

## Women Empowerment In Select Pantene Tv Commercials

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### *Abstract*

To open up the eyes of the community about the usefulness of advertisements not just in patronizing products and service but also in spreading advocacies, this study analyses how Pantene TV commercials depict women empowerment specifically looking into the propaganda techniques employed in the commercials, images of women empowerment; and the images of values integration. This study reveals that the propaganda techniques such as glittering generalities and testimony used in the commercials of Pantene are not just a marketing strategy but also a means that runs a cause boosting the confidence of every woman. The images of women empowerment are shown through scenes of the commercials about women fervently pursuing other walks of life aside from merely being a domestic or housewives, and redefining standard of uprightness, sense of responsibility and beauty in the patriarchal society. The selected Pantene TV commercials are observed not to be totally subliminally profit oriented since they also reflect values that promotes women empowerment. The virtues of assertiveness, determination, resiliency, persuasiveness, contentment, steadfastness, flexibility, confidence, valor and character are integrated in the commercials. Thus, the selected Pantene TV Commercials depicts women empowerment by integrated virtues that help women pursue non-domestic walks of life and refine standard of uprightness, responsibility and beauty imposed by culture. Since the propaganda techniques are seen to be a powerful tool both in marketing a product and teaching values, there must be a study on how effective these kinds of commercials are. Considering that the selected Pantene TV commercials show images of women empowerment, there must also be a study on the unconsciousness inferiority complex women have as reflected in beauty products. Taking into consideration the values integration seen to be present

in the selected Pantene TV Commercials, there must also be study on the effects of TV commercials to human values.

### **Introduction**

Women of nowadays have soared beyond their conservative horizon. They have broken the culture that brainwashes them that they are to stay at home, carry out house chores and take care of their children. In this way, one could say that women have destroyed the old conventions and have emancipated themselves to bondage of misconception of what an ideal woman is.

Despite the women's effort of uplifting themselves, Mananzan (100) admits it is still undeniable that women still experience discrimination and inequality. The society still regards them weaker over men although they already have landed themselves on several taxing careers because it is not irrefutable that women priorities their domestic roles than men. Women have been enslaved by their roles which rooted from the tradition that says women are meant to become mothers, wives or housekeepers.

These days, the movement to promote women empowerment has become stronger that calls advertisement to make its definition even more meaningful. It is not only use to entice people patronize a product but also to run an advocacy. It is to abide the standards postulated by the Integrated Marketing Communication has implemented that advertising standards to ensure that advertisements are value-laden and not sensationalized (Cavanlit, 26). The said institution assure that advertisements the avoidance of stereotyping, preservation of life, revival of integrity, assertion of the importance of ecological and environmental resources, renewal and strengthening of family, termination of offensive brand message and manipulation and subliminal topics are taken into account in the production of commercials.

Going back to the issue of gender crisis suffered by women, some commercials features ways on how to fuel up women to be empowered. In this connection, this study look into the way advertisements integrate the vision of helping the women pursue different passions outside the box of their domestic roles. It seeks to analyses how Pantene TV commercials depict women empowerment. It delves into It specifically looks into the propaganda techniques employed in the commercials, images of women empowerment; and images of values integration.

This study is anchored on the Muted Group Theory, Coordinated Management Theory and Cultivation Analysis Theory.

The Muted Group Theory of Human Communication Model which was first introduced by Edwin Ardener in 1969 and later was developed by Shirley Ardener in 1974 suggests that language is formulated by men and is intended for them resulting women's voice to be underestimated. Since it denies women's adeptness in speech, it stresses women's incapacity to express themselves with conviction. Lakoff claims that women are said to speak with less authority, certainty and clarity. (467)

On the other hand, Cultivation Analysis Theory which is proposed by Professor George Gerbner focuses on the effects of television viewing on the viewers' attitudes rather than their behaviour. In this theory, Gerbner emphasizes the presence resonance effect that could increase cultivation especially if the television show links with the viewer's experience. Cultivation theorists acknowledge the effects of television programming and point out how it shapes the behaviour and thinking of the viewers. It also admits how powerful propaganda is in molding human sense for hate, will and hope (221)

Since this theory focuses on how women are muted and silenced, it is applicable in identifying the images of inferiorities suffered by women as depicted in the selected Pantene TV commercials.

### **Research Methodology**

This study uses qualitative method utilizing content analysis in order to identify the propaganda techniques used in the commercials, the depiction of women empowerment and images of values integration.

