Investigating Consumers' Perceived Social Representations of Arab Women in Media: Messages found in Glocal Magazines Advertisements

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Abstract

This study examined and documented the stereotypes associated with women in today's advertisements found in Glocal magazines in the Egyptian context. Mixed research methods were conducted for this study. Five focus-groups and four-hundred questionnaires were analyzed in order to answer the research questions: does exposure to magazine advertisements impact perceived social representation of females? What are the stereotypes that exist today in association with women in magazine advertisements? The analysis revealed that the exposure of magazine advertisements impact consumers' perceived social representations of Arab women. The study indicates that women in magazine advertisements are mainly portrayed as: home-makers (responsible for household chores), physically beautiful (sex-appeal and attractive), dependent on man, and self-reliant. These images of women conform to most stereotypical portrayals of women (as documented by previous researcher). This study highlights and implies the need for the advertising industry to adjust its communication practices to the changing role of women in society. The emerged insights of this study extend research in the area of female role stereotypes in print advertising by considering the frequency of female role portrayals.

Keywords

Advertising, Magazines, Middle East, Women, Stereotype.

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Introduction

Though digital media nowadays hold undisputed appeal for all age groups, research show that, for some types of magazines (on lifestyle, fashion, beauty, and popular culture), print has never been more popular (Consterdine, 2005). Magazines are an active medium, with the reader in control (Al Jenabi, 2011). Magazines are not just read once; many pages (including advertisements) tend to be read repeatedly, often picked up more than once during a day and on more than one day (Sharma, 2016). This reflects one of the main benefits of print media over television and radio - the readers' ability to control the timing of their exposure (Kotler and Armstrong, 2013).

For readers, advertising is seen as an essential part of magazines (Consterdine, 2005) and one of the drives for purchasing the media (Sharma, 2016). Readers screen advertisements in much the same way as they screen the editorial - looking for items that intrigue, catch the eye, entertain, and inform (Consterdine, 2005). Advertising is a communication tool, reflecting social values, prevailing norms, and stereotypes of society (Kotler and Armstrong, 2013). Images in advertising help highlight societies' culture, including: *"not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs"* (UNISCO, 2016). Further, advertisements shape and reinforce: *"the acquisition of gender-appropriate behavior, a major feature of human social development"* (Durkin, 1985, p.101).

Advertising, worldwide, continues to be influenced by western values (Bhaves Advertisers, 2011). The type of people who appears, or is appealed to, in advertisements is often: *"a stereotypical American characterization"* (Al Jenabi, 2011, p.67). Accordingly, advertisements that are produced locally or worldwide usually ended up being mostly in the Western style (Negm, 2016). When producing advertisements, Glocal magazines consider that social norms are best expressed in terms of "*American democratic values*" - given to serial production of sameness with slight difference (Gender Representations, 2011). Thus, western ideas have dominated most advertisements throughout the world, particularly the Middle East (Amin and Fikri, 2000). Debates are found in prior research regarding whether consumers in a less developed economy, such as Egypt and other countries in the Arab region, would prefer advertising that matches local culture or prefer advertising that promotes the global culture, the adoption of western culture values (Negm, 2016).

In an era of increasing globalization, women continue to be underrepresented and stereotyped in national, international, and global media, specifically in print media and advertising (Morris, 2006). Stereotyping has been found to be quite pervasive (Kotler and Armstrong, 2013). Most of the women's magazines worldwide consistently portray women into narrow channels and define their concerns, pre-occupations, and aspirations within matters concerning the home and family (Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009), especially Arab women in the Middle East (Al Jenabi, 2011). Women are not depicted as intelligent, but submissive and subservient to men (Eisend, 2010), especially in the Middle East (Allam, 2008). Changing economic and social conditions in societies have allowed critics in Arab countries to call for more positive images of women as active participants in society (Obeidat, 2002). Conversely, only few contemporary advertisements endorse stories in

favor of women, which promote female empowerment (Morris, 2006; Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009; Gallagher, 2016).

