

Liquid Gender in Modernity: Research on the Femininity Construction and Audience Perception of TV Advertisement Spokesperson

Mengchao Xie

School of Environment, Education and Development, The University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

mengchao.xie@student.manchester.ac.uk

Abstract. In the wake of patriarchal culture, the female images in TV advertisements have been confined to the framework of “good housewife” for a long time, which has become the object of male’s gaze. Meanwhile. With the development of globalization, informatization and networking, the female images in TV advertisements have been more diverse. Using qualitative and quantitative methods as well as questionnaires and in-depth interviews, this paper aims to study the femininity construction and audience perception of TV advertisement spokespersons. When it comes to the TV advertisement industry, this study is beneficial to inspiring future female TV advertisements to further break the gender stereotype under the male gaze and present diverse and positive TV advertisements from the perspective of “gender equality”. In addition, this study holds that diversified femininity construction is not only conducive to establishing a richer gender cognition from the audience aspect and intensifying women's subjective consciousness, but also helps promote a more valuable construction of gender temperament and guide the audience perception of femininity.

Keywords: TV Advertisements; Spokesperson; Femininity; Audience Perception.

1. Introduction

Influenced by the gender stereotype that women are more suitable for work related to public relations, the proportion of female spokespersons in TV advertisements is large, with the femininity construction often realized by means of symbolic language. The interactive impact of spokesperson type and product type on advertising communication effect is concentrated on the construction of the spokesperson’s gender temperament. The female image spokesperson in these TV advertisements has influenced the evaluation of the construction effect of gender temperament, and femininity has been paid full attention by TV advertisements. As for the analysis of gender stereotypes of female spokespersons in TV advertisements, existing studies have proposed that female image spokespersons of different ages manifest synchronic characteristics that change with the times. In other words, influential social fashion participates in the female image construction of TV advertisement spokespersons. Such a change not only reflects the transformation of social culture, but also reveals the diversity and complexity of female image shaping in the advertising industry.

On the whole, combining quantitative research and qualitative research, this study mainly finds that TV advertisements commonly discriminate against women and gender stereotypes. Besides, this study puts forth that advertisements have undergone the deconstruction and reconstruction of femininity construction in the female image, and believes that TV advertisements will demonstrate more diversified characteristics in the future, with new media features in accordance with digitalization and globalization. Up against the continuous development of the times, it is expected that the female images in TV advertisements in the future can showcase the charm and value of women in a more true, diversified and three-dimensional manner. For a long period, the female image in TV advertisements embodies the characteristics of constructing a “good housewife” as the center. Through the analysis of the image of different female spokespersons in TV advertisements, this study holds that the influence of patriarchal culture on female media image is not only reflected in the single construction of female image by the male gaze, but also in the self-construction of the female image

to a certain extent. In other words, women's subjective identity tends to weaken, affected much by the liquid gender in modernity.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Femininity Construction and Gender Stereotypes

As a vital carrier of cultural communication, mass media such as radio and television is likely to shape and strengthen a universal cultural norm through selective statements and thematic emphasis, aiming to pursue a wide audience recognition to realize a cultural norm and a maximized audience recognition. This cultural norm contains the basic factors that produce gender stereotypes. As an important foundation of gender patterning, the realization of norms by mass media is often internalized, which is embodied in the social expectation of communicators to the audience. Moreover, it is easy to produce complex gender awareness behaviors (Wu & Zheng, 2004). The femininity construction depends on social expectations featuring patriarchal values. For example, it is challenging to break through traditional gender stereotypes in the construction of female athletes' gender temperament (Yang, 2021: 154). The function of mass media to construct gender meaning enables it to affect social behavior with the help of gender stereotypes. For instance, the characteristics of young, beautiful, gentle and obedient women constructed by advertisements constitute the female stereotypes expected by society with patriarchal values (Jiang et al., 2022).

