PWA
N	203	203
Range	4	3.63
Minimum	1	1
Maximum	5	4.63
Mean	3.71	3.81
Std. Dev	0.54	0.571
Variance	0.292	0.327
Skewness	-0.865	-1.525
Kurtosis	2.302	3.467

YB=Youngsters Behavior
PWA=Portrayal of Women in Advertising

Reliability

Table 3 shows the internal consistency between the items used under each variable. The internal consistency was measured via Cronbach Alpha test applied in SPSS. According to Edelsbrunner et al., (2025), alpha values were described as excellent (0.93–0.94), strong (0.91–0.93), reliable (0.84–0.90), robust (0.81), fairly high (0.76–0.95), high (0.73–0.95), good (0.71–0.91), relatively high (0.70–0.77), slightly low (0.68), reasonable (0.67–0.87), adequate (0.64–0.85), moderate (0.61–0.65), satisfactory (0.58–0.97), acceptable (0.45–0.98), sufficient (0.45–0.96), not satisfactory (0.4–0.55) and low (0.11).

Table 3
Internal Consistency Test

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Deleted Items
YB	.713	5	-
PWA	.690	8	-

Inferential Statistics

		Consumption	Price
YB	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	203	
PWA	Pearson Correlation	.610**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	203	203

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

To test the stated hypotheses, the Inferential Statistics was used. From this perspective, regression test was run using SPSS. Table 4, 5 and 6 display the results of the regression test. Table 4 shows the overall impact of independent variable on the dependent variable (R = .628) which is 62.8%. It means, with the change in the independent variables, the dependent variable changes up to 62.8 percent.

Table 4
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.628a	.395	.389	.42258

a. Predictors: (Constant), YB

The sig value (.000) in the table 5 shows that the prescribed model is good fit to test the regression.

Table 5
ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.314	2	11.657	65.277	.000b
	Residual	35.716	200	.179		
	Total	59.030	202			

a. Dependent Variable: YB

b. Predictors: (Constant), PWA

The sig values (.000 less than .05) in the table 6 show that the independent variable has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable. The positive B value shows that the independent variable has a positive impact on the dependent variable. It can be stated in other words that with the changes in Portrayal of Women in Advertising, the Youngsters Behavior will be increased by 40.6 percent.

Table 6
Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.144	0.242		4.731	0
PWA	0.406	0.081	0.429	5.003	0

Dependent Variable: YB

Table 7
Summary of Hypotheses

No	Statement	Sig Value	Status
H_1	Portrayal of Women in Advertising has a significant impact on the Youngsters Behavior	.000	Supported

Discussion

The findings of the current study, if compared with the reviewed literature, show that the variable including Portrayal of Women in Advertising has a significant impact on the Youngsters Behavior. Therefore, it would not be wrong to state that the findings of the present study are similar to that of the recommendations of the studies reviewed as in literature. This similarity further strengthens the findings of the present study. De Lenne et al., (2021) indicate that the image of the ads, carries within itself a huge range of values that through the combination of the image and the speech create fantastic worlds where products and / or services earn much more than their use value. Pedros-Perez et al., (2019) point out that advertising creates a "Ideal world" where it directly influences society, being considered a powerful tool for the promotion and legitimization of consumer culture, capturing meanings already pre-established in society. Ullah (2014) concluded that women of Pakistan working in ads just to expose their bodies which lie in the categories of seduction among the youngsters or bachelors of universities.

CONCLUSION

After a deep analysis on the portrayal of women in advertisement I reaffirm my position that media is objectifying the women and treated them as a show piece in the arena of advertisement. This misrepresentation of women in the advertisement creates the mindset of our youth that those females are morally corrupted. This personal thinking permits them to target and victimize them in their own way. Directors and producers also demoralize the women to force them in specific and objectified advertisement. This disgracing of women is only due to some specific factors of our society which aimed to earn money only through sensuous advertisements. Using the female in advertisement creates psychological effects and start a conflict between moral and ethical standards of society. Our youth daily facing such sort of objectified ads on various social sites like YouTube, Facebook and twitter and constantly watching them create a nerve impulse of damaging signal in the brain. Using in these advertisements reflect the two aspects, one is social in which youth put them in negative context and effect on personal satisfaction, self-confidence and create a sense of opposing morals and ethics.

