

Selling Domesticity: A Socio-Cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis of Patriarchal Ideology in Mid-Twentieth-Century Advertising

Noraizati Aisyah Sohor* & Nor Fatin Abdul Jabar

Faculty of Education, Social Sciences & Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10100027>

Received: 30 December 2025; Accepted: 05 January 2026; Published: 19 January 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examines the discursive construction and normalisation of patriarchal ideology in mid-twentieth-century advertising through a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis. This study analyses a representative 1950s domestic appliance advertisement through Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, investigating the interaction between linguistic choices, visual components, and the social cognition that shapes discourse and society. The analysis demonstrates that textual strategies such as polarisation, presupposition, and evaluative language, in conjunction with visual elements like gendered positioning and symbolic domestic imagery, functioned to normalise the confinement of women to domestic labour while legitimising male authority as a benevolent provision. These discursive patterns establish collective cognitive frameworks that portray domesticity as an inherently feminine duty and consumerism as the appropriate solution for inequitable domestic labour. This study asserts that the advertisement, contextualised within its historical and ideological framework, served not merely as a promotional artefact but also as a powerful instrument for perpetuating and disseminating patriarchal gender norms across generations. The results underscore the enduring relevance of socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis in elucidating how quotidian media discourse sustains gender inequality and highlight the imperative of critical media literacy in challenging entrenched ideological paradigms in contemporary contexts.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis; patriarchy; gender ideology; advertising discourse; social cognition; media and gender

INTRODUCTION

Advertising has always been more than just a way for businesses to make money. It is a powerful cultural process that creates and spreads social values, identities, and ideological standards. Advertisements do not merely persuade or remain neutral; they actively shape societal perceptions regarding gender, labour, and social hierarchy by embedding ideological assumptions into quotidian visual and linguistic practices. Scholars in critical discourse studies have consistently argued that commercial discourse plays a crucial role in normalising unequal power dynamics by portraying them as common sense, desirable, or inevitable (Fairclough, 2018; Machin & Mayr, 2012; van Dijk, 2021). Patriarchy is one of the most enduring ideological constructs, particularly as it has been historically manifested through representations of gendered domestic labour.

Mid-twentieth-century advertising in the United States provides a critical context for examining the discursive construction of patriarchal ideology. Emerging after the Second World War, this period was marked by a concerted cultural effort to reinstate traditional gender norms following women's significant participation in industrial labour during the conflict. Print ads for home appliances, household items, and consumer technologies played a big role in changing the way we think about femininity as domestic, supportive, and focused on consumption, while masculinity was linked to authority, rational decision-making, and providing for the family (Eager, 2021; Elliott & Robinson, 2021). These ads not only reflected social structures; they also helped create and strengthen gendered ideas by always linking women's identity, happiness, and value to their work at home and their ability to keep the house running smoothly.

Feminist research has consistently demonstrated that these images are intrinsically linked to the perpetuation of sexism and gender inequality. Initial feminist critical discourse analysis highlighted that advertising language and imagery represented women as objects of evaluation, domestic carers, or emotional dependents, whereas men were depicted as knowledgeable authorities and benevolent providers (Lazar, 2007; Gill, 2018). Recent research has augmented this critique by illustrating how these discursive patterns enabled the legitimisation of unequal labour divisions within households and larger social institutions (Orgad & De Benedictis, 2021; Sunderland, 2019). These studies highlight that patriarchal ideology is sustained not only through overt discrimination but also through subtle, habitual representations that shape cognitive internalisation and the social reproduction of gender roles.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a comprehensive framework for examining these processes, viewing discourse as a social practice interconnected with power dynamics and ideology (Fairclough, 2018; Wodak, 2021). Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach within Critical Discourse Analysis is especially relevant for analysing advertising discourse, as it highlights the importance of social cognition in connecting textual and social structures (van Dijk, 2021). The socio-cognitive paradigm emphasises the development, activation, and reinforcement of collective mental models—encompassing ideas, conventions, and ideologies—through consistent exposure to specific discursive patterns, rather than perceiving speech as a mere reflection of societal constructs. From this perspective, commercials serve not only as persuasive messages but also as cognitive tools that help shape enduring beliefs about gender, authority, and social hierarchy.