The construction of female media images needs to transcend gender politics. Especially under the influence of the male gaze, the female images in Chinese advertisements have affected the basic perception of society on female images to a certain extent. The social problems and structural social adjustments brought about by the awakening of women's groups have affected the liberation of women. Meanwhile, the presentation of female media images that focus on the problems between "women" and "society" is bound to be quite different from that of Western society (Cao & Song, 2024). Up against social media empowerment, the construction of post-feminist discourse is mainly based on changes in gender power structures. After being empowered, women rethink gender power relationships, and once again use the media to deepen their understanding of the essence of female consciousness (Wang & Tan, 2023). Different from the "good housewife" of advertisements in the TV era, social media has built a brand-new world of female discourse. In other words, female-centered consumerism has begun to profoundly influence female media images (Yang, 2017). Masculinity is a concept opposite to femininity, which is based on the pursuit of external factors such as power, wealth, sexual ability and violence ability. At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish between the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. The latter prevails in popular culture and social customs, which are external, repressive and compulsive. For example, in the primary education stage, there is a gender stereotype that "girls are not suitable for learning STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)", and rumors in society even have that men's intelligence is better than women's. However, taking "gender and mathematics education" as an example, studies have proved that no significant relationship exists between gender differences and mathematics learning (Jaxon et al, 2019).

Feminist advertisements known as "femvertising" are characterized by the highlight of feminine talents. However, the central characters of the advertisements are more likely to be male than female, suggesting gender differences in the allocation of major roles (Lewis & Lupyan, 2020). In the world of female discourse, the breakthrough of gender stereotypes mainly depends on the construction of media discourse. For example, in *People's Daily*, the construction of female images in the traditional media era fundamentally relies on the basic structure with "men as breadwinners and women as housekeepers". New media can amplify the diversified presentation of female images in audio-visual communication means, and men and women transcend the basic framework of binary opposition, thus better promoting social development (Zhang, 2017). However, under the combined patriarchy and consumerist ideology, although the value of "female independence" has been strengthened, it rationalizes the unequal status of women (Wang, 2022).

2.2. Research on TV Advertisement Spokespersons

According to the capital theory put forward by Bourdieu, symbolic capital, as an immaterial form of capital, can be transformed into commercial value. The female image in TV advertisements has a “symbolic association”. Besides, TV advertisements associate products with the symbolic capital and symbolic meaning of female stars, so that products have the constructive function of symbolic meaning and identity. For example, in the process of selling lipsticks, TV advertisements create a complex symbolic illusion for lipstick by connecting lipstick with the symbolic capital of stars (Kuang, 2020). In the field of advertising history research, women’s beautiful appearance is fully utilized by the mass media, which also stimulates the emergence of new independent images of women. For example, *Women’s Magazine* affirms women’s own values and women’s pursuit of equality, beauty and new knowledge as well as self-awakening and personality independence are reflected in the women’s map (Liu, 2018).

From the perspective of media ecology, the mass media has inadvertently constructed a “biased” media landscape. As a crucial carrier, advertising generally associates men with rationality and official duties, while women with sensibility and housework. Such a phenomenon reflects the denial of women’s values (Liu & Bu, 1997). Gender theory holds that the mass media “stereotypes” female images and patterns female images by “role solidification” and “gender solicitation”, which limits the diversity and profundity of female images. Back at the end of the 20th century, there were many hidden worries about gender discrimination in China’s TV advertising industry, which failed to fully reflect the diverse contributions and role changes of women in modern society. At that time, China’s TV advertisements had not broken through the tradition, nor had they adapted to the changes of female image patterns in line with the development of the times, which belittled women’s contribution and role in life (Liu, Bu & Chen, 1997). However, since the 21st century, this situation has started to demonstrate positive changes.

In the wake of the 21st century, the images of women in China’s TV advertisements have become increasingly diversified, women’s roles in the family have changed, and traditional gender concepts have disintegrated (Liao, 2018). In TV advertisements with women as spokespersons, the female advertising spokespersons of Heads & Shoulders completed a series of difficult pole dancing movements, which not only illustrated the anti-dandruff ability of shampoo, but also showed new female images with the help of TV advertisements (Lan, 2013). With the vigorous development of consumer culture, its influence on TV advertisements is more and more in-depth over the days, with the display of female images more abundant and diverse. TV advertisements are no longer limited to showing women’s external beauty or traditional family roles, but lay more emphasis on presenting women’s unique charm and diverse values in various life scenes. For example, the capability and independence of women in the workplace and their tenacity and courage in the pursuit of dreams and self-worth are shown in TV advertisements (Chai, 2015).