It is composed of three phases namely; Propaganda Technique Identification, Recognition of Women Empowerment Depiction and Distinguishing the Images of Values Integration. The first phase identifies what propaganda techniques are used in the selected commercials in order to convey women empowerment. It also examines how women are portrayed through the use of the advertisement devices. The second phase classify the images of women empowerment as reflected in the way they are portrayed in each commercial. It also provides explanation by giving what each image implies. Lastly, the thirdphase enumerates the values integration shown in the commercials. It also gives enlightenment on how these deeds features women empowerment.

### **Results and Discussion**

Advertisements are known to entice consumers for a certain product or service to be patronized. It is expected to be attractive enough in order to grab attention. Advertisement is known to catch people's attention in order to introduce a product or service. Since advertisements abide some standards imposed by Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), they have amended their purpose and have extended it by providing tips on how to adopt new lifestyle and break the old ones in order to uplift the standards of living and many more (Your Article Library). Marketing strategies used in advertisement do not just aim to stir up curiosity but to teach values and promote advocacy. In the Pantene TV Commercials understudied, it is revealed that the propaganda techniques being employed pave way for women empowerment to be portrayed.

The propaganda techniques used in the advertisements are testimonial and glittering generalities. These propaganda techniques advise women to stay strong and beautiful despite the baggage their culture has demanded them to carry since they are born women. Such encouragement also indirectly pictures the various ways how women become strong in the phenomenal world. The commercials also embolden women to continue shining and whip the adversities thrown to them.

The commercial, Labels Against Women Philippine Pantene Commercial 2013 underlines the double standard between men and women. While men are assumed to be the boss, persuasive, dedicated, neat and smooth, women are images of imperiousness, aggressiveness, selfishness and showiness. Since the bias seems to affront women, they are uplifted by the encouragement of the tagline, Don't let labels hold you back. Be strong and Shine and the hashtag #WHIPIT.

Aside from using glittering generalities, the next is Thai Pantene Commercial which exhibits the storytelling technique in featuring a story of a mute deaf girl who shows off what she got by playing violin. This advertisement becomes motivational since it expresses that a person with disability can be a positive outlier, can excel as much as normal people do and can overcome prejudice and challenges in her simple ways such as following the council of his coach, engaging herself in music doggedly and staying patient to those who offend her without letting them pin her down.

The third advertisement is Pantene Philippines: Denise Laurel Rises Above her Labels. It is in a form of testimony and glittering generalities which portrays how women stay strong and keep going while battling the challenges of double-standard. It also discusses how

a woman rises herself even though they are unfairly judged by people. According to her, people call her a slut and bash her for wasting her opportunities instead of helping her recover easily for the mistake she did. In her testimony, she confessed that labels are a challenges and she chose to accept and whip it.

The commercial, Pantene Philippines: Kris Aquino Whips Away her Labels which also employs the testimonial and glittering generalities presents the idea of how outspoken women are criticized for expressing their thoughts about things. Aquino enumerates ways on how she has shown her boldness and wit by accentuating that recognizing your weakness as your strength can be a gut that shuts people from bashing. She also brings out the idea that a person can only be intelligent when he knows how to pay respect to the opinion of an intelligent woman.

Elevating one's sense of pride through embracing one's uniqueness is what the commercial, Pantene Golden: Celebrating Strong, Beautiful African American shows. It advises that having perms is a way of having a unique identity and counsels that there is nothing to be insecure about it since being different counts more than conforming to the norm of beauty.

Like the Thai Pantene Commercial, Russian Pantene Commercial 2012 also uses the storytelling technique to highlight the importance of perseverance, wit and determination. In the story, a child who is interested in gymnastics become an applauded gymnast with the help of her grandmother and of course her eagerness and passion toward her dream. Her imperfection like her bountiful physique, her detractor and other negative vibes do not stop her from exceling. Instead of giving up, she faces all odds and carry out all quick solutions for her problems to achieve her goals.

Testimonial technique again is used in the Philippine Pantene Commercial with Angel Aquino 2006. The testimony gives way for Aquino to imply how flexible women are because in her case, she welcomes any opportunities offered to her by showing her willingness to take whatever roles as an actress and infuse in herself that she can stand out.

In the commercial, Pantene Commercial with Gretchen Barreto which was filmed in a form of a testimony and at the same inhibiting the principle of glittering generalities, women's instinct that they can gain people's confidence and attention is shown. Barreto affirms how complacent she is that her hair is one of the asset she possesses which is worthy to be proud of and that others can't just criticize it.