Employing a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis of vintage advertising enables a comprehensive understanding of the normalisation of patriarchal ideology at both discursive and cognitive levels. Linguistic techniques, including evaluative language, assumption, and polarisation, along with visual elements such as gaze, placement, and symbolic imagery, were employed to depict gendered domesticity as both inherent and attractive (Machin & van Leeuwen, 2016; Lazar, 2018). These semiotic choices made people think in ways that made them believe that women's main job was to do housework and that men showed their leadership by providing for their families instead of being involved. Over time, these representations helped pass down gender norms from one generation to the next. They shaped expectations that stay the same even when social conditions and job markets change (Gill & Orgad, 2018; Wodak, 2015).

Despite significant advancements in societal and legal gender equality, the current study reveals that numerous cognitive frameworks persist in their influence. Studies on postfeminist and neoliberal media cultures reveal that modern advertising often redefines traditional gender roles as empowerment, choice, or lifestyle branding, thereby sustaining inequality in more nuanced forms (Banet-Weiser, 2018; Orgad & De Benedictis, 2021). Understanding the historical discursive foundation of these patterns is essential for a critical analysis of contemporary representations of gender in media. Van Dijk (2021) posits that ideologies do not dissipate solely due to alterations in discourse; they persist through entrenched social cognitions shaped by antecedent communication practices.

This research examines the discursive construction of patriarchal ideology in mid-twentieth-century advertising through a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis. This study analyses a representative 1950s print advertisement for a domestic appliance, focussing on the interplay between verbal and visual elements that served to normalise gendered domestic roles and validate male authority within the household. The approach situates the commercial within broader ideological frameworks that link discourse, cognition, and social power, rather than perceiving it as an isolated historical artefact. This research elucidates the understanding of advertising discourse as a mechanism for sustaining patriarchal norms by examining the encoding and normalisation of gendered significations in quotidian commercial texts.

This study presents two principal contributions. This research advances contemporary feminist and media-oriented Critical Discourse Analysis by explicitly employing van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework within the realm of vintage advertising, thereby highlighting the cognitive dimensions of ideological reproduction that are often insufficiently theorised in historical analyses. Secondly, it underscores the persistent importance of analysing historical media discourse to understand contemporary gender inequalities, particularly in light of ongoing debates regarding representation, domestic labour, and media accountability. The research underscores

the importance of social cognition in sustaining patriarchal ideology, demonstrating the essential role of critical media literacy in challenging entrenched discursive frameworks that shape modern gender relations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertising, Ideology, and the Construction of Gender

People have always known that advertising is a powerful way to spread and create social ideas. Advertising discourse not only reflects existing social norms but also actively shapes collective perceptions of identity, power, and social relationships through the intentional use of language and imagery (Fairclough, 2018; Machin & Mayr, 2012). Feminist and critical media scholars assert that advertising plays a substantial role in the formation and validation of gendered ideologies by persistently associating specific social roles, emotional states, and behavioural norms with femininity and masculinity (Gill, 2018; Lazar, 2018).

In the middle of the twentieth century, advertising was a clear example of these ideological processes. After the Second World War caused a lot of changes in society, advertising became a big way to reinforce traditional gender roles. Studies on post-war print advertising consistently reveal that women were primarily depicted in domestic settings, engaged in household duties, childcare, or consumer activities aimed at family welfare (Eager, 2021; Elliott & Robinson, 2021). Conversely, men were portrayed as logical decision-makers, providers, and custodians of technology, with their authority within the household justified by narratives of care, efficiency, and accountability. These representational patterns not only mirrored social structures but also actively promoted the intellectual entrenchment of patriarchy during a period of social transformation.

Recent studies have emphasised that gender ideology in advertising operates through subtle and ingrained forms of representation rather than overtly discriminatory statements. Brough et al. (2023) show that even though advertising uses less openly discriminatory language, it still reinforces gender inequality by linking women to household chores and emotional labour while always linking men to power and competence. This continuity highlights the importance of examining historical advertising discourse, as contemporary representational techniques often originate from discursive frameworks established in earlier periods.

Patriarchy, Domestic Labour, and Gendered Ideology

Patriarchy, characterised as a social system that privileges male authority while constraining women's responsibilities and autonomy, has been a central theme in feminist discourse analysis. Patriarchal ideology is frequently manifested in advertising through the normalisation of unequal labour divisions, particularly within the domestic sphere (Lazar, 2007; Manne, 2018). Feminist researchers assert that the persistent association of women with unpaid domestic labour legitimises broader structural inequalities by portraying household work as natural, fulfilling, and inherently feminine.