3. Research Methodology: Questionnaire Survey and In-Depth Interview Based on TV Advertisements Audience

3.1. Research Methodology: Questionnaire Survey and In-Depth Interview

A questionnaire survey is a commonly used research method in social science research. This study constructs a Likert scale based on the theory of changing gender stereotype, and the symbiosis and initiative of gender temperament have been emphasized. As the theoretical foundation for changing gender stereotypes, social role theory holds that the characteristics of symbiosis in the construction of masculinity in the United States are not obvious. Nevertheless, the construction of masculinity in Asian countries such as South Korea allows “masculinity” and “femininity” to coexist, with apparent symbiotic characteristics (Wang et al., 2024). Accordingly, in the design of questionnaires, the impact of symbiosis and initiative on respondents is fully considered.

As a vital qualitative research method, in-depth interview mainly includes one to one and face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, focus interviews, etc. As for the research steps, the in-depth interview first needs to enter the interview site, understand the interviewee's culture and language, determine the researcher's position in the interview, and find the "key informant" (Peng, 2005). This study intends to use in-depth interviews as an important methodological support to sort out the image characteristics of female spokespersons in TV advertisements, and provide a basis for discussion for further in-depth research.

3.2. Research Object: Different Types of TV Advertisements Audiences

The 1990s was a period when the home appliance industry was booming. As one of the largest gas appliance manufacturers in China at that time, Macro invited Wang Mingquan, a famous Hong Kong movie star, as its spokesperson, and changed its slogan to "Creating happiness!", and then spread it all over the country. In the Macro dishwasher advertisement in 1992, Wang Mingquan appeared as a "good housewife". After cooking dishes and greeting guests, she was also responsible for cleaning up tableware and washing dishes. At that time, women were often branded with "housework". This phenomenon was born in the patriarchal culture. Besides, the objectification and dwarfing of women emphasized by feminist theory also commonly existed in the image construction of female spokespersons in TV advertisements. The construction of female images in TV series is also manifested as single and group images, with female narratives caught in such a dilemma for a long time (Cheng, 2024).

In the 21st century, with the development of globalization, informatization and networking, the female images in TV advertisements are further diversified and personalized. Female spokespersons are no longer just promoters of goods, but also transmitters of brand ideas and advocates of values. Being more real, natural and vivid, their images can arouse the resonance and recognition of the audience. Meanwhile, the advertisement industry has begun to pay more attention to the respect and protection of women's images, and avoid using too rigid or discriminatory depictions. As stars from Hong Kong and Taiwan, CoCo Lee is a Western woman with overseas life experience, and Jolin Tsai is a confident modern woman who has finally become a capable superstar through hard work. However, they both show their "free and frank" female images to the audience in their endorsed shampoo advertisements. Coco Lee's Haodi advertisement, accompanied by her masterpiece Di Da Di and the catchy advertising slogan "It's only good when it delivers to everyone", has been unforgettable for a generation as classic advertising. Jolin Tsai's advertisement for Heads & Shoulders made the public remember the brand by its dancing strength on the rings, analogizing its anti-dandruff strength as outstanding as her dancing strength, with the advertising slogan "Heads & Shoulders for unparalleled anti-dandruff strength".

In the 2010s, the femininity construction of female spokespersons demonstrated different characteristics. Sun Li used the slogan "Superwomen use Super Laundry Detergent" in the advertisement endorsing Super Laundry Detergent, which highlighted the external characteristics of modern women's independence and profession. In the advertisement of Liu Liu Mei (a brand of plum candy), Yang Mi repeatedly stated "Are you OK?" and created the external image of post-modern women by means of Meme-style communication. Such a cyborg feature realized a particularly good communication effect. Postmodernist advertisements often attract consumers with irrational factors, leaving a deep impression on consumers. In addition, they often break the traditional logic and enhance the overall visual impact with obscure expressions and incomprehensible content without stories, which are good at subverting traditional aesthetics with vague narratives and a strong negative and destructive color. Postmodernist advertisements also attach importance to deconstruction and despise construction, so as to show the unexpected charm of commodities. Focusing on the production of cultural value during the dissemination to consumers just as the female image that constantly subverts the traditional female image, post-modernism advertisements constantly change the symbolic meaning of the "female", which rebels and surpasses the female image constructed by modernism consistently, redepicting the traditional sexual relationship subversively. Advertising

slogans such as “Superwomen use super laundry detergent” call on women to re-examine women’s power, prompting people to realize that women should no longer follow the lead of traditional patriarchy. Meanwhile, women all over the world are advocated to change the world, rebuild a new order, create a new discourse system and women’s issues, and contribute to women’s rise and equality (Feng, 2018).