The topic of the portrayal of women in the Arab media has been under examination due to its negativity and its ability to impact the image of Arab women in society (Al Jenabi, 2011). Although some positive models are beginning to appear, the movement in this direction is quite slow (Allam, 2008). Accordingly, this subject matter is significant to examine and consider (Sharma, 2016). *"The power of the media to make and unmake the image of women, to hasten or retard the progress of women in society, cannot be denied or underestimated"* (Molara, 1990, p.52). However, studies analyzing the portrayal of Arab women in the media are quite limited (Sharma, 2016).

This paper is an attempt to investigate the portrayal of women as they appear in advertisements found in Glocal magazines in the Arab region, specifically Egypt. This article will consider how contemporary print advertising in the Arab nations shapes perceptions of female identity, her role representation. This study strives to adopt a holistic outlook to the phenomenon of female stereotypes in this media channel.

This study attempts to provide evidence on the appearance of female role portrayals in Glocal magazine advertisements, drawing insights from those who are general audience and consumers of magazines. It will look at the stereotypes that exist today in association with women in advertisements found in Magazines. Prior research on gender issues in advertising provided conflicting evidence regarding the depiction of women in media (Taylor *et al.,* 2005). The majority of these studies have been conducted in the western context, even though most criticism about the stereotypical depiction of women in advertising exists in the Middle East (Allam, 2008; Al Jenabi, 2011). Further, the emergence of narrow traditional characters of females in society emphasizes the idea that female role stereotyping is a contemporary global problem (Bordo, 1995). Thus, this research develops insights to enrich the area of female role portrayals in global markets and document trends with respect to changes, if any, in images of women in print media, magazines (Zotos and Tsichla 2014).

Literature Review

Advertisements are a practical and successful method of mass communication- an important marketing strategy (Gallagher, 2016). Advertising is a powerful force in influencing people's perceptions on a variety of issues (Kotler and Armstrong, 2013). As a carrier of information, ideas, and views, it diffuses meanings into the belief systems of the society (Solomon, 2013). According to Schudson (1984), it has driven and sparked its way into: *"what we read, what we care about, the ways we raise our children, our ideas of right and wrong conduct, our attribution of significance to 'image' in both public and private life"* (p.209).

Advertisements have a significant role in prompting societies' interpretations of matters, such as women roles (Morris, 2006). Advertisements can be both positive, as well as negative in terms of the position and views of women (Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009). However, it has been established in previous research that generally advertising

messages about women are often stereotypical (Eisend, 2010). Overall, advertisements confine women to traditional mother, home, or beauty/sex-oriented roles (Zhang *et al.,* 2009). These images are predominated in print media, such as magazine advertisements - whether they are international editions or locally produced in a society (Consterdine, 2005).

Prior research highlighted the increasing use of stereotypical images of women in print advertisements (Zhang *et al.,* 2009). Thus, Komisar (1971) implied that people could never know the reality of women's character and function found in society by looking at advertising. The images found in advertisements mostly show women in domestic tasks and concerned with physical attractiveness (Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009). This is not the representation of the women's diversity (Al Jenabi, 2011). This issue raised by scholars have provided a basis for academic research to explore the degree to which advertising accurately reflects contemporary roles of women rather than depicting women in a stereotypical way (Zotos and Tsichla 2014).

Prior researchers obtained several categories with regard to the representation of women in advertising. The categories were: women as dependent on men; women ass self-sacrificing housewives; women as a high standard of living; women as physically beautiful; women as sexual objects (Morris, 2006). Several studies argues in favour of the current bias toward the stereotypical depiction of women in print advertisements, whereas several other studies suggest that female role stereotyping seems to be decreasing over time (Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009).

Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976) study revealed that women are mainly portrayed in traditional and decorative roles, and hence, female role portrayals in print advertising have not changed to reflect the evolving role of women in society. Correspondingly, Sexton and Haberman (1974) implied that advertisements display women in domestic tasks (household settings). Later studies showed that decorative roles are much more important female stereotypical functions, reaching almost 80% of the depiction of advertising in magazines (Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009). Eye-catching roles help attract consumers to advertisements (Achakpa-Ikyo and Anweh, 2016). Thus, Morris (2006) presented that stereotypes of women as physical attractiveness are frequently common. Eisend (2010) found that women are depicted mostly as sexual objects.