Studies of historical advertising have shown that ads for home appliances strongly supported these ideas. Ads that show new technology as a way to help women with their household chores know that housework is hard work, but they don't talk about how unfairly it is divided (Elliott & Robinson, 2021). The ideological outcome was that efficiency, instead of equity, was the appropriate reaction to domestic inequality. This framing portrayed consumption as a substitute for social transformation and preserved patriarchal domestic frameworks by portraying masculine provision as benevolent rather than authoritative.

Recent studies demonstrate that these gendered beliefs exert lasting influences that transcend their historical origins. Orgad and De Benedictis (2021) assert that contemporary dialogues regarding parenting, work-life equilibrium, and household responsibilities consistently depend on entrenched perceptions of women's primary role within the home. They contend that these biases are perpetuated by cultural narratives originating from historical media representations, including mid-century advertising. Understanding how these stories are put together in words is important for explaining why they still exist today.

Critical Discourse Analysis and Gender Representation

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides an extensive theoretical and methodological framework for examining the ways in which language and visual semiotics sustain social power and inequality. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) posits discourse as a social practice that both reflects and shapes social structures, making it particularly suitable for the examination of media texts, including advertisements (Fairclough, 2018; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). In Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), gender has become a prominent area of inquiry, with scholars examining how discursive practices perpetuate gender hierarchies and marginalise alternative identities.

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) has notably underscored the gendered dimensions of discourse. Lazar (2007, 2018) asserts that FCDA elucidates the ways in which discourse sustains patriarchal power structures by embedding gender inequality into everyday communicative practices. This methodology has been extensively employed in advertising, where researchers have documented the representation of women as objects of evaluation, emotional entities, or domestic carers, while men are portrayed as embodiments of authority and rationality (Gill, 2018; Machin & van Leeuwen, 2016).

Nonetheless, a considerable segment of CDA research pertaining to advertising has primarily focused on textual and visual analysis, failing to rigorously investigate the cognitive processes through which ideological meanings are internalised and sustained. This limitation has prompted calls for greater integration between discourse analysis and social cognition theories, particularly in studies examining persistent ideological influences (van Dijk, 2021). It is essential to rectify this deficiency to understand how advertising discourse enables both immediate persuasion and the formation of enduring cognitive frameworks concerning gender and social roles.

Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach and Social Cognition

Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework for Critical Discourse Analysis serves as a substantial foundation for investigating the interaction among discourse, cognition, and society. This method is fundamentally grounded in the concept of social cognition, which involves shared mental representations, encompassing beliefs, norms, values, and ideologies, that enable the interplay between discourse and social structure (van Dijk, 2021). Van Dijk asserts that discourse impacts society indirectly by shaping cognitive processes that influence individual interpretation, retention, and reproduction of social meanings.

In advertising, socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis enables researchers to examine how recurrent exposure to specific discursive patterns cultivates the formation of mental models that normalise inequality. Linguistic strategies, encompassing polarisation, presumption, and evaluative language, alongside visual cues such as gaze, posture, and symbols, function to stimulate pre-existing ideologies while fortifying emerging ones (Machin & Mayr, 2012; van Leeuwen, 2008). Eventually, these discursive traits become part of accepted knowledge, making gendered social systems seem normal and necessary.

Recent studies employing van Dijk's framework have demonstrated its effectiveness in assessing gendered media discourse. Sunderland (2019) demonstrates that familial communication and media narratives promote the intergenerational transmission of gender norms by shaping children's cognitive expectations regarding appropriate roles for men and women. Lazar (2018) also stresses that socio-cognitive processes help explain why patriarchal ideology lasts, even in places where sexism is openly rejected. These studies underscore the importance of van Dijk's methodology for examining historical advertising, during which ideological assertions were often understated yet cognitively influential.

Intergenerational Transmission of Gender Ideology

An expanding body of research highlights that gender ideology is transmitted across generations through everyday language and media representations. Wodak's (2015) Discourse-Historical Approach underscores the temporal progression of discourses while maintaining essential ideological elements, particularly concerning gender and power. This viewpoint suggests that historical depictions in advertising continue to shape contemporary understandings of gender by affecting collective memory and cultural standards.

Studies on intergenerational socialisation support this viewpoint. Sunderland (2019) asserts that infants internalise gender norms through persistent exposure to discursive signals within familial relationships, educational environments, and media. Consistent advertising that portrays women as responsible for domestic labour and men as providers reinforces cognitive schemas that shape children's expectations before they encounter alternative narratives. Even though modern media uses the language of empowerment, the basic ideas often stay the same, leading to what Gill and Orgad (2018) call a "postfeminist sensibility" that hides structural inequalities.