In the 2020s, the femininity construction of female spokespersons manifested atomic characteristics. The overall styles of the Rio cocktail advertisement endorsed by Zhang Zifeng and the Youkeshu underwear advertisement by Zhao Jinmai were relatively niche, taking a forest style with a focus on ecology and individualism, rather than being as single as the image of previous female advertisements. With the adjustment of demographic structure, Generation Z (namely the “post-95s” and “post-00s”), which is about to become the main body of consumers, is the “digital native” group in the Internet era . As a special sub-community, Generation Z is not only a leader in digital consumption, online consumption, and information consumption, but also a new force in knowledge consumption, green consumption, and healthy consumption. The *Generation Z Insight Report* released by QUEST MOBILE summarizes the behavior features of Generation Z as “rich livelihood with both material and spiritual enjoyment; preference to niche culture and more willingness to pay for ‘uniqueness’” (Hu, 2021). For this group, the emotional value carried by goods is their priority. For example, the slogan of “wine for a single person” for RIO captures the emotional characteristics of urban youths who are “lonely but not alone”, and behind its creativity is the insight and recognition of Generation Z’s “optimistic attitude towards exquisite life” (Zhang & Zhao, 2022).

4. Research Findings

4.1. Questionnaire Survey

In this study, a simple random sampling method was adopted, with 108 valid questionnaires collected after the questionnaire was distributed by online survey tool Wenjuanxing. When it comes to the gender of the respondents, 61.11% of the sample are “females”, and the proportion of male sample is 38.89%. Based on the age of the respondents, there are relatively many respondents aged “21-30 years old” in the sample, accounting for 44.44%, which shows a younger tendency as a whole.

Table 1. Basic Demographic Characteristics (N=108)

Name	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	66	61.11	61.11
	Male	42	38.89	100.00
Age	Aged Under 20	11	10.19	10.19
	Aged 21-30	48	44.44	54.63
	Aged 31-40	15	13.89	68.52
	Aged 41-50	16	14.81	83.33
	Aged 51-60	15	13.89	97.22
	Aged Over 60	3	2.78	100.00
	Total		108	100.0
Educational Level	High School	14	12.96	12.96
	Specialty	9	8.33	100.00
	Undergraduate	54	50.00	62.96
	Postgraduate	24	22.22	85.19
	Doctoral Graduate	7	6.48	91.67
Total		108	100.0	100.0

As for the reliability and validity test results, the reliability coefficient value of this survey is 0.834, which is greater than 0.8, while the reliability coefficient value of the data is higher than 0.8, which comprehensively shows that the reliability quality of the data is high and can be used for further analysis.

Table 2. Results of Reliability Analysis (N=108)

Cronbach Reliability Analysis-Simplified Format		
Number of Items	Sample Size	Cronbach α Coefficient
12	108	0.834

In this study, the corresponding commonality values of all research items are higher than 0.4, indicating that the information on research items can be effectively extracted. Additionally, the KMO is 0.801, which is greater than 0.6, and the data can be efficiently extracted for information.

Table 3. Results of Validity Analysis (N=108)

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
	KMO	0.801
	Approximate chi-square	577.378
Bartlett Sphericity Test	<i>df</i>	66
	<i>p</i> -value	0.000

On the whole, the results of the reliability and validity test are excellent, with this study suitable for further discussion and analysis. In this study, correlation analysis was used to study the correlation between gender, age, education and 12 items in the Likert scale. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to express the strength of the correlation.

