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Sexual Objectification of Women in Alcohol Print Advertisements in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the sexual objectification of women as core models perpetuated by alcohol advertisements. The findings are based on five (5) distinct print advertisements from the leading alcohol brands in the Philippines. The research focuses on how women are portrayed stereotypically in print advertisements. The study utilized both critical discourse analysis (CDA) and semiotics. It allows scholars to examine how various meanings and ideologies are produced, digested, and legitimized via social behaviors, instead of only reviewing discursive texts. The study is predicated on Fairclough's three-dimensional framework: description (textual characteristics), interpretation (discursive practice), and explanation (social practice). According to the findings, ads promote gender inequity. Advertisers use a concentrated technique to depict sexual gender stereotypes against women in alcohol ads. Such advertising supports the notion that women have sexually exploitative and fantasizing images in the alcohol industry, with men as large consumers. The study also indicates how the female role may be portrayed in other marketing industries evaluating alternative multimodal texts.

INTRODUCTION

Over the years in the advertising industry of alcoholic beverages, a consensus has existed on the nature of promoting these products with an image of seduction, allurements, and temptation. Advertisers used this overarching technique in appraising the consumers to engage and consume their products. These distinct portrayals in the alcohol ads reflect the culture and a more likely "norm" for how people accept the reality of brewery, alcoholism, and intoxication.

The Philippines, and the world, continue to patronage the use of sexism in the advertisements of alcoholic beverages. Sexual images became more overt and still effective to the target consumers of the beverages. More and more models wore suggestive and erotic clothing to entice consumers to consume these products. Advertisers use these "short-cuts" to a limited amount of time in motion advertising while having it extra vivid in print media to catch the fleeting attention of the market.

The representation of women in advertising is sometimes characterized as exploitative, insulting, and humiliating, which is not representative of contemporary women (Khandeparkar & Motiani, 2015). When it comes to promoting gender equality, advertising has traditionally lagged. Instead, it perpetuates female stereotypes and fails to represent women's empowerment. This occurs, for example, when women are depicted in alcohol advertisements. No alcohol advertisement projects women as not sexy, beautiful, and tempting.

In addition, advertisements depicted ladies with an impossible level of beauty. Women in commercials are typically shown as lovely, with fair, soft, smooth, radiant skin. In addition, they exhibit youthful characteristics such as large eyes, big lips, high cheekbones, smooth skin, a pleasing look, and sexual appeal (Tehseem & Kalsoom, 2015).

According to Hall & Crum (1994), women's bodies and body parts are depicted more frequently than men. In beer commercials, women are shown with chest, leg, buttock, and crotch images. In addition, they discovered that most women in these advertisements wore leisurewear or swimsuits. They stated that this supports the idea that women are sexual objects.

Cankaya (2013) contends that women have been presented as "sex objects who are typically young, slender, gorgeous, docile, dependent, and frequently inept and unintelligent." Moreso, women were portrayed as meek and helpless supporting characters who are "passive and awaiting men's attention" as was in the case of projecting women endorsers in alcoholic beverages.

According to Cook (2001), advertisements inform, persuade, and influence. Thus, advertising not only sells products and attracts customers but also alters society, pushes individuals to purchase items they do not desire, and pressures them to play idealized roles. According to Stankiewicz & Rosselli (2008), advertising evaluates what is desirable and typical.

A stereotype depicts a person based on limited, inaccurate, and essentialist ideas. Thus, it is necessary to critique advertising stereotypes since they influence our beliefs, choices, and expectations of what people's values should and should not be like. Such stereotypes can persuade individuals that they are the only 'real' and 'correct'. This viewpoint has been investigated further by Hoepfner (2006). In other words, advertising that stereotypes women can foster unconscious and thoughtless attitudes toward women and their skills in society.