Contrary to evidence in favour of female role stereotypes in print advertising, other studies reported decreasing stereotyping of women in print media. For example, Venkatesan and Losco (1975) concluded that the depiction of women as sex objects has considerably decreased. Royo *et al.* (2007) concluded that over time women appeared in less traditional roles. Prior studies have indicated that since the early 1980s traditional depictions of women in print media have been decreasing, but still are used extensively (Klassen *et al.,* 1993; Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009). Gallagher (2016) indicated that nowadays advertisements are trying to put realistic images, which tell a relatable story, regardless of the model's identity.

According to the Arab Women Development Report (2008), the literature on the portrayal of women in the Arab media is quite limited. Nevertheless, the studies conducted to measure the image of women portrayed in the Arab media have yielded results supporting

the female role stereotypes (Allam, 2008). Advertisements featuring Arab women are often showing women as: *"submissive wives happily using the products being sold"* (Obeidat, 2002, p.2). This focus is still a stereotypical direction. As noted by media researchers, there is too much focus on housewives and too little attention given to workingwomen (Al Jenabi, 2011). According to Dinia and Kenza (2016) Arab media should challenge conventional notions of femininity in order to shed light of hope in terms of how female characters might inspire real women to find ways of rising above oppression in whichever way it manifests itself.

The depiction of females in advertising has received considerable academic attention, driven by the feminist movement and the evolution of women's roles in the society (Gallagher, 2016). Even though a decrease in female stereotyping is transpiring, considering the contemporary structure of society that prescribes multiple gender roles, this does not seem to be the case when it comes to the female images found in print advertisements (Morris, 2006). The literature is full with studies documenting that female stereotyping is alive and thriving (Zotos and Tsichla 2014).

In summary, advertising influences the people's affective, cognitive and behavioral aspects (Solmon, 2013; Gallagher, 2016), causing unintended effects on society (Kotler and Armstrong, 2013) through communication that reinforces certain stereotypes (Royo *et al.,* 2007). The existing literature is inconclusive regarding the progress of female stereotypes in print advertising. This study will focus on Glocal magazines may highlight the importance of "synergies" in advertising within the broader content of a magazine (Ferguson *et al.,* 1990). Given the above, this study presents the following Research Questions: *(1) Does exposure to magazine advertisements impact perceived social representation of Females? (2) What are the stereotypes that exist today in association with women in Magazine advertisements?*

Research Methodology

Mixed research methods are used in this study to collect and analyze the data. The data collection and analysis is divided into two phases - first with the qualitative phase (mainly inductive to detect the phenomenon and arrive at a general conclusion) followed by the quantitative phase (mainly deductive to take the general theory and apply it to the studied situation). Thus, the data collection are implemented sequentially, one dataset build on the results from the other. In this study, the qualitative findings help modify and develop the proposed conceptual framework and the quantitative findings justify the acknowledged associations among the variables.

Both phases are conducted in the *Egyptian context.* This target population is chosen because Egypt has historically been the region's leader in media, politics, and culture (Allam, 2008). Egypt has led the region in the development of a strong, vibrant, and relatively open print and broadcast media (Amin 2002). The media of Egypt is highly influential in Arab World, attributed to its large audience and increasing freedom from governmental control (Levinson, 2005). The Egyptian press is very diverse, whereby one can find state/governmental media, partisan/opposition media, and independent and private media (Allam 2008). Further, the focus is on Cairo and Alexandria because

according to the domestic report on the state of the media in Egypt, these cities have the highest purchasing of magazines (Allam, 2008).

The Qualitative Phase

This research used the qualitative method, focus group discussions, to explore and explain the research topic - how magazine advertisings impact the nature and role of female representation in the Middle East region, specifically Egypt. This approach helped the researcher to gain the perspectives of those participating in the discussion.