Table 4. Results of Pearson Correlation Analysis (N=108)

		Gender	Age
Gender stereotypes in TV advertisements that emphasize masculinity or femininity	Correlation Coefficient	-0.190*	-0.291**
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.048	0.002
	Sample Size	108	108
Male or female in advertisements will deliberately cater to some gender stereotypes	Correlation Coefficient	-0.176	-0.339**
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.068	0.000
	Sample Size	108	108
Excessively masculine female images in advertisements will inhibit your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	-0.212*	-0.056
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.027	0.568
	Sample Size	108	108
Deliberately feminine female images in advertisements will stimulate your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	0.210*	0.189
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.029	0.050
	Sample Size	108	108
Casually revealed gender stereotype in advertisements will affect your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	-0.224*	-0.234*
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.020	0.015
	Sample Size	108	108
Compared with men, women spokespersons will enhance your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	-0.138	-0.164
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.154	0.090
	Sample Size	108	108
Female media images in advertisements are generally gentle and particularly feminine	Correlation Coefficient	-0.056	0.038
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.565	0.695
	Sample Size	108	108
Diversified female images in advertisements will enhance your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	-0.276**	-0.244*
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.004	0.011
	Sample Size	108	108
Female advertisements deliberately create masculine characteristics such as superwomen	Correlation Coefficient	-0.166	-0.132
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.086	0.175
	Sample Size	108	108
The discrimination of advertisement against women is implied in its shaping of gender temperament	Correlation Coefficient	-0.327**	-0.396**
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.001	0.000
	Sample Size	108	108
Housewife image in advertisements will enhance your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	0.420**	0.429**
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.000	0.000
	Sample Size	108	108
Image of independent women in advertisements will enhance your purchase desire	Correlation Coefficient	-0.149	-0.094
	<i>p</i> -Value	0.124	0.331
	Sample Size	108	108

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

The correlation coefficient between age and “housewife image in advertisements will enhance your purchase desire” is 0.429, with 0.01 as a significant level, thus indicating their significant positive correlation.

4.2. In-Depth Interview

This in-depth interview was conducted with 6 relevant respondents. With the interview duration from June 15 to 16, 2024, such an interview was conducted using a one to one face-to-face interview. The interviewees attending the meeting have their own characteristics in gender, age and education with apparent individualized characteristics.

Table 5. Basic Information of Respondents (N=6)

Number	Gender	Age	Profession	Educational Level	Introduction
A1	Female	22	Student	Postgraduate Degree	Overseas advertising students with international vision
A2	Female	24	Student	Postgraduate Degree	Engaged in the research of advertising and communication
A3	Female	23	Student	Postgraduate Degree	Master of Archaeology, Xiaohongshu blogger
B1	Male	24	Student	Postgraduate Degree	Master of Communication Engineering, with experience in media
B2	Male	23	Student	Undergraduate Degree	Enthusiasts interested in advertising
B3	Male	31	Postdoc	Doctoral Degree	Engaged in the research of advertising and communication

As for the design logic of the interview outline, the interview in this study is divided into two parts and each part has a theme, with three subtopics related to the theme. The theme of the first part is the understanding of femininity construction and gender stereotypes. The first two sub-questions are about respondents' basic cognition of "femininity construction" and "gender stereotype" respectively. The last sub-question leads to the respondents' perception of the two. Meanwhile, the theme of the second part is about the understanding of female spokespersons in different TV advertisements. The first sub-question is about the interviewees' understanding of female spokespersons in different TV advertisements, and the second sub-question continues to ask the details, arousing the interviewees' memories by age division. The last sub-question asks the interviewees to make an overall evaluation.

There are six items in the interview outline as follows. (1) What characteristics do you think are typical femininity at present? (2) In your perception, what are the gender stereotypes of women? (3) What do you think there are problems with the current construction of femininity and gender stereotypes of women? (4) Do you still remember which female spokespersons in TV advertisements left a deep impression on you? (5) Who do you think are the female spokespersons of TV advertisements that impressed you in different eras? (6) What do you think the femininity construction of female spokespersons in TV advertisements mainly affects gender stereotypes?

As for the main contents of the interviews, this survey aims to understand the audience perception of different types of TV advertisements. In-depth interviews were conducted with respondents' knowledge about femininity construction and gender stereotypes and about female spokespersons in different TV advertisements. When it comes to the contents of the interview responses, there are (1) respondents generally think that typical femininity is "gentle", with similar expressions including "delicate", "emotional", "quiet", "considerate", "strong empathy" and "considerate"; (2) stereotypes about women include "cry-lover" and "emotionality" and respondents tend to think that women are weak with relatively poor physical strength and physical fitness. Women are often in the role of "obedience" and need to take care of their families, do housework and take on family roles; (3) regarding the communication effect or influence of TV advertisements, gender opposition, women's social freedom, and women's family status and social status have all received attention. At the same time, female spokespersons of different ages have left various impressions on the interviewees. Some opinions also hold that advertising may amplify and strengthen stereotypes, and the forms of advertising are also considered to be intertwined with stereotypes.