A survey of the relevant literature, notably Berberick (2012); Hoepfner (2006); Sharma (2003), and Perucha (2009), reveals that semiotic of women projected through advertisements tend to reinforce traditional, submissive,

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and decorative attitudes and frequently presents a degrading and humiliating image of women to reinforce patriarchal social power all over the world. Hence, this study makes it vitally important to analyze print commercials using a critical discourse analysis method as it attempts to expose the underlying ideologies buried in advertising discourse. The language of advertising plays a crucial role in molding and building our attitudes, values, and conceptions of lifestyle, choices, public duties, and right and wrong. Advertisers utilize visual, semiotic, and linguistic ways to communicate these messages.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative approach. This study, which tries to analyze how feminine sexism in advertising influences people's meaning formation, required a qualitative approach. The ads for alcohol in the Philippines were analyzed. Therefore, a qualitative analysis is preferable to a quantitative analysis for descriptive analysis.

The leading brands of alcohol in the Philippines were searched on the Internet. Their posters were considered in the analysis of the study. Only five (5) posters from different alcoholic beverage brands were reckoned for analysis. See the Appendix for the visual texts analyzed in this study. Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (2001) is the basis for the data analysis. Consequently, this framework is utilized to demonstrate the connection between social activity's nature and visual semiotic texts' characteristics.

His three-dimensional approach consists of discourse as text (micro level), discourse practice (meso level), and sociocultural practice (macro level). It investigates the links between language, ideology, and power representations. Thus, this study focuses on analyzing the role of women in alcohol advertising in the Philippines and demonstrates how consumers and the public forged the image of women.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Textual Analysis (Description)

Text 1 (Colt 45 Alcohol Ad) strongly places a paramount area for the female model wearing exact lingerie only. Sophisticated breast cleavage furrows are ultimately formed while maintaining an effective abdominal physique to show sensitivity to a thinner lifestyle. Legs, in the side view perspective, are halfway opened to bring a more elucidating extract of attention from the consumers. A fair and exact tone of the skin with a temperature color of hotness increases boldness and attraction to the markets. The hair of the model is curled, which adds more sophistication and beauty on her part. The shot was a scene from a bed with bedding of white hue to advance the cleanest attention. Leftmost at the bottom is an icon of the product occupying less than five percent of the ad text. Above the print ad, on the leftmost, is a tag "Watch Andrea Torres in Action" with the involvement of technology to access it. The label above manifests

more curiosity to the consumers. It is likely to engage more people as to what the model can still offer to them on a healthier preyed-eyes.

Meanwhile, Text 2 (Tanduy Rhum Alcohol Ad) upfronts a center image of a female model showing chances of nudity. The model wears a cut short blazer at the abdominal level, directly contacting the skin. Removing the model's brassieres and ultimately showing the cleavage furrows is the point of red-dyed attention of the possible consumers. The model's shorts exposing her impossible fair-skinned legs is a grasping spot to the people. Eyes and lips are always on their remarkable post to communicate the possibility of enticement. Hair is brought down and curled, making it a sexier appeal to consumers. The leftmost bottom of the ad is a four-bottled product icon leaving people with extravagant options to choose from on the same brand idea. The left side of the ad is an iconic representation of the product brand transcending and claiming victory over other competitors.

Text 3 (Ginebra Alcohol Ad) uses a thematic shoot of the model to relay a stalwart image directly perceived by the people or consumers. Having been a product brand franchise, the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) basketball team is also exclusively commercialized. The wearing of a lingerie-style jersey for basketball seemed to make the product attractive to players or fanatics of the game, mostly men. The model in white-inspired and red-lined lingerie fits the utmost attraction while holding the object ball, empowering the scene of commercial sports attire in the sexiest modification. Skin, as always been unclouded, continued to stimulate the delusional wishes of the potential market. At the bottom right perspective is where the image of products is placed for advertisement. The ad material shows the ascent of bottle sizes, primarily making consumers aware of different bottle sizes they can choose from to their capacity of intoxication. Above the rightmost part is the brand's iconic symbol, leaving prints for consumers to remember when trying to buy some liquors.