The focus group tackled several questions: *do magazine advertisements reflect the diversity of the world's women, including more progressive models, or do they concentrate on a traditional image? How can magazine advertisements do justice to the modern reality of women? Are their perceptions based on stereotypes and clichés, or do they represent a pluralist view of women? How can magazine advertisements in the Arab World promote more positive, realistic portrayal of women?*

Five focus groups (combination of heterogeneous and homogenous assemblies) were initially steered until saturation level was met (no new thoughts are being said by the participants). The participants were selected based on *nonprobability sampling*, specifically *purposive sampling*. Each group contained a range of minimum 7 to maximum 9 participants. The participants for the first focus group were male, the second were housewives, the third were employed females, the fourth were mixed genders, and the fifth were females of mixed occupations and education. The selected samples were of different socio-demographic backgrounds (age, gender, marital status, career, and income) in order to ensure a large enough variety of mind-sets and opinions in the studied population. The grouping of participants together facilitated discussion and allowed for a variety of viewpoints at once (Babbie, 2007).

The focus group sessions took place during the month of May 2016 in a quiet classroom, which the researcher rented out from a private education center. The sessions were recorded and transcribed. The researcher wrote down key information needs; categorized the information; and gave meaning to the words and phrases said by the respondents (identify trends, general themes, and patterns including ideas, concepts, behaviors, terminology, or phrases used). Narrative analysis was used to evaluate the data. The researcher used the field texts, the focus groups' conversations and field notes, as the units of analysis to research and understand the way people create meaning in their lives as narratives.

The Quantitative Phase

The researcher used the quantitative method, the distribution of administrated questionnaires, to develop further insights to the research problem. This method was descriptive in nature. The researcher measured the known associations and significances among the studied variables. The variables were examined using pre-formulated hypotheses based on the explored reports (primary and secondary data).

In this study, the questionnaire included systematically organized and structured questions (with predetermined response-options) to obtain the needed information from respondents. The questionnaire contained words that are simple and straightforward. The survey was originally created in the English language. However, an Arabic version was also created due to the fact that the native language in Egypt is Arabic. The researcher used the back-translation process in order to ensure that the language conversion was done accurately. A pilot test was conducted before the actual distribution of the questionnaire. The pilot sample allowed the researcher to improve the questionnaire and correct any inaccuracies that might have transpired.

The questionnaire contained three main sections. The first section is the introduction part. It contained several nominal questions, assessing the respondent type of magazine purchases (global, Glocal, local), frequency in reading magazines, their enjoyment towards the advertisements found in the magazines, and the depiction of female roles found in the advertisements. The second part of the questionnaire contained several 5-point liker scales, assessing the respondents' perceived social representation of Arab women in the magazine advertisements. The final part of the magazine asked about the respondents' socio-demographic characters.

To operationalize women's images, the researcher adapted, modified, and supplemented the categories of women developed by Venkatesan and Losco (1975) to conform to the purpose of this study. There are six different scales, each measuring a distinctive image of the female role found in advertising: (1) *"dependent on man"* contained 2 statements to measure the image: woman relies on male for affection; instruction and woman relies on male for happiness (2) *"homemaker"* contained 3 statements to measure the image: woman shown using household appliances; woman shown doing housework; woman shown taking care of husband or children (3) *"self-reliant"* (strong and dependent woman) contained 2 statements to measure the image: woman shown as smart, talented, confident; woman shown as professionals or working (4) *"physically beautiful"* contained 2 statements to measure the image: woman concerned with enhancing facial appearance and skin conditions; woman concerned with looking more youthful, slimmer, more appealing (5) *"high-living"* (materialistic) contained 2 statements to measure the image: woman concerned with luxury leisure; woman concerned with luxury adornments and material possessions (6) *"embodiment of taste"* (sophisticated) contained 3 statements to measure the image: woman concerned with taste in living environment; woman shown as being tasteful, distinct and unique; woman shown engaged in the arts (including reading).

In order to distribute the questionnaires, the researcher visited several public recreational facilities during May and June 2016. The consumers intercept data collection method was used to reach the respondents and to ensure the collection of large amounts of data in a relatively short period of time. The respondents were stopped and asked if they were willing to participate in a brief study. Those who agreed were given a description of the survey process. The respondents were given the questionnaire on the spot or taken to a near location that was set up elsewhere. Once enough questionnaires were collected, the

researcher used the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to analyze the data. This program helped to answer the research questions and to support or invalidate the hypotheses. The reliability analysis, validity analysis, frequency analysis, correlation analysis, and regressions were conducted.