5. Discussion

5.1. Self-Orientalization: Tenderness as Typical Femininity

The femininity construction in TV advertisements has experienced a series of evolutions in different ages. From the end of the 20th century to the 2020s, the femininity construction of female

spokespersons in TV advertisements has found the footing of advertising discourse expression between “independence” and “gentleness”. In particular, at the end of the 20th century, the “gentle” female spokespersons in TV advertisements showed themselves as good housewives, such as the dishwasher advertisements produced by Wang Mingquan. At the beginning of the 21st century, the spokespersons with “independent” femininity were mainly female stars from Hong Kong and Taiwan, such as shampoo advertisements endorsed by CoCo Lee and Jolin Tsai. In terms of the observation in recent years, although it is still wandering in different discourses, the image of female spokespersons in TV advertisements has not responded positively to the construction of new female images in the new era.

There is such a suspicion of catering to gender stereotypes, and the main problem lies in its lack of positive response. For example, the construction of some characteristics of new women in the new era (advertising) is actually avoided (Respondent B3).

“Self-orientalization” is a vital cultural phenomenon encountered by China and other Eastern countries in the era of globalization. The single temperament construction of female images in TV advertisements is mainly based on the discussion of gender stereotypes, that is, subconsciously suspending women in the scene of housework in the patriarchal culture. As an adjustment strategy to the femininity construction, “self-orientalization” compares with the diversity of Western femininity, and Eastern femininity is equated with gentleness and obedience. While interpreting this gentle femininity, “self-orientalization” also enables the temperament construction of Chinese female spokespersons in TV advertisements to fall back into the choice of “independence or gentleness” (Zhang, 2008).

5.2. Gender Stereotypes: Media Image of “Good Housewife”

When it comes to gender stereotypes, the definition of this concept is put forward according to the social role theory, and the symbiosis of female and male social roles needs to be paid attention to again. Therefore, the media image of a “good housewife” occurs under the patriarchal culture. Besides, the “perceptual bias hypothesis” and its derivatives become more prominent under the catalysis of mass media communication (Wang & Guan, 2024). Regarding the results of this questionnaire survey, older respondents more recognize the media image of female spokespersons as “good housewives”, which implies that the gender stereotype cognition of “good housewife” is based on an orientalized femininity.

Female spokespersons in TV advertisements reinforce gender stereotypes and further exacerbate the influence of gender stereotypes on people. Under its influence, gender stereotypes finally limit some functions of many female spokespersons in TV advertisements in communication (Respondent A3).

The so-called “good housewife” requires women to be gentle, patient and obedient from the male point of view, which makes women’s living space extremely bound by their families. Meanwhile, their other values are ignored, and women themselves are oversimplified (Gao, 2013). On the surface, the “good housewife” in TV advertisements seems romantic and warm. However, it profoundly reflects the influence of the backward traditional concept of “men as breadwinners and women as housekeepers”. The mass media represented by TV advertisements are keen to describe women as one-sided images such as “good housewives”. The hidden reasons are the restriction of traditional culture on women’s roles, the restriction of women’s images under the patriarchal discourse system, and the materialization of women’s images by the pressure of commercialization and marketization (Liu, 2016).

It is hard to believe that there is still an idea that women must attach to men for survival and women can’t be ambitious. For example, L actress was said to be utilitarian when she participated in *Ride the Wind* before, but the essence lies in competition (Respondent A1).

The female image of a “good housewife” in TV advertisements has a negative impact on gender construction. Thus, the social patriarchal discourse system may become more and more strengthened,

and female groups may more agree with backward cultural concepts such as “men are strong and women are weak”. In addition, gender orientation and gender stereotypes are obeyed in a state of “collective unconsciousness”, with the male-oriented social discourse system acquiesced (Liu, 2016).