Women's fearlessness of working with big wigs is what the commercial, Pantene Commercial with Ruffa Gutierrez aired. The testimony narrates how comfortable and delighted Gutierrez is being with people who are either her equal or superior since she supposes that she has the potential to be on top.

The last commercial which seems to be good stereotype attributed to women is integrated in the commercial entitled, See the Difference with Pantene. It underscores women's inner goodness which importantly defines through beauty that is believed to be intensified through healthy and beautiful glowing glory. It is implied through the statement healthy from the core.

The propaganda techniques used in the commercials of Pantene is not just a marketing strategy but they also run a cause and that is to boost the confidence of every woman. As defined glittering generalities is a propaganda technique which uses words that promote values and triggers appealing emotions. It often uses nouns that stimulate virtues such as ideals, such as dignity, freedom, fame, integrity, justice, love and respect (Changing Minds Homepage). On the other hand, the testimonies are also utilized to strengthen the advocacy shouted in the use of glittering generalities. Testimonies make the commercials more believable since the people behind the ads are people who are known to be defamed in the world of showbiz and so they easily nab the trust of the mass which eventually lead the product to be sold.

### **Images of Women Empowerment**

Nowadays, women have broken the chain of the culture that says that they are meant to stay at home. In the commercial, Labels Against Women Philippine Pantene Commercial 2013 features how women venture men's undertakings in the corporate world. It shows the comparison between men and women in terms of their work ethics and habits in which the bad ones are attributed to women. It bespeaks about women's courage to break the tradition that says they are meant only to run household chores. Despite the double-standard bagged by women, they have shown that they are empowered that they could also do what men are capable of. They have convincing power to lead, assertiveness to speak their mind, determination to make a difference, meticulousness to assure goodness and well-being and cognizance to tell the world that they are lovely and elegant---very much not unlike to what the stereotyping culture has projected for them compelling that they are an image of unpleasant and tasteless countenance.

Thai Pantene Commercial portrays about women entering the world of entertainment and fighting for their passion. Unlike the show businesses in early centuries which only welcomed men, women also thrive and bloom showing their talents and potentials. The commercial stresses that women nowadays deserve to be applauded not just being housekeepers but also as stage performers. It especially emphasizes that aside from being housewives staying at home, they follow other paths that lead them to burn fire for their passion than merely doing their duties at home.

Pantene Philippines: Denise Laurel Rises Above her Labels highlights how women face the world bravely and continue life even after her career has declined due to her mishaps. Through this, she eventually has gained greater integrity. She has proven that a woman still deserves respect and honor despite the mistake she had in her past because her life is not defined by it. The commercial shows that women become more honourable when she manages to lift herself up from the downfall. This commercial proves that women are still worthy to be glorified for being courageous in standing after being stumped down by her own mistakes.

Pantene Philippines: Kris Aquino Whips Away her Labels shows women's candidness, confidence and outspokenness. Aquino serves as a prototype of women who fearlessly speak out their thoughts as firmly as men do and acknowledges that her intelligence worthy of appreciation. Through her statement, she likely shouts that women assert that they are never illogical.

In the commercial, Pantene Golden: Celebrating Strong, Beautiful African American, it pinpoints that women are self-assured despite being different. The commercial shows the different kind of hair instead of merely having the straight one. The women in the commercial let their curls and perms crown themselves proudly. This commercial portrays how women modify the patriarchal definition of beauty.

Russian Pantene Commercial 2012 shows that women are adamant that physique is not a determinant for anyone to sway gracefully and simple ingenuity can be an innovation. To recall, the gymnast or ballerina was once a fat girl but due to her arduous passion to dance, she has learned the arts and has turned into a lovely swan. This portray how women's determination, astuteness and resourcefulness rise to stardom. This commercial also stresses that women are meant to be applauded being housewives but also when they pursue their passion.

Philippine Pantene Commercial with Angel Aquino 2006 pictures how women accommodate any tasks given to them. For instance, the actress accepts any role offered to her to portray. Through that, the commercial shows how empowered women are that they do not refuse any opportunities stone to them. The commercial shows that women are invincible because they do not turn their back to any challenges coming in their way.

Pantene Commercial with Gretchen Barreto suggests that despite women's imperfection leading them to the eyes of criticism, women admit to themselves that they always possess an asset worthy for anyone to adore. Women boost their sense of pride in the best way they knew. This commercial uplifts the character of women showing how their confidence in the way their build grace in them.

Pantene Commercial with Ruffa Gutierrez affirms that women are not hesitant to work with people who are their equal or superior than them. Since they are confident and they believe in the potential they possess, they debunk sense of inferiority.