Qualitative Analysis

The researcher conducted five different focus groups with general audience and consumers of magazines from both Cairo and Alexandria. A total of 50 consumers were asked and invited to join or become part of the research. However, only 39 participants joined (average of eight members in each group). Each focus group discussion lasted around 45 to 90 minutes. The volunteering participants in each group had either similar or diverse socio-demographic characteristics. Table 1 clarifies each focus group's participants' socio-demographic characteristics.

The opening question in the focus groups was regarding what type of magazines the participants read. The males rarely read magazines; they read more the sports sections in the newspapers or issues of editorials regarding sports. The females, on the other hand, value reading magazines, especially those focusing on fashion, beauty, lifestyle, and celebrity gossip. The participants enjoy reading topics of general interest, such as lifestyle, news and politics, consumer goods (accessories, watches, jewelry, and cars), Computers and Technology, and Travel. They read magazines both online and print.

The females (of different socio-demographic traits) were the prevalent readers of magazines in the focus groups. The magazines that they choose to read are all not locally produced, but are global magazines that have editions that are distributed in the Middle East. Thus, Glocal magazines are popular in the Egyptian context, among the high middle-Income class. The participants enjoyed reading Glocal magazines because it contained information, newsflashes, and updates that are relevant to the local community (the Middle East) and that are also popular overseas. Thus, the participants believe that these magazines act as two in one publications.

Glocal magazines are not relatively cheap. However, the participants stated that the content in these magazines are abundant, sufficient to last readers a month until the next monthly edition comes out, when compared to local magazines. The local magazines range around 20 pages, while the Glocal magazines are double the size. Further, magazines are handed-down to one another in the Egyptian context (friends give to friends; siblings take turn reading). The magazines that the participants enjoy reading successively are: Harper's Bazaar Arabia, Cosmopolitan Middle East, Cleo, Enigma, Alpha, Aquarius, and Ahlan. They enjoy these magazines because it assembles photographers, artists, designers and writers that deliver a "sophisticated" perspective into the world of fashion, relationships, beauty, self-improvement, grooming and well-being, and popular culture.

Table 1: Focus Group Participants' Socio-demographic Characteristics

Focus Group (FG)	No. of Participants	Age				Gender		Education		
		20-25	26-30	31-35	Above 35	Male	Female	School Dropout	High school Graduate	College Graduate
Mixed Gender	9	4	2	1	2	6	3	1	5	3
Mixed Females	8	2	3	1	2	0	8	1	5	2
Males	7	0	5	2	0	7	0	2	2	3
Housewives	7	0	3	2	2	0	7	1	2	4
Working Females	8	0	1	4	3	0	8	0	1	7
Sub Total		6	14	10	9	13	26	5	15	19
Total Attendants		39				39		39		
Percentage		15%	36%	26%	23%	33%	67%	13%	38%	49%

When it comes to advertisements found in magazines, all the participants notice them as they flip the pages. They notice that women are usually the main attention in the picture, despite the product or service being promoted. The women chosen in the advertisements are eye-catching and are usually: *"abnormally beautiful". "Do not represent how most women actually look in Egypt".*

The participants found in each group had the same opinion that advertisements portray women in a manner that has aggravated modern women of society. They acknowledged that in the region, traditional images of women are still being shown extensively. Some of the pictures of the women are not representative of the females in society, when it comes to their appearance, social behaviours, or societal role.

In locally, globally, or Glocally produced magazines, images of women in advertising are often stereotypical: women are sensual and fleshly, irrational, not intelligent, and submissive. This is not what most women in Egypt or the Arab region are today, especially the new generations. The participants specified that the changing economic and social conditions in the country have led women to become active members of society. They stated: "*Today, women have new roles in society". "They are not full time housewives anymore, but this is not shown". "It is a totally distorted image."*

The usage of women as sexual commodities is found to be the main negative image found in magazines. The participants declared that: "*Women bodies are always displayed but not their thoughts". "They just appear and sell the products". "Women are portrayed as being beautiful, sexy or housewives". "Most women in the advertisements have physical features of western women (hair, complexion, eye colour, etc.) NOT Arab women." "Most women in advertisements are submissive wives happily using the products being sold".* The participants supported the idea that media enterprises, rather than promoting social welfare, often are catering to popular tastes in order to make money. Other negative images that are promoted in the advertisements successively are: the portrayal of women as being materialistic, opportunistic, and dependent.