5.3. Impact of Advertisement Communication: Hidden Worries About Gender Opposition Communication

The media presentation of female spokespersons in TV advertisements has long been plagued by the unequal gender political framework. The impact of male gaze on the construction of female images is direct and in-depth. The media image that equates women with “good housewives” implies a cultural attribute characterized by gender hegemony (Cao & Song, 2024). As for the male gaze, the perspective of “reviewing the right in hand” cuts the distance between the body landscape and the media presentation (Lu & Yang, 2017). For female spokespersons in TV advertisements, this male gaze interferes with the media presentation and the situation is even more obvious. Some interviewees think that the simplification of femininity construction results from the collusion of multiple social factors, among which patriarchal culture occupies an important position.

Women’s traits are rich. At present, the femininity construction and the gender stereotype of women only magnify a few of them. It is also easy for people to ignore other traits (Respondent A2).

In the process of the questionnaire survey, the implicit discrimination against women in advertisements is directly reflected in the gender stereotype of women. Meanwhile, the role of women in consumer society has changed, and the deconstructed and decentralized feminism has profoundly affected the self-knowledge of women groups. Therefore, the simplified treatment of female images in TV advertisements can no longer meet the basic demands of advertisement audiences for gender equality. Existing studies believe that gender opposition is also based on the background of TV advertisements and social media discourse shaping. It is not uncommon to scold wars around gender. How to resist the influence of male-centered culture on society has become an integral part of media culture in this period (Dong, 2021).

If such a stereotype is aggravated, it will easily trigger gender opposition and gender aggression, deteriorating the current network analysis that is always about gender abuse and war (Respondent B2).

According to the results of this questionnaire survey, the younger the respondents, the more they agree that “the discrimination against women in advertisements is implied in its temperament shaping”. The current younger generation of Generation Z tends to further liberate the image of women, rather than suppressing them from becoming the object of the male gaze in patriarchal culture. In the future, the female images presented in TV advertisements may be further optimized, that is, the diversified female media images will affect the media’s understanding and construction of gender to a greater extent.

6. Conclusion

Shaping the female image of spokespersons in TV advertisements has been subject to the influence of patriarchal culture for a long time, and the image form shows the flat and single spokesperson. In other words, the single female image of “a good housewife” is full of the content of TV advertisements. By analyzing different types of female spokespersons in TV advertisements of different ages, this study finds that patriarchal culture has profoundly influenced the female spokespersons in TV advertisements. This paper revealed that the diversified presentation of female image shows its liquid feature on aspect of gender communication, while the main features of gender change a lot as time goes by. This paper sorts out and analyzes the characteristics of female spokespersons in TV advertisements in the construction of gender temperament, which helps to clarify the direct influence of patriarchal culture on female groups and avoid falling into the “trap” of gender stereotypes constructed by mass media. In the future, further research can combine the latest

theories of gender studies based on the audience perception, and analyze the temperament construction of female spokespersons in advertising.

