

Empowering Narratives: Exploring the Impact of Kotak General Insurance's 'Drive Like A Lady' Campaign on Shifting Perceptions of Female Empowerment

Abstract

Amidst India's evolving societal landscape, this study delves into the profound influence of Kotak General Insurance's *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign on reshaping perceptions of female empowerment and aspirations. Through detailed qualitative analysis, the study explores how the campaign's narrative and reception challenge biased stereotypes and inspire young girls to pursue ambitious goals. Central to the campaign lies the portrayal of Surekha Yadav, India's first female loco pilot, whose journey embodies resilience and determination.

By spotlighting Yadav's story and celebrating women who drive change, the campaign aims to instill empowerment and possibility among its audience. Through content analysis and exploration of existing literature, this research explains the campaign's effectiveness in reshaping cultural narratives surrounding female achievement and ambition. It uncovers how the campaign's storytelling strategies and celebration of female role models foster a more inclusive and aspirational societal narrative.

Moreover, this study examines the campaign's resonance across diverse demographic groups, probing its ability to surpass cultural boundaries and resonate with individuals from varied socio-economic backgrounds. It offers insights into the broader societal implications of the *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign and its role in shaping perceptions of gender equality and empowerment in India.

This research underscores the *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign's pivotal role as a catalyst for reshaping cultural norms and empowering the next generation of women to dream big and defy societal limitations.

Keywords: Achievement, Ambition, Aspirations, Bias, Campaign, Change, Cultural, Determination

Introduction

Significant changes in cultural views and beliefs around gender roles and female empowerment have occurred in India in recent decades. Even with progress, ingrained prejudices and social norms persist, especially in fields that have historically been dominated by males, like driving. Kotak General Insurance launched the *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign after realizing these difficulties. Based on an awareness of the obstacles preventing women from advancing, the campaign seeks to dispel long-held myths and give women the confidence to fearlessly follow their dreams. By doing this, it aims to undermine ingrained cultural conventions that restrict women to certain positions and prevent them from entering areas that have historically been controlled by males.

The *'Drive Like A Lady'* advertisement stands out as a ray of light in a world where gender inequalities are pervasive. Kotak General Insurance is using advocacy and storytelling to help change the way people think about female empowerment, especially in areas that have previously been seen negatively. The goal of this campaign is to redefine what it means to drive like a woman and to encourage Indian women to break stereotypes and choose their routes to success.

Amid India's ongoing attempt at gender equality, the initiative is a tribute to the fortitude and resolve of women to surpass social constraints. Examining this innovative project in further detail reveals that it serves

as a catalyst for significant societal change as well as a call to action. We examine how campaigns that challenge ingrained standards might promote inclusion and uncover the complexity of gender relations in modern-day India via the prism of the *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign.

In this research study, we conduct a detailed analysis of the *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign by Kotak General Insurance, looking at its goals, history, and effect on changing the way society views gender roles and female empowerment. We want to shed light on the relevance of this creative undertaking in the context of India's changing social environment by carefully examining its details. We hope to gain insights into the campaign's efficacy as a catalyst for societal change and its role in enabling women to reach their full potential by examining its narrative methods, reception, and resonance among various demographic groups. We hope to demonstrate the transforming potential of advocacy campaigns in dispelling myths, encouraging diversity, and opening doors for a more just and empowered future through this investigative trip.

Literature Review

(Chidinma Favour Chikwe et al., 2024)their study "Navigating the double bind: Strategies for women leaders in overcoming stereotypes and leadership biases" explains women leaders often face a "double bind" where they're expected to embody both stereotypically feminine and masculine traits to be seen as effective. This challenge arises from pervasive gender stereotypes in leadership, hindering women's progress. Research shows that conforming too closely to feminine stereotypes may undermine perceptions of leadership while adopting masculine traits can compromise likability. To overcome this, women can embrace an "androgynous" leadership style, blending both traits. They can also emphasize their unique strengths like empathy and collaboration to build trust with their teams. Mentorship and networking are vital for navigating these challenges. Ultimately, challenging stereotypes, balancing traits, and leveraging strengths can help women overcome barriers to leadership success and foster inclusive environments.