In response, the participants are wishing for more images of women as mothers, wives, and active participants in society. They believe that the media are slightly beginning to promote female empowerment. However, more positive images of women that reflect daily life should be prevalent. The participants believed that there is too much focus on housewives and too little attention given to workingwomen. Thus, they are in favour that the media, specifically magazines and it's advertisements, readdress and fix the demeaning portrayal of women and bring to the forefront the actual role they play that are invisible and marginalized in the media. The roles can include housewives, but not depicted as inexperienced, fragile, thoughtless, and dependent. When portraying different female images in the media, it will impact how society perceives women and the roles that they should hold.

The narrative analysis revealed several themes related to presence of different representation of women portrayals in magazines' advertisements. The first representation of women in the focus groups is images that "devalued" women (materialistic, not intelligent, irrational, and as housewives). This description is present and in accordance to literature cited by Kang (1997). The second representation of

women is images that idealized women (images far from reality). The participants described the women as: "*woman as physically perfect - young, gorgeous, and skinny*"; "*women absence of Arab features- blond, tall and have fair skin*". They suggested that women are portrayed in decorative roles, "*concerned with physical attractiveness*" and as "*sex objects*". This notion is consistent with Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976) findings. The third representation of women is the modern way – women being able to be mother, professional, and wife concomitantly (superwomen). This description is mentioned in Jaffe (1994) research. In conclusion, according to the data analysis, the proposed research model (Figure 1) was confirmed and established, showing advertising impacting the role of female representation (perceived female identity).
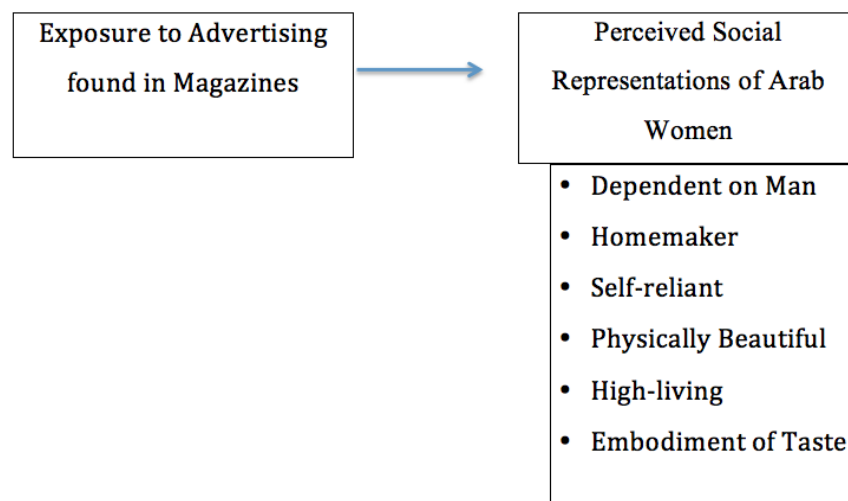

Figure 1: The Proposed Conceptual Framework

Quantitative Analysis

Out of 420 questionnaires distributed, 8 were eliminated because the respondents did not satisfy the eligible criterion- they were not general audience and consumers of magazines. Moreover 12 were unusable because respondents failed to answer most of the questions. As a result only 400 questionnaires were usable and analyzed. The data was analyzed by using SPSS 18. Each collected questionnaire was coded and entered into an SPSS data file. Descriptive analyses were conducted for the demographics to provide the sample profile. Reliability analyses were conducted for variables, which were measured by multi items. Correlation analysis was used to test hypotheses followed by regression analysis to determine the interrelationships among the set of variables in a more sophisticated way.