Competing Interest

The authors had no competing interests.

References

Ali, A., Ali, R., Kumar, D., Hafeez, M. H., & Ghufran, B. (2012). Gender role portrayal in television advertisement: Evidence from Pakistan. *Information Management and Business Review, 4*(6), 340.

Ali, S., & Shahwar, D. (2011). Men, women and TV Ads: The representation of men and women in the advertisements of Pakistani electronic media. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies, 3*(4), 151.

Asemah, E. S., Edegoh, L. O., & Ojih, E. U. (2013). Audience perception of the portrayal of women in television advertising. *AFRREV LALIGENS: An International Journal of Language, Literature and Gender Studies, 2*(1), 21-37.

Byerly, C. M., & Ross, K. (2008). *Women and media: A critical introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.

De Lenne, O., Vandenbosch, L., Smits, T., & Eggermont, S. (2021). Framing real beauty: A framing approach to the effects of beauty advertisements on body image and advertising effectiveness. *Body image, 37*, 255-

268.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2021.03.003

Edelsbrunner, P. A., Simonsmeier, B. A., & Schneider, M. (2025). The Cronbach's Alpha of Domain-Specific Knowledge Tests Before and After Learning: A Meta-Analysis of Published Studies. *Educational Psychology Review, 37*(1), 1-43.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-024-09982-y

Fahim, S. (2018). *Influence of advertising on gender roles and stereotypes in Pakistan* (Doctoral Dissertation).
http://hdl.handle.net/2152/67965

Grabe, S., Ward, L. M., & Hyde, J. S. (2008). The role of the media in body image concerns among women: a meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies. *Psychological Bulletin, 134*(3), 460.

Gupta, H., & Singh, S. (2017). Social media in contemporary marketing: YouTube advertising for the guerrillas. *Media Watch, 8*(3), 413-422.
https://doi.org/10.15655/mw_2017_v8i3_49145

Gurrieri, L., Tuncay Zayer, L., & Coleman, C. A. (2022). Transformative advertising research: Reimagining the future of advertising. *Journal of Advertising, 51*(5), 539-556.
https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2022.2098545

Hashmi, N. U., Zulqarnain, W., & Ghafoor, W. (2018). Portrayal of women for advertising effectiveness in Pakistan. *Journal of Research and Reviews in Social Sciences Pakistan, 1 (2)*, 164-168.

Jamil, M. F. (2018). Stereotypical and non-stereotypical representation of women in Pakistani TV advertisements. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies, 5*(10), 58-66.

Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., & Asquith, K. (2018). *Social communication in advertising*. New York: Routledge.

Liu, F., Cheng, H., & Li, J. (2009). Consumer responses to sex appeal advertising: a cross-cultural study. *International Marketing Review, 26*(4/5), 501-520.
https://doi.org/10.1108/02651330910972002

Pedros-Perez, G., Martínez-Jiménez, P., & Aparicio-Martinez, P. (2019). The potential of car advertising in pursuing transport policy goals: Code of good practices in the Spanish context. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment, 72,* 312-332.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2019.05.010

Raza, S. H., & Noor, S. (2016). Portrayal of women in national and international advertisements in Pakistani magazines: Why need to rethink. *Journal of Marketing and Consumer Research*, 27.

Sharma, S., & Bumb, A. (2021). Role portrayal of women in advertising: An empirical study. *Journal of International Women's Studies, 22*(9), 236-255.
https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol22/iss9/16

Ullah, H. (2014). The Objectification of Women in Television Advertisements in Pakistan. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences, 8*(2).

Zhdanova, E. U. (2015). An Advertisement as an Object for Linguistic Research. *Frontier Materials & Technologies*, (2-1), 82-85.
https://vektornaukitech.ru/jour/article/view/444