Recent studies show that digital media has made it easier to share historical stories by using nostalgia, irony, and retro aesthetics to put old ads in a new light (Banet-Weiser, 2018). Even though people often think of these portrayals as funny or old-fashioned, they may unintentionally reinforce patriarchal views by treating them as cultural legacy instead of ideological ideas. This highlights the continuing importance of critically analysing historical advertising discourse through contemporary theoretical frameworks.

Research Gap and Positioning of the Present Study

Even though there have been a lot of studies on sexism, patriarchy, and how women and men are shown in ads, there are still big differences. Most of the available material focusses on modern advertising, and not enough is said about how historical advertising discourse still affects people's ideas about gender today. Secondly, while feminist Critical Discourse Analysis has yielded substantial insights into the discursive construction of gender, there exists a paucity of studies that have directly employed van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework in the examination of historical advertising texts. This limits our understanding of the relationship between discourse, cognition, and ideology across time.

This research addresses these deficiencies by utilising a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis on a mid-twentieth-century domestic advertisement. The research offers an extensive elucidation of the normalisation and dissemination of patriarchal ideology through prevalent commercial discourse by examining the interaction between linguistic and visual structures and the social cognition they stimulate. This pertains to ongoing discussions regarding the role of advertising in sustaining gender inequality and exemplifies the lasting importance of socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis for the examination of both historical and contemporary media discourse.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilises a qualitative design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), specifically employing Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is particularly effective for examining advertising discourse, as it frames language and semiotic resources as social practices that create, validate, and perpetuate power dynamics and ideological structures (Fairclough, 2018; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). This approach enables a critical examination of advertising texts, perceiving them not merely as neutral or persuasive artefacts, but as instrumental in the normalisation of societal structures, particularly in relation to gender and domestic labour.

Van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework is integral to this approach as it explicitly theorises the mediating role of social cognition between discourse and society. This viewpoint asserts that language does not directly impact social structures; instead, it operates through collective mental models, beliefs, and ideologies that shape individual interpretation and reproduction of social meanings (van Dijk, 2021). This is especially relevant for historical advertising, as the ideological effects of such materials extend beyond their immediate communicative context and persist through extended cognitive internalisation. This study focusses on social cognition, moving beyond simple descriptions of sexism to look at how traditional commercial language makes patriarchal ideas seem normal, acceptable, and relevant.

The data for this study consist of a single mid-twentieth-century print advertisement for a household appliance, published in the 1950s. The advertisement was intentionally selected as a qualitative case study because of its clear focus on domestic labour, its visual representation of a heterosexual family unit, and its adherence to representational norms extensively documented in post-war advertising research (Eager, 2021; Elliott &

Robinson, 2021). The analysis concentrates on a singular advertisement, consistent with established Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology that prioritises the profundity of interpretive analysis over the volume of the dataset, especially when the aim is to uncover the ideological and cognitive mechanisms embedded in discourse (Fairclough, 2018). The selected advertisement is perceived as a discursive artefact for the analysis of overarching patriarchal significations, rather than as a singular or anomalous example.

The analytical approach aligns with the core principles of socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis by examining the interaction of discursive structures, social cognition, and social context. The method analyses both linguistic and visual elements within discourse systems. The focus is on evaluative lexis, presupposition, polarity, and the framing of domestic labour and consumerism. The research investigates spatial positioning, gaze, posture, symbolic objects, and the distribution of agency among the participants. This examination of semiotic selections seeks to clarify the formulation and prioritisation of meanings related to femininity, masculinity, authority, and domestic duties within the commercial context (Machin & Mayr, 2012; van Leeuwen, 2008).

The approach analyses how these discursive elements stimulate or reinforce collective mental models pertaining to gender roles within the realm of social cognition. This research, in alignment with van Dijk's (2021) framework of ideology, examines the cognitive connections of femininity to domestic labour, emotional fulfilment, and servitude, whereas masculinity is linked to authority, logical decision-making, and provision through consumption rather than participation. These mental models are acknowledged as socially shared and historically situated, enabling the intergenerational dissemination of patriarchal ideology. The analysis focusses on the advertisement's portrayal and its encouragement for viewers to regard gender relations as natural, desirable, and morally defensible.

The final analytical layer puts the results in the larger historical and ideological context of post-war consumer culture. This necessitates examining the advertisement within the framework of mid-twentieth century socio-economic conditions, particularly the cultural re-domestication of women following wartime employment and the rise of consumerism as a solution to social inequality (Elliott & Robinson, 2021; Gill, 2018). By placing the speech in its historical context, the study avoids making old judgements while still critically looking at the commercial's ideological roles. This contextualisation enables the study to discern connections between historical discursive patterns and contemporary gender beliefs, as evidenced by recent research on postfeminist media culture and the persistent existence of inequitable domestic labour arrangements (Orgad & De Benedictis, 2021).