Moreover, Text 4 (Beer na Beer Alcohol Ad) places a side platform plank of a female model wearing luscious lingerie at the forefront of the print ad. The side plank of the model makes the consumers glaze at the hill-like breast of the model, creating consciousness of the cleavage lines and some breast skin. The model also heralds exposure to the side deck of her butt to denote aggressive sexiness and the proving line lumps of her butt going below the extended long legs further to release appeals on the beholding eyes of the consumers. Projectively, the model's little facial emotion enthralls consumers more in a seductive argument to come over the product and make fantasy with the agonizing fierceness of the model. The image of the product brand is placed in a relatively large size at the bottom of the ad in the right corner. Its essence still manipulates the consumers to consume the product in exchange for the sizzling model attempting to motivate them to pay for the branded liquor.

On a paramount of suggesting the strength of the hottest

sexual energy, Text 5 (White Castle Alcohol Ad) brings a more vulgar seduction from the target market of men consuming the liquor product. Still bemusing the whole print ad, it uses a bold female in a red set of thin lingerie to grip the consumers to hold a taste of their alcohol. The striking red hue of the model's lingerie concerns the impossibility of resistance of the consumers to fixate their eyes on the modeled woman. The skin still significantly impacts the hotness of the female model, leaving a lasting impression of the desirable qualities of a woman. Further, the ad is intensified with a tagline scripted on the leftmost middle side with a suitable font size increasing readability to the consumers. The tag "Calibre 69" is a lustful awakening of the wishes and desires of the consumers to perspire more and have a gustatory lookout at the liquor as well as fantasize about the female model in their id-conscious stream. Beside the perfect curved hip of the model on the left is where the image of the liquor brand is placed in an intriguing bottle size alteration. Totally, the print ad has a strong lure for the audience and consumers from its aggressive and warm colors with a matching sultry female model.

Process Analysis (Interpretation)

What is common to the five (5) texts advertised in the alcoholic beverages industry is the use of women as an object of attraction to the potential market of these products, which are men (generally, if not all). The text ads are demeaning, strongly sex-oriented, and exploiting to the part of women. The bareness, significant nakedness, or showing off some large portions of skin explicitly concerns men in the process of ad consumption and production.

Further, the fitness of a woman, the lingerie, the image, the beauty, and the sexiness are all attributes of what the advertisers think can penetrate the attention of the masculinity of the consumers to consume liquors and of high chance, talk about these women with the other men in drunkenness. The high fantasy of men of the perfect image of women stimulates the alcohol ad industry to forfeit other strategies when producing and marketing their products to the public. It can be thought that sexualization as a tool for advertising has been dynamically used even before and is still proven to be an effective mechanism to draw the eyes and ears of people. Despite the consciousness of the consuming public on the eroticisms and women objectification found in alcohol ads, people continue to patronage such advertising techniques as it is pleasant to them. However, these ads where femininity is sacrificed over values create outspoken false ideas against women. It forms a perfect woman one can inescapably think of. The image of shapely legs, a minute waistline, ample breast formation, defying butt exposure, flawless skin, and everlasting beauty constitute the "dream" and the "illusion" of every man consuming alcoholic drinks.

Moreover, the objectification of women in the alcohol ads exploits learned desires. Advertisers deemed men

to desire an infinitely "impossible" perfect woman of beauty and shape. This is a candid reason why advertisers prefer women as objects in their advertisements. Women are programmed to aspire and look up to a woman who happened to be in the advertisements to be grown, resembling them like that of aiming for long legs, perfect skin, beautiful hair, and a perfectly shaped body.

To develop a media that satisfies the values mentioned above, advertisers have educated society—particularly men—to regard women as objects of increased wants. Men also preached to associate liquor brands with a celebrity with the sexiest image endorsement. Scantly clad women in alluring poses indoctrinate men that they are objects and, indeed, not a material worthy of appraisal respective of values and roles. Finally, the objectification of women in the sexist means in the advertising industry has cultured people to view them on an extreme superficiality and vulgar stereotyping.