(Koch et al., 2015)their study "A Meta-Analysis of Gender Stereotypes and Bias in Experimental Simulations of Employment Decision Making" examines factors influencing gender bias within male-dominated, female-dominated, and integrated job settings. Findings reveal a clear gender-role congruity bias favoring men in male-dominated roles, with male raters demonstrating greater bias than female raters. While additional information inconsistently reduced bias, clarity on high competence mitigated gender bias. Decision-makers motivated to make careful judgments exhibited reduced bias in male-dominated roles, and experienced professionals showed less bias compared to undergraduates or working adults. Understanding these factors is crucial for addressing gender bias and promoting fairness in organizational decisions.

(Barnett, 2004)explains in their study "Preface: Women and Work: Where Are We, Where Did We Come From, and Where Are We Going?" that Persistent barriers faced by women in the workplace mirror historical gender biases, reminiscent of the traditional notion that women belong primarily in the home rather than in professional spheres. These biases persist in contemporary workplaces through stereotypes like the maternal wall and the ideal worker, contributing to ongoing gender disparities. Gendered beliefs influence behavior, as women may feel conflicted about prioritizing their careers over family responsibilities, while men may hesitate to take family leave due to concerns about being perceived as less committed to work. Despite evolving attitudes, gender inequalities endure, often attributing women's career challenges to their perceived limitations rather than addressing systemic barriers. However, recent trends suggest a gradual shift away from these entrenched beliefs, offering hope for a more equitable workplace environment.

(Heilman, 2012) the study "Gender Stereotypes and Workplace Bias" examines the impact of descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes on women's career advancement. It argues that these stereotypes lead to biased judgments and decisions, hindering women's progress in the workplace. Descriptive

stereotypes create negative performance expectations due to perceived mismatches between women's traits and the attributes deemed necessary for success in male-dominated roles. Prescriptive stereotypes establish normative standards for behavior, resulting in social penalties for women who deviate from these norms by being successful. Research explores specific career consequences of stereotype-based bias, and identifies factors that can amplify or mitigate their effects.

(Morgenroth et al., 2015) their study "The Motivational Theory of Role Modeling: How Role Models Influence Role Aspirants' Goals" examines the Motivational Theory of Role Modeling, which synthesizes expectancy-value theories of motivation with the concept of role modeling to elucidate the mechanisms through which role models influence goal attainment. By integrating various definitions of role models into three distinct functions behavioral modeling, representation of possibility, and inspiration the theoretical framework highlights the multifaceted ways in which role models impact motivation and goals. It underscores the significance of leveraging role models to reinforce existing aspirations and foster the adoption of new goals, particularly among individuals from stigmatized groups. Moreover, the study emphasizes the need for further research to explore the nuanced dynamics of role modeling across diverse contexts and to develop targeted interventions aimed at empowering individuals to pursue and achieve their ambitions.

(Hoyt & Murphy, 2016) their study "Managing to clear the air: Stereotype threat, women, and Managing to clear the Air: Stereotype Threat, women, and Leadership" delves into the phenomenon of stereotype threat for women in leadership roles. Beginning with an overview of stereotype threat, the article explores its implications for women in leadership positions. It reviews a model encompassing cues to stereotype threat, its consequences, and factors moderating individuals' appraisals and responses to stereotype threat. In addition to focusing on leadership-specific research, the review incorporates broader studies on stereotype threat in workplace contexts and tasks relevant to leadership. Finally, it discusses implications for future research and proposes practices to mitigate the adverse effects of stereotype threat.

(Brown & El-Ansary, 1976) in their study "The Portrayal of Women in Advertising: An Overlooked Area of Societal Marketing," discovered that women are frequently depicted as housewives or in low-level occupations. Advertisements often featured young housewives in domestic settings or portrayed women as sex objects, dressed as stewardesses, secretaries, or military personnel. Conversely, high-ranking professions such as doctors, attorneys, CEOs, and athletes were predominantly represented by men. Employing qualitative methods, particularly content analysis, the study revealed a disparity in the portrayal of male and female roles in advertising. The researchers concluded that existing literature and feminist critiques underscore the need for further exploration of gender roles in advertising. This prompted the development of future studies aimed at assessing the social acceptability of gender portrayals in advertisements across various dimensions such as sexuality, aesthetics, and relationship dynamics.