The analysis was conducted using a systematic and iterative approach. The advertisement was first looked at in detail to find out what its main themes, story structure, and purpose were. This was followed by a careful examination of both the text and the images, during which important discursive elements were identified and recorded. These characteristics were subsequently examined using a socio-cognitive framework to evaluate their contribution to the development and maintenance of patriarchal mental models. The analysis was grounded in established Critical Discourse Analysis and feminist media studies to ensure theoretical coherence and analytical validity.

In qualitative Critical Discourse Analysis research, methodological rigour is attained through theoretical coherence, transparency in analytical procedures, and interpretative validity, rather than statistical reliability. This study enhances validity by explicitly linking discursive elements to socio-cognitive processes and situating interpretations within established academic discourse. Analytical reflexivity was maintained by acknowledging the interpretive nature of speech analysis and by avoiding claims of universal or deterministic causation. The results are presented as a theoretically grounded analysis of how patriarchal ideology was discursively and cognitively normalised through advertising.

The research investigates a publicly available historical advertisement, thus obviating the need for ethical approval. Nonetheless, the study was conducted with an emphasis on ethical obligation, recognising the historical context of the material while rigorously assessing its ideological implications. The study seeks to clarify how seemingly trivial commercial writings facilitated the continuation of gender inequality, rather than to moralise historical occurrences.

FINDINGS

The results of this study illustrate that mid-twentieth-century advertising rhetoric functioned as a significant ideological instrument that normalised and cognitively internalised patriarchal gender dynamics. A socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis of the selected domestic appliance advertisement demonstrates that linguistic choices, visual arrangements, and symbolic representations collectively construct a unified ideological narrative centred on gendered domesticity, benevolent male authority, and consumerism as a solution to social inequality. The ads used subtle discursive techniques instead of overtly coercive messages, making unequal gender roles seem normal, appealing, and morally acceptable.

At the level of discourse structure, the ads make it look like a family scene that is very divided but also very peaceful. Using positive evaluative language to describe domestic work makes it seem like a source of emotional pleasure instead of a physical or mental burden. Words that have to do with happiness, comfort, and ease hide the hard work that goes into home labour by framing it as an expression of love and care. This evaluative framework posits that domestic labour is an inherent and recognised component of women's identity, thus rendering it immune to negotiation or critique. The absence of alternative representations—such as collaborative labour or male participation in domestic responsibilities—reinforces this assumption by depicting a singular model of domestic organisation as unequivocal.

Visual discourse is crucial for reinforcing these meanings. The way the figures are arranged in the ad gives men and women different amounts of power. The woman is standing next to the appliance, which makes her body look like the tool of home work. Her body language and facial expression show that she is grateful and sensitive, which confirms that she is a person who is based on service and feeling. On the other hand, the male persona takes on a role of authority and action. His position, gaze, and physical separation from the appliance symbolically set him apart from domestic labour while simultaneously granting him authority over its operation. This visual layout makes it clear that there is a difference between execution and decision-making, with women doing the work and men managing it.

These discursive patterns stimulate and perpetuate specific social cognitive frameworks related to gender roles. From a socio-cognitive perspective, the advertisement promotes a mental schema in which femininity is defined by domestic responsibilities, emotional receptivity, and gratitude, while masculinity is defined by provision, rational decision-making, and altruistic leadership. It is important to note that masculine authority is portrayed not as domination or coercion, but as nurturing and safeguarding. The ads make patriarchal control seem normal by showing that men providing for their families is an act of love, which hides the structural parts of it. This cognitive framing aligns with van Dijk's (2021) claim that ideologies are most effective when they appear moral and rational rather than explicitly hierarchical.

A significant finding relates to the impact of consumption on the formation of gender inequality. The ad shows the home appliance as a technological fix for family work problems, which takes the focus away from the unfair distribution of work. The issue is not framed in terms of fairness or shared responsibility, but rather in terms of efficiency. The proposed solution—purchasing a modern appliance—reinforces a cognitive framework that addresses social inequalities through consumption rather than systemic reform. This framework supports a broader capitalist view in which market participation takes the place of collective bargaining or the redistribution of labour. Within this cognitive framework, male authority is further legitimised, as men are portrayed as the economic agents who resolve domestic issues through financial means rather than personal involvement.

