

The portrayal of gender in Indian Tamil television advertisements

Kiruththiga Tharumarajah

Lecturer, Media Studies Unit, Universty of Jaffna

kiruththiraja@yahoo.com

The portrayal of gender in Indian television advertisements has greatly influenced society. Television advertisements influences the Jaffna Tamil society in different ways, and impact on individuals' personal lives. Be it the clothes they wear, the way in which they speak, their social behavior, most members of this society are affected by commercial advertisements directly or indirectly. In addition, the impact of cable television and satellite television makes is particularly great in the Jaffna region. The influence of advertisements not only makes people buy things but also increases the stereotyping of gender issues in the society. While early advertisements largely portrayed women, at present there are also men and children in television commercials. The main objective of this research is to analyze the portrayal of the gender roles, gender sensitivity and the gender diversity in the advertisements as well as the changing trends in Indian television advertisements with special reference to Tamil channels. Content analysis is the main research method used in this study, while interviews were also used in the collection of data. This three-month study focused on the advertisements in the major Indian Tamil television channels. The findings indicate that the trend is under changing now due to the awareness of and the sensitization towards gender roles in the society.

Key Words: Television dvertisements, Jaffna, Indian television, gender roles