(Bartos, 1983) in their study "Women and Advertising," discovered that consumers' negative perceptions of advertising can diminish the quality and credibility of brand images. Conversely, advertising that resonates positively with consumers can enhance brand perception. The study highlights issues stemming from conventional methods of advertising research and a narrow definition of "advertising effectiveness," advocating for an expanded understanding that incorporates emotional responses. The researcher suggests that measuring the level of consumer liking may be a crucial aspect of advertising efficacy, especially in today's evolving media landscape. Through a cross-sectional study, the researchers gathered insights into women's perceptions of how they are portrayed in various advertising executions. The study concluded that both housewives and working women reacted more favorably to modern advertising and images compared to traditional ones. Interestingly, even women with traditional viewpoints showed strong support for these newer advertising principles, indicating a positive response to signs of change irrespective of their lifestyles aligning with "new values."

(Moorthi et al., 2014) in their study titled "The Changing Roles Portrayed by Women in Indian Advertisements: A Longitudinal Content Analysis," the researchers examined the evolution of female roles in Indian television advertisements over time. Utilizing content analysis as the methodology, they

analyzed how gender roles have shifted in advertising portrayals. The study found that women's roles have indeed transformed over the years, with Indian advertisers typically depicting them in stereotypical ways across various product categories. Notably, there has been a trend towards portraying women in traditionally male-dominated advertisements over time.

(Das & Sharma, 2016) in their study titled "Fetishizing Women: Advertising in Indian Television and its Effects on Target Audiences," the researchers underscore the significant influence of advertising on shaping diverse notions of beauty, particularly in India. Rather than featuring "size-zero" models, advertisements often portray women with fair skin, tight clothing, and exposed midriffs as the epitome of beauty, reflecting a Westernized perspective. The study investigates how young girls interpret media pressures by examining the portrayal of thin, attractive models in Indian TV commercials. Conducted by students from BITS Pilani, the study utilized quantitative research methods, surveying female students over four years to analyze their perceptions. Findings reveal that advertisements frequently present women with unattainable and unrealistic beauty standards, encouraging them to prioritize physical appearance over well-being. This pressure contributes to feelings of disappointment and frustration among women, leading to unhealthy eating habits. Despite these challenges, the study highlights a preference among respondents for contemporary depictions of women as role models.

Methodology:

The present study employs a qualitative research methodology to investigate the intricacies of Kotak General Insurance's '*Drive Like A Lady*' campaign and its influence on the transformation of society's attitudes towards female empowerment. The research endeavors to thoroughly analyze the narrative components incorporated into the campaign's many communication materials using a content analysis lens. This methodological decision enables a thorough examination of the campaign's underlying ideas, messaging techniques, and visual representations to communicate its main message, which challenges preconceived notions about female empowerment.

Content Analysis:

The foundation of this study technique is content analysis, which provides an approach for dissecting the complex elements of the '*Drive Like A Lady*' campaign. Through a thorough examination of a wide variety of campaign materials, such as advertising, promotional videos, social media posts, and related media coverage, the research aims to identify the underlying story threads that underpin the campaign's efficacy and resonance. The research aims to clarify how the campaign creates and communicates its vision of female empowerment by closely examining the language, imagery, symbolism, and narrative approaches used in these materials.

The research tries to find repeating patterns, persuasive methods, and representations of female agency and autonomy within the campaign's narrative framework by use of a thematic coding and interpretation procedure. The research aims to explore the nuances of how the '*Drive Like A Lady*' campaign navigates and challenges current stereotypes and social expectations around women's roles and skills by analyzing the campaign's messaging at both surface and sub-textual levels.

Features:

Advertiser: Kotak General Insurance

Title of Campaign / Hashtag: #Drive Like A Lady

Title of Ad: Drive Like A Lady 2024

Product: Insurance services offered by Kotak General Insurance

Appeal/s: Emotional appeal, aspirational appeal

Length: 2 Min

Narratives of Ad:

Beginning: The ad opens with a little girl sitting with her grandfather, sharing her dreams of becoming a loco pilot for the train. Her grandfather listens attentively and questions her about how she can drive a train being a girl.