Social Analysis (Explanation)

The media culture romanticizes and promotes alcoholic drinking to people, especially men (but studies say, women are significantly placing themselves in the limelight of alcohol drinking for self-imposed reasons). Advertisements today of liquors and beers have never fallen short and used sexuality or sexual opportunity/appeal to promote. Primarily, these sexist ads reinforce unfavorable values to the people, such as alcohols and sex appeal association, independence, maturity, and rebellion, among other things.

To narrowly point out, gender role is the target ideal these advertisers want to develop among people (especially teens and adolescents). Young teens and those in the early adult stage are preyed on by these advertisers to consume. However, this also teaches men to stereotype women as "sexpot", "temptress", "man-eater", or even an "angel". The use of women's sexiness and nakedness is part of what the consumers brought. They do not only pay for the liquor but develop sexual subservience over these beer and liquor models. Indeed, women are objectified and trivialized in these alcohol ads.

Moreover, there have been typologies in the portrayals of women in alcohol ads. First is the "hotties" typology of women. These women in the ads are highly sexualized and fantasized about by men and are seen as objects to reinforce and define strong masculinity. The other typology of women perceived in the alcohol ads is "bitches". They are women whom men are committed to having but undermine erotic pleasures. These only suggest that there is a masculine norm that exists in alcohol commercials. Men are depicted as assertive, aggressive, and in control, while women are just hypersexualized and serve as "prize girls" to men who consume liquors.

Truthfully, sexism exists in the perimeters of alcohol advertising. These ads only depict irresponsible liquor consumption and unfair treatment of women. The exposure of people, especially teens and early adults, to the sexual images overboard in the alcohol industry

largely contributes to the deviance of developing self-understanding or concept of a culture of excessive liquor consumption, encouragement of sexual interaction, and a certain degree of violence against women. The violence comes out when women are overpowered, watched by men in their most nakedness, and fantasized about as desirable objects for raising their eroticism and orgasm.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, advertising form and develop values, ideas, attitudes, and the desired image, and they are created to suit the interests of social power relations. Through the language characteristics and semiotics of ads, gender inequality is perpetuated and promoted in this study. Advertisements depict women in diminishing roles, such as objects of desire. As a result, women are locked out in the image portrayed in alcohol advertisements. In addition, women are portrayed as things to be viewed rather than as intellectually capable beings. Through such advertisements, patriarchal ideology promotes women's physical appearance and suggests that they have no thought, only a body that needs care.

Critical discourse analysis plays a crucial role in uncovering and revealing the concealed meanings concealed within these advertisements. Analysts of critical discourse must scrutinize each tactic employed by advertising to control and distort the truth. A critical discourse analyst must also demonstrate how power and dominance are structured and institutionalized via marketing to present explicit pictures of social roles. Thus, critical analysts need to focus on discursive techniques that legitimize gender inequality; normalize the social order and exploitative imagery found in ads to achieve a society that is both developed and equitable.

The fight for gender equality is a continuing struggle, and advertising will always find a way to ridicule or degrade women in every job. The purpose of the study was to examine gender stereotypes in print advertising. The study determined, using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and semiotic analysis, that advertising maintains female stereotypes boxed as sexual objects. They continue to be portrayed as fragile, dependent, and inferior individuals. Additionally, it was noticed that they were consistently portrayed with perfect attractiveness in various situations. It cannot be argued that a woman's looks impact their social beliefs. In fact, women's physical attractiveness is widely evaluated by society. Some individuals may assume

that advertising is insignificant or have no impact on their values; however, this is not the case. Marketing misleads women as enablers of lifestyle purchasing, as exhibited in alcohol ads.

Future study on additional women's portrayals in other marketing industries is possible if they were sexually objectified then or their gender roles improved from the classic sexism as exhibited in the materials analyzed in this study. These ads from other media, like the Internet and television, may be analyzed. This study exclusively examines print ads of five known leading liquor brands only. In addition, future research must examine a semiotic study of the multimodality of advertisements in the present time.

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