The findings also illustrate how the commercial promotes the transmission of patriarchal concepts across generations. Visual cues suggesting the presence or importance of children—particularly daughters—symbolically extend the ideological message beyond the domestic sphere. The advertisement depicts domestic labour as a conventional and emotionally rewarding pursuit for women, thereby creating a cognitive framework that facilitates the internalisation of gender norms among younger viewers before they transition into adult social roles. This aligns with previous research demonstrating that media representations profoundly affect children's initial cognitive frameworks regarding gender appropriateness and future identity (Sunderland, 2019). The ad works as both a way to persuade adults to buy something and a cultural script that affects how people socialise over time.

The commercial aligns ideologically with post-war narratives designed to restore traditional gender hierarchies following women's increased workforce participation during wartime. The findings suggest that the advertisement functions as a discursive tool of re-domestication, depicting domesticity not as a societal constraint but as a source of fulfilment, identity, and moral virtue. This change in ideas is stronger because it is part of a story about progress and modernity. The household appliance is portrayed as a symbol of technological advancement, facilitating the redefinition of traditional gender roles as modern rather than obsolete. Consequently, patriarchy is perceived not as an archaic system but as a rational and contemporary social structure congruent with contemporary existence.

A significant finding relates to the absence of discursive opportunities. The ad not only supports a certain gender configuration, but it also systematically pushes other options to the side. There are no visible or linguistic indicators that household labour might be shared, negotiated, or redistributed. The lack of such alternatives promotes what van Dijk (2021) refers to as ideological closure, in which dominant representations limit the range of conceivable social structures. This conclusion strengthens the cognitive impact of the discourse by depicting gendered domesticity as the only viable or intelligible option. The advertisement reduces the likelihood of critical thinking among viewers and reinforces the ideological message.

The overall effect of these ways of talking about things is to create a common understanding of how men and women relate to each other. The ad doesn't directly tell people what men and women should do; instead, it tells a story in which gender roles seem obvious and make people feel good. This aligns with socio-cognitive theories of ideology, which contend that authority is more effectively maintained through collective beliefs than through overt coercion. The findings illustrate how advertising rhetoric contributed to the normalisation of patriarchy by embedding it into everyday behaviours, emotional responses, and consumer practices.

The results show how old and new ideas about gender are related. The campaign, based on a specific time in history, shows how people's minds work in ways that are similar to how advertising and media culture works today. Recent examinations of postfeminist and neoliberal discourse reveal that women continue to bear the primary responsibility for domestic and emotional labour, notwithstanding representations that employ the rhetoric of empowerment or choice (Gill & Orgad, 2018; Orgad & De Benedictis, 2021). The present findings suggest that contemporary discourses employ cognitive frameworks derived from prior media representations, thereby reinforcing the idea that historical advertising is essential in the formation of enduring gender beliefs.

The results demonstrate the effectiveness of a socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach in uncovering ideological mechanisms that might remain hidden in purely textual or visual examinations. The analysis links speech structures to social cognition, showing how seemingly harmless representations help keep power imbalances going. The advertisement's effectiveness lies not in explicit instruction but in its capacity to amalgamate emotional resonance, visual symbolism, and ideological presuppositions into a unified cognitive narrative that normalises patriarchy.

The results show that the commercial being studied is a complicated ideological object that keeps patriarchal gender relations going through speech. Linguistic and visual techniques work together to show that gendered domesticity is natural, masculine authority is kind, and consumerism is the right way to respond to unfairness. These representations operate at the cognitive level by shaping collective mental models that persist beyond the historical context of their origin. The ad shows how the use of patriarchy in everyday family and consumer behaviour has kept gender inequality going through advertising discourse over the years.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that advertising from the middle of the twentieth century was a key ideological platform for making patriarchal gender roles normal and keeping them that way. The study, utilising a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis, illustrates that the selected advertisement not only promoted a household appliance but also played a role in shaping collective mental frameworks regarding femininity, masculinity, authority, and domestic labour. This discourse situates these findings within contemporary scholarship on gender, advertising, and discourse, highlighting the interplay between discourse structures and social cognition that perpetuates patriarchal ideology across historical contexts.

The results indicate that patriarchal ideology is sustained not by overt coercion but via discursive naturalisation. The advertisement normalises gendered domesticity by incorporating it into storylines that are emotionally appealing, morally defensible, and technologically sophisticated. This substantiates van Dijk's (2021) claim that ideologies exert their greatest influence when they are internalised as common sense rather than explicitly articulated as power relations. The ad hides systemic inequalities by making women's household chores seem emotionally rewarding and men's power seem like a good thing, using emotional appeal and consumer logic.