The last commercial, See the Difference with Pantene imply the goodness they have that begins from their inner core. Women become outspoken of the cliché that are naturally good at heart. Women live by the essence of good virtue because that who they are.

All of these commercials affirm that women have developed many abilities these days expanding their duties at home to the society. Despite the presence of some misinterpretation behind women's effort of empowering themselves, women have overcome the issue of mutedness in another way aside from nagging which Ardener (80) has observed to be women's defense mechanism to show that they can be dominant over men. Women have formulated a way to break their inferiority complex and have boost their confidence through deeds and action not just through verbal fluency.

To sum up, the images of women empowerment are shown through fervently pursuing other walks of life aside from merely being a domestic, and redefining standard of uprightness, sense of responsibility and beauty in the patriarchal society.

### **Images of Values Integration**

As postulated by Duncan (qtd in Cavanlit 8), advertisers must integrate positive values and standards in advertisement following the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication for the public not just to be well informed about a product or service to patronize, but also educated on the virtues that would be helpful in whatever human undertakings. Pantene TV Commercials seem to



abide this since there are values that can be seen in their advertisements.

The value integration the compiled Pantene TV Commercials have such as assertiveness, determination, resiliency, persuasiveness, contentment, steadfastness, flexibility, confidence, valor and character. All of these virtues are possessed by phenomenal women who are battling against double-standard. Women are seen to be phenomenal because they no longer limit themselves as household managers but they have extended their horizons and have followed their paths driven by their passion and potentials. These virtues continuously empowered women to strive and attain their respective goals for their family, career, society and for themselves.

In the commercial, Labels Against Women Philippine Pantene Commercial 2013, assertiveness is the dominant values perceived emphasizing that women have voices worthy to be heard. This can be proven through their effort to lead and go on with their undertakings in the corporate world.

Thai Pantene Commercial highlights determination telling that women persevere in all odds of life. In the case of the violinist, she faces all difficulties and discrimination being a deaf and mute but that doesn't hinder her to reach her goals.

Pantene Philippines: Denise Laurel Rises Above her Labels speaks about resiliency since it involves a woman who dares to uplift herself after she has fallen proving that women can rise more gloriously after they fall.

Pantene Philippines: Kris Aquino Whips Away her Labels captures the image of persuasiveness suggesting that women have logic. The testimony shows that women these days are no longer afraid to express their ideas about things around them. Aquino says it all when she states that it takes an intelligent person to accept an intelligent woman.

Pantene Golden: Celebrating Strong, Beautiful African American implies contentment highlighting that women are never insecure. They stride with honor with what they have and embrace the uniqueness they have deviating the standard culture and society have established and have followed through ages.

Russian Pantene Commercial 2012 illustrates steadfastness depicting that women endures hardship to succeed. The story highlights how a woman's determination win the heart of other people and content herself seeing her goals and visions all happening in reality.

Philippine Pantene Commercial with Angel Aquino 2006 presents flexibility that women are daring and adventurous since they do not let anything slip. They take whatever comes and make most of the opportunities with the ardor.

Pantene Commercial with Gretchen Barreto denotes confidence that women stand with pride knowing they have an edge that they do not deserve to be discriminated.

Pantene Commercial with Ruffa Gutierrez infers valor that women shine without outweighing others. Women are complacent that they will can excel in any way they can and they instil in their consciousness that excelling does not mean they are superior over the others. They just find the people they are working with their equals.

See the Difference with Pantene signifies character indicating that women are beautiful inside and out. Archetypes have been recognizing that women has the natural goodness inside and their countenance can also be a manifestation of what they keep inside.

The selected Pantene TV commercials are observed not to be totally subliminally profit oriented since they values that promotes women empowerment. The virtues of assertiveness, determination, resiliency, persuasiveness, contentment, steadfastness, flexibility, confidence, valor and character are integrated in the commercials.

### **Conclusion**

The selected Pantene TV Commercials depicts women empowerment by integrated virtues that help women pursue non-domestic walks of life and refine standard of uprightness, responsibility and beauty imposed by culture. Since the propaganda techniques are seen to be a powerful tool both in marketing a product and teaching values, there must be a study on how effective these kinds of commercials are. Considering that the selected Pantene TV commercials show images of women empowerment, there must also be a study on the unconsciousness inferiority complex women have as reflected in beauty products. Taking into consideration the values integration seen to be present in the selected Pantene TV Commercials, there must also be study on the effects of TV commercials to human values.

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