

The Electronic Media as a Technological Marketing Tool for the Subordination of Women in Zimbabwe. The Case of Adverts on ZTV and SABC 1, 2 and 3

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Abstract

The study examines the significance of the electronic media in maintaining and perpetuating gender inequality. In the wake of various conventions and declarations that advocate for a dignified portrayal of women in the mass media, advertisements continue to portray women in images that inhibit their potential in the extradomestic sphere. In the marketing of goods and services, advertisements perpetuate stereotypes of women. In that view a close look at the role of the mass media in the subordination of women becomes germane especially in the analysis of women's positioning in today's world. Content analysis was used as a method of inquiry for this study. One hundred and ten advertisements were recorded from television channels ZTV, SABC 1, 2 and 3 in Zimbabwe. Coded data was recorded using descriptive statistics. The study shows that people in the media business do not practice what they profess in relation to the representation of women in the media. Through technology, advertising continues to portray women as objects to be used as means to particular ends. There are some deep seated attitudes of individuals and organisations that continue to thwart efforts to improve the representation of women in the media. The study recommends the need for intensive, gender sensitive training for media professionals so that they desist from using stereotyped and unbalanced images of women in the marketing of goods and services.