The findings validate and augment feminist Critical Discourse Analysis literature, which has traditionally acknowledged advertising as a critical domain for the continuation of gender inequality (Lazar, 2007; Gill, 2018). This research enhances complexity by demonstrating the operational dynamics of these representations within social cognition. The analysis underscores that particular linguistic and visual techniques, rather than mere representational bias, stimulate cognitive frameworks that define what is conceivable, acceptable, and desirable in gender relations. This cognitive dimension clarifies the enduring nature of such perspectives, despite the social unacceptability of overtly sexist discourse.

This study's significant contribution lies in its examination of male power as both moralised and depoliticised. The ad shows masculinity not as being in charge or in control, but as being loving, reasonable, and focused on finding solutions. This portrayal aligns with contemporary feminist critiques of "benevolent patriarchy," wherein power is expressed through protection and provision rather than overt control (Manne, 2018). By depicting male power as emotionally justified and socially beneficial, the advertisement diminishes the likelihood of dissent and ethically legitimises patriarchal dynamics. This finding supports the claim that authority is generally more stable when regarded as ethical rather than oppressive.

The research emphasises the ideological role of consumption as a substitute for structural change. The ad changes the way people think about the unfair division of household work by framing it as a technical problem that can be solved by consumerism instead of facing the problem of inequality head-on. This line of thinking is part of a bigger capitalist worldview that makes social problems seem like personal problems and turns them into things that can be bought and sold. This takes the focus away from solutions that involve working together or building relationships. Feminist scholars have noted that this narrative endures in contemporary media, where technological convenience is often depicted as empowerment, despite the persistence of underlying inequities (Orgad & De Benedictis, 2021). The findings suggest that contemporary discourses are not novel but are rooted in historical advertising techniques that framed consumption as the preferred response to gendered inequality.

The intergenerational dimension of the findings underscores the socio-cognitive impact of advertising rhetoric. The advertisement reinforces gender ideology by symbolically portraying domestic labour as an inherited feminine duty. This supports studies that show that people learn gender norms early on by watching media and hearing stories from their families (Sunderland, 2019; Wodak, 2015). From a socio-cognitive perspective, the endurance of patriarchal ideology can be attributed to the early formation of cognitive frameworks that shape expectations before individuals undertake adult social responsibilities. The advertisement functions as an instructional medium, indirectly and emotionally informing viewers about the dynamics of gender interactions.

The results clarify how ideological closure works in commercial discourse. The advertisement limits the range of possible social configurations by leaving out other ways of showing home labour, like shared responsibility or male involvement. This aligns with van Dijk's (2021) assertion that dominant discourse limits ideological alternatives by controlling both what is expressed and what is deemed unspeakable. The absence of counter-models amplifies the cognitive impact of the discourse, as audiences are presented with a singular, coherent narrative that appears natural and unopposed. This closure is vital in sustaining gender inequity by hindering critical reflection in quotidian understanding.

The historical specificity of the advertising does not diminish its relevance; rather, it enhances the study's significance by elucidating the discursive foundations of contemporary gender stereotypes. Although modern advertising employs the language of empowerment, choice, and self-actualization, numerous studies indicate that women are still primarily tasked with managing domestic and emotional labour (Gill & Orgad, 2018; Banet-Weiser, 2018). The present findings suggest that contemporary trends are underpinned by cognitive frameworks

established through prior media discourse. This study underscores the importance of historical discourse analysis in understanding current disparities through the examination of ideological continuities.

The debate methodologically substantiates the utilisation of a socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework in advertising research. Traditional content or representational analyses can identify gender bias, yet they often do not clarify the mechanisms through which this bias is internalised and sustained over time. This study focusses on social cognition, demonstrating how speech constructs enduring belief systems that transcend specific texts. This approach facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of ideological strength by linking micro-level discursive elements to macro-level social structures through cognitive mediation.

The findings are also important for basic media literacy. Understanding how historical commercial rhetoric shaped collective mental models of gender highlights the need for educational initiatives that address both contemporary media and entrenched ideological frameworks. Media literacy programs that encourage critical examination of the emotional, visual, and cognitive dimensions of advertising may help to undermine the persistence of patriarchal norms. Addressing gender disparity necessitates more than mere representational diversity; it requires confronting the cognitive legacies embedded in quotidian media discourse.