Frequency analyses showed that the respondents in this study were from different socio-demographic characteristics. Table 2 summarizes the socio-demographic characteristics of the people who answered the questionnaires.

Table 2: Respondents' Socio-demographic Characteristics

City of Residence	Gender	Education
o Cairo (61%) o Alexandria (39%)	o Females (74%) o Males (26%)	o Dropout (10%) o High-School graduate (24%) o College graduate (26%) o Post Graduates (40%)
Age	**Monthly Household Income**	**Occupation**
o Under 20 (26.1%) o 20 - 35 (60.2%) o 36 – 45 (8.4%), o 46 - 55 (4.2%) o Above 55 (1.1%)	o Less than 2,000 L.E. (10%) o 2,000 L.E. - 5,000 (42%) o 5,000 L.E. - 10,000 (36%) o Over 10,000 L.E. (12%)	o Students (19.5%) o White-collar employees (38.1%) o Blue-collar employees (22.5%) o Housewives (16.6%) o Unemployed (3.3%).

The Frequency analysis showed that all the respondents read magazines either soft copy or hard copy daily (28.75%), weekly (48.75%), monthly (11.25%), or yearly (11.25%). 16.25% of the respondents read local magazines, 43.75% read Glocal magazines (foreign magazines that make Arab versions for the region), and 40% read global magazines. All the respondents did not mind watching the advertisements found in the magazines when asked what is the main frequent portrayal of female roles found in the advertisements, 2.5% stated the dependent on man depiction, 7.5% stated homemaker depiction, 3.75% stated self-reliant depiction, 53.75% stated physically beautiful depiction, 7.5% stated high-living depiction, and 3.75% stated embodiment of taste depiction.

Reliability of scales was measured using Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis. If the alpha is equal or more than 0.6 then the scale is reliable. According to the analysis, all scales used in the study were reliable and can be depend on them to measure the variables under analyze - advertising exposure (0.688), perceived image (0.74), dependent on man depiction (0.903), homemaker depiction (0.820), self-reliant depiction (0.762), physically beautiful depiction (0.837), high-living depiction (0.845), and embodiment of taste depiction (0.620).

The correlation analysis showed how one variable was related to another, indicating the direction, strength, and significance of the relationships: advertising exposure and the perceived social representation of the Arab women. According to the analysis, the relationship between advertising exposure and the perceived social representation of the Arab women as dependent on man was direct, positive, moderate in strength, and significant with a correlation of 0.405**; as homemakers was direct, positive, strong in

strength, and significant with a correlation of 0.621**; as self-reliant was direct, positive, weak in strength, and significant with a correlation of 0.343**; as physically beautiful was direct, positive, strong in strength, and significant with a correlation of 0.593**. However, the relationship between advertising exposure and the perceived social representation of the Arab women as high-living depiction and embodiment of taste depiction were not significant, with a correlation of 0.420 and 0.509.

Finally, the regression analysis was conduct to determine the interrelationships among the set of variables in a more sophisticated manner. When considering the model as a whole, the effect showed that the model, when applied was significant with a value of 0.000 in the ANOVA. Next, the R Squared value helped express how much of the variance in the independent variable and dependent variable is explained by the model. According to the results, the R squared value was 0.400 (equal to 40%) between the independent variables and the dependent variable. This number meant that in the proposed model, exposure to advertising explained 40% of the variance in peoples' perceived social representation of the Arab women (the remaining 60% was due to other variables not included in the model and the random error). This was a fairly respectable result when compared to some of the previous studies.

Conclusion

This study focused on magazines and concentrated on stereotypes associated with women in advertisements, specifically Glocal magazines (western magazines Arab edition) in the Egyptian context. The aim of the study was to investigate consumers' perceived social representations of Arab women in advertising found in Glocal magazines. Two main research questions were examined: (1) Does exposure to magazine advertisements impact perceived social representation of females? (2) What are the stereotypes that exist today in association with women in Magazine advertisements? The researcher went about the investigation by using mixed research approaches, collecting data using focus groups and administrated questionnaires. The findings provided interesting insights into female role stereotypes.

