

Article history: Received 13 June 2016 Accepted 13 August 2016

Discovering the Changes in Gendering of Products: Case of Woman in ‘Bikerni Community’ in India

Varsha Jain[±]
Kriti Bharadwaj*
Amrita Bansal[†]
Vivek S. Natarajan[∞]

Abstract

In the Indian society, gender roles have played an important role in shaping the culture. However, due to technological advancements and change in societal needs, there is an evolution in the gender roles. This evolution has created a need to understand the gendered products from a new perspective. Therefore, this paper tries to discover the factors of consumption of gendered products and role of social media in shaping the consumption pattern and motivation of women in biking industry in India. Subsequently, to address the objectives, qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, netnography and projective techniques are applied and data is analyzed further. With the help of data analysis, it has been found that the Indian woman is motivated by a quest for freedom, independence and empowerment. The families and close-knit communities that they are part of, such as Bikerni Association of India, help them participate in a hyper-masculine product market.

Keywords: *gendered products; gender roles; identity theory; self congruency theory; Bikerni Association.*

INTRODUCTION

India has observed development in all the aspects of economy in the last decade. The robust economic growth has encouraged a decrease in the disparity amongst different social classes in the country (Shinde and Khamkar, 2014). Gender equality and women empowerment have seen phenomenal improvement in the country (Banerjee, 2011). The distance between gender

[±] Dr Varsha Jain, Assistant Professor, Integrated Marketing communication, Chairperson, Research and Dissertation, MICA, Shela, Ahmedabad – 380058, India.
E-mail: varsha@micamail.in.

* Kriti Bharadwaj, Cuponation, Marketing Manager- Singapore & India, Gurgaon Office, India.
E-mail: bharadwaj.kriti@gmail.com

[†] Amrita Bansal, FPM Scholar, MICA, Shela, Ahmedabad – 380058, India.
E-mail: Amrita_fpm15@micamail.in

[∞] Dr Vivek S. Natarajan, Associate Professor, Jerry and Sheila Reese Faculty Scholar