This analysis shows that the advertising in question is a complicated ideological artefact that helps make patriarchy normal through social and cognitive processes. The advertisement normalises unequal interactions by embedding gender inequality within narratives of care, progress, and consumerism, thereby rendering them morally acceptable and cognitively stable. The study advances contemporary scholarship by illustrating that advertising rhetoric functions not merely as a reflection of societal ideals but also as a formative force in the construction of the cognitive frameworks that shape and sustain gender relations.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to examine the discursive construction and normalisation of patriarchal ideology in mid-twentieth-century advertising through a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis. This study, through the analysis of a representative domestic appliance advertisement from the 1950s, demonstrates that advertising functioned not merely as a commercial medium but also as a significant ideological instrument that rendered gendered social relations meaningful, acceptable, and cognitively enduring. The findings demonstrate that linguistic and visual techniques conspired to represent women as inherently responsible for domestic labour, while portraying male authority as a charitable provision rather than structural supremacy. The advertisement reinforced patriarchal ideals that surpass the historical context of its production.

The principal theoretical contribution of the study lies in its application of Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework for Critical Discourse Analysis within the realm of historical advertising. While feminist and critical media studies have extensively documented sexist representations in advertising, there is a paucity of research that has explicitly examined the cognitive mechanisms through which these images are internalised and perpetuated across generations. This study underscores social cognition, illustrating how advertising discourse operates through shared mental models that shape audience perceptions of normality, desirability, and moral legitimacy. This socio-cognitive perspective enhances the understanding of ideological power by linking discursive frameworks to enduring social reproduction.

The work demonstrates the methodological importance of qualitative CDA case studies in uncovering ideological processes that may remain obscured in extensive quantitative analyses. Even though the research is limited to a single advertisement, it shows how everyday commercial texts can carry out complex ideological roles through careful semiotic choices. The findings indicate that ideological influence does not require explicit instruction or overt bias; rather, it often operates through emotional resonance, visual imagery, and assumptions embedded in otherwise ordinary representations. This emphasises the importance of critical discourse analysis as a methodological tool for examining media content frequently overlooked as ideologically influential.

This research underscores the role of consumerism as an ideological conduit. The advertisement changed a systemic problem of household inequality into a personal one, implying that getting involved in the market is the answer through technological consumption. This reasoning not only shifted attention away from the unfair

distribution of family duties, but it also reinforced male dominance by portraying men as providers who solve household problems with money. The recurrence of similar narratives in contemporary advertising suggests that identical ideological strategies continue to shape gender dynamics, albeit in more subtle and rebranded forms. Understanding these historical discursive tendencies is essential for engaging critically with contemporary media discourse.

The study emphasises the significance of intergenerational transmission in sustaining a patriarchal worldview. The advertisement symbolically associated femininity with domestic responsibilities and emotional fulfilment, thereby contributing to the formation of gendered cognitive frameworks that influence expectations throughout an individual's life. These results support previous studies indicating that media representations profoundly impact socialisation processes, altering perceptions of gender roles before individuals are exposed to alternative discourses. From this perspective, gender inequality cannot be regarded solely as a product of contemporary conditions; it must also be examined as a result of historical discursive and cognitive evolutions.

This study, notwithstanding its contributions, possesses limitations. The methodology focusses on a single advertisement, thereby limiting the capacity for empirical generalisation. This is in line with qualitative CDA traditions that value depth over breadth. However, future research could expand the dataset to include a wider range of commercials from different product categories, time periods, or cultural contexts. Comparative studies may clarify the evolution of patriarchal ideology in response to changing social contexts, while maintaining essential cognitive frameworks. Furthermore, future research could include audience reception studies to examine how contemporary viewers interpret historical advertisements, thereby providing empirical insights into the persistent impact of entrenched gender stereotypes.

The consequences of this work extend beyond academic discourse. The results show how important critical media literacy is in fighting gender inequality by showing how patriarchal ideas are built into everyday media. Educational initiatives that encourage critical examination of historical and contemporary advertising can aid individuals in recognising the ideological presuppositions that shape their perspectives on gender and domesticity. This information is important for dealing with the fact that gender relations are still not equal in both public and private settings.

This study demonstrates that mid-twentieth-century advertising profoundly impacted the evolution of patriarchal gender concepts through socio-cognitive mechanisms that continue to shape contemporary views on domestic labour and authority. This study combines critical discourse analysis with social cognition theory to thoroughly investigate how advertising language promotes and sustains gender inequality. It is important to deal with the legacies of this discourse in order to create more equal representations and social structures in the future.

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