Based on this study, it is safe to conclude that stereotypes exist and are a part of people's lives. These stereotypes are learned throughout society and the media usually supports them in their communicated messages. Stereotypes are socially acceptable by people and are commonly found in advertisements. For example, when people think of an advertisement for a household cleaner or perfume/ cologne, what comes to their mind, most likely, is the appearance of a woman, representing an "attractive crowd-puller" or a "happy housewife" stereotype.

The quantitative analysis in this study confirmed that exposure to advertisements found in magazines impact significantly the perceived social representation of Arab women. These advertisements have power to influence how people perceive women's roles in society. Correspondingly, magazine advertisements impact significantly and lead to several representation and perception of women as: home-makers (responsible for household chores), physically beautiful (sex-appeal and attractive), dependent on man, and self-reliant (strong and dependent woman). Thus, the results indicated that women

in magazine advertisements were mainly portrayed in traditional and decorative roles and appeared to perpetuate in print advertisements. This finding adds to the body of literature that documented increasing bias toward the sexist depiction of women in print advertisements (Zotos and Tsichla 2014).

This study shows that advertising exposure does not impact significantly the perceived social representation of the Arab women as high-living depiction (materialistic) and embodiment of taste (sophisticated and cultured). It may be inferred from the results that perhaps advertising practices lag the changing role of women in the society. Thus, embracing non-traditional female images in magazines' advertisements is not popular in the studied context. It supports the literature that states that even though a decrease in female stereotyping is transpiring in society, this does not seem to be the case when it comes to the female images found in print advertisements (Morris, 2006; Zotos and Tsichla 2014).

This study has significant marketing practice implications. The results of this study raise significant concerns regarding the appreciation of women in Arab society. The stereotypical images of females found in magazine advertisements can have a major influence on gender representation (sex role development) among citizens. Exposure to such communications and messages can impact the cognitive development, attitude formation and development and change, and socialization. It is influencing how people formulate their knowledge, attitudes, stands and practices. Further, the use of women as housewives (caretaker) or attractive/ sexy crowd-puller (decorative objects) appears to damage the female image in society, weaken their empowerment in society (belittle women liberation in society) and contribute to their depersonalization (impacting negatively the self-confidence). According to Kilbourne (1999), *advertising has afflicted women with a range of problems including low self-esteem, eating disorders, binge drinking and domestic violence, which arise from an attempt of women to adapt to a false self in order to become more "feminine"* (p.55).

Klassen *et al.* (1993) and Zotos and Tsichla (2014) suggested the way that women were depicted in advertisements would continue to shape societal values regarding the societal representation of females in society. Thus, it is recommended that advertisers should adjust its communication practices to the changing role of women in society. It should promote more positive images of women as active participants in society. Further, advertisers should be aware of their messages that are likely to spread female stereotypes and reduce images that emphases females in insignificant roles.

When conducting this study, several limitations appeared in both the qualitative and quantitative research phase. This study focused on Glocal magazines, neglecting locally produced magazines or global standard magazines found in the country. This study focused on general print advertisements not a specific product category. The study was conducted in the Egyptian Context, not several countries in the Middle East. The participants in the study were limited in number and were from Cairo and Alexandria, not other cities found in Egypt. The participants were selected using non-probability sampling technique. Hence, the results may not be generalized to Egypt as a whole. This study used a cross-sectional time horizon. Furthermore, this study only focused on the receivers' viewpoints not the influencer (advertisers).

This study suggests several directions for research. First, future studies may examine the associations between product categories and women imagery, which is a relatively under-explored theme. This study can focus on stereotypes found in different categories or modes of magazines (global, local, and Glocal). Future research can focus on other cities in Egypt to compare between cities and sub cultures found in the country. Advertising in other countries in the Middle East can be examined in order to investigate whether the results of the current study can be generalized in a broader setting. Researchers can examine this issue in order to acquire a comprehensive picture regarding female stereotyping and explore factors that may inhibit progress toward role perceptions of women in advertising messages. The participants can be selected using probability sampling. Further, such an effort can be complemented by longitudinal research that may illuminate whether and how representations of women in print advertising have changed over time.

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