Body / Development of Ad: As the ad progresses, it transitions to showcasing Surekha Yadav, India's first female loco pilot. It depicts her journey, and challenges in a male-dominated profession. The ad highlights her determination and resilience, inspiring the little girl and viewers to dream big and break stereotypes.

Conclusion: The ad concludes with a powerful message celebrating women who drive change and urging young girls to dream big, irrespective of societal barriers.

Outline for Analysis

Appeal: The ad primarily appeals to viewers' emotions and aspirations, aiming to inspire and empower them.

Location: The ad is set in a railway station and scene depicting Surekha Yadav's workplace as a loco pilot.

Meaning of Ad

The central message of the Ad: The central message of the ad is to challenge biased perceptions and inspire young girls to dream big by showcasing the story of Surekha Yadav, India's first female loco pilot.

Characters in advertisement: The main characters include the little girl, her grandfather, and Surekha Yadav.

Scene selected for Analysis: The scene depicting Surekha Yadav's triumphant moment as she operates a locomotive.

Time Code: 1:13 to 1:43

Brief description of the selected scene: The scene shows Surekha Yadav confidently operating a locomotive, symbolizing her groundbreaking achievement as India's first female loco pilot.

Ad plot discussion: The ad highlights Surekha Yadav's ultimate triumph, and contrasts with the aspirations of a young girl. It underscores the importance of breaking stereotypes and pursuing one's dreams.

The overall theme of the Ad: The overall theme of the ad revolves around empowerment, breaking stereotypes, and inspiring women to pursue their ambitions.

Mise-en-scene / Props: The mise-en-scene includes a train station and the interior of a locomotive. Props include a toy train symbolizing the little girl's dream and the locomotive representing Surekha Yadav's profession.

Editing / Mixing: The ad features smooth editing transitions between scenes, effectively contrasting the narratives of the little girl and Surekha Yadav.

Sound Effects: The ad incorporates uplifting background music and sound effects to enhance emotional resonance.

Images 1



Results

The content analysis of Kotak General Insurance's '*Drive Like A Lady*' campaign revealed several key findings regarding its narrative elements and impact on reshaping societal perceptions of female empowerment:

- **Emotional Appeal and Aspirational Messaging:** The campaign primarily appeals to viewers' emotions and aspirations, leveraging storytelling techniques to inspire and empower audiences. By portraying Surekha Yadav's journey as India's first female loco pilot alongside the aspirations of a young girl, the campaign effectively communicates its central message of challenging biased perceptions and encouraging women to dream big.
- **Symbolism and Representation:** Through careful selection of settings, characters, and props, the campaign constructs a narrative that symbolizes empowerment and resilience. Scenes depicting Surekha Yadav's triumphant moment as she operates a locomotive serve as powerful symbols of female achievement and breaking stereotypes, resonating with viewers on both a symbolic and emotional level.
- **Narrative Themes:** The overarching theme of the campaign revolves around empowerment, breaking stereotypes, and inspiring women to pursue their ambitions fearlessly. By juxtaposing the aspirations of a young girl with Surekha Yadav's real-life achievements, the campaign underscores the importance of challenging societal norms and pursuing one's dreams irrespective of gender barriers.
- **Effectiveness of Storytelling Techniques:** The use of smooth editing transitions, uplifting background music, and sound effects enhances the emotional resonance of the campaign, effectively engaging audiences and reinforcing its message of empowerment and possibility.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the content analysis of Kotak General Insurance's '*Drive Like A Lady*' campaign highlights its significant impact on reshaping societal perceptions of female empowerment in India. Through a

compelling narrative that celebrates the achievements of Surekha Yadav and inspires young girls to dream big, the campaign challenges biased stereotypes and fosters a culture of inclusivity and aspiration.

By leveraging emotional appeal, aspirational messaging, and powerful symbolism, the campaign effectively communicates its central message of empowerment and resilience. Through its portrayal of female agency and determination, the campaign inspires women of all ages to defy societal expectations and pursue their aspirations with confidence.

Overall, the *'Drive Like A Lady'* campaign serves as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of storytelling in driving social change and empowering marginalized communities. As India continues its journey towards gender equality, initiatives like this play a crucial role in challenging entrenched biases and fostering a more equitable and inclusive society.

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