References

- [1] Wang, L. L. & Dong, M. L. (2022). Does “male beauty” really work: The impact of male endorsements on female consumers’ evaluation of female-gender-imagined product. *Acta Psychologica Sinica*, 54(02):192-204.
- [2] Wu, T. J. & Zheng, Y. (2004). Analysis of female stereotypes in TV advertisements. *Contemporary Communication*, (05):68-70.
- [3] Yang, X. (2021). *Research on the “liberation” of women in Chinese competitive sports*. Wuhan: Wuhan University Press.
- [4] Jiang, H. Y., Xu, M. M., Chen, H. & Liu, B. S. (2022). The impact of gender traits of cross-gender stereotype endorsement and product signaling on advertising effectiveness: Based on the context of male star endorsing female products. *Management Review*, 34(07):175-188.
- [5] Cao, P. X. & Song, J. Y. (2024). Beyond gender politics: Thirty years of research on Chinese women's media image (1994-2023). *News and Writing*, (02):54-62.
- [6] Wang, T. & Tan, T. H. (2023). Creating new women image: Product-feminist discourse and audience meeting production in social media advertising. *Chinese Journal of Journalism & Communication*, 45(09):48-70.
- [7] Yang, X. (2017). Female image presentation and discourse construction from the perspective of new media. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China)*, 39(09):159-161.
- [8] Zhang, N. (2017). A study of female images in the discourse of *People’s Daily* (2001-2015). *Journalism and Mass Communication*, (03):70-74+82.
- [9] Wang, H. Y. (2022). Advanced housewives: Independent women from the perspective of gaze—Based on the field investigation of a makeup and nail training institution. *China Youth Study*, (06): 68-74.
- [10] Kuang, W. B. (2020). Critical interpretation of “beauty” as a metaphor for beauty internet celebrity and consumer culture. *People’s Tribune*, (19):133-135.
- [11] Liu, W. N. (2018). Study on the women’s style of the Republic of China in the images of women’s magazine (1915-1931). *Publishing Research*, (10):108-111.
- [12] Liu, B. H. & Bu, W. (1997). The research report on the women image in the TV advertisement in China. *Journalism and Communication*, (01):45-58+96.
- [13] Liu, B. H., Bu, W. & Chen, X. X. (1997). Analysis on the stereotyping of male and female roles in TV advertisements in China. *Journal of Chinese Women’s Studies*, (02):19-24.
- [14] Liao, J. W. (2018). Application and change of female images in Chinese TV advertisements. *Youth Journalist*, (14):97-98.
- [15] Lan, C. & Cai, Y. (2013). Cognitive linguistic study of multimodal metaphor in TV advertisements—A case study of Heads & Shoulders advertisements. *Foreign Language Research*, (05):17-23.
- [16] Chai, P. J. (2015). Construction of female images in TV advertisements. *Contemporary TV*, (04):78-79.
- [17] Peng, X. P. (2005). Review of qualitative research interview method. *Social Scientist*, (S1):534-535.
- [18] Wang, Z., Zuo, G. G., Shen, P. Y., et al. (2024). The negative effects of positive gender stereotypes: The mediating role of depersonalization and moderating role of interpersonal sensitivity. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 32(02):268-272.
- [19] Cheng, Q. (2024). From “female” to “she”: The iteration and expectation of women’s images in domestic dramas. *China Literature and Art Criticism*, (04):92-103+127-128.
- [20] Zhang, X. H. (2008). On the self-orientalization of Tang Tingting’s woman warrior. *Jiangxi Social Sciences*, (02):120-123.
- [21] Wang, Z. & Guan, J. (2024). Have gender stereotypes changed or not changed? Evidence from contents, methods, and consequences. *Advances in Psychological Science*, 32(06):939-950.
- [22] Hu, X. R. (2021). Research on the new direction of variety show-themed brand implantation under Generation Z—Taking the self-produced program *Rap for Youth* at Bilibili as an example. *Press Output*, (09):111-112.
- [23] Zhang, Y. X. & Zhao, S. Y. (2022). Enable creativity to connect generation Z—A study of advertising creativity based on the digital age. *Voice & Screen World*, (01):78-79.
- [24] Gao, J. (2013). Is it a gewgaw or a good housewife?—A brief analysis of female stereotypes in advertisements. *Arts in China*, (09):126-128.
- [25] Liu, T. Y. (2016). Viewing the female images of good housewives in TV advertisements from the perspective of social gender. *Journal of Western*, (04):38-40.

- [26] Feng, L. (2018). A study of female images in postmodernism advertisements from the perspective of semiotics. *Research on Transmission Competence*, 2(11):166+168.
- [27] Cao, P. X. & Song, J. Y. (2024). Beyond gender politics: Thirty years of research on Chinese women's media image (1994-2023). *News and Writing*, (02):54-62.
- [28] Lu, S. Y. & Yang, X. R. (2017). The power to review your right: Live video of online celebrity returning to the male gaze. *Journalism Lover*, (02):53-55.
- [29] Dong, K. Y. (2021). Gender conflict and criticism of patriarchal ideology—Critical discourse analysis of “hot trend” topics in Weibo. *Journal of Fujian Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, (04):97-110.
- [30] Jaxon, J., Lei, R. F., Shachnai, R., Chestnut, E. K., & Cimpian, A. (2019). The acquisition of gender stereotypes about intellectual ability: Intersections with race. *Journal of Social Issues*, 75(4), 1192-1215.
- [31] Lewis, M., & Lupyan, G. (2020). Gender stereotypes are reflected in the distributional structure of 25 languages. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 4(10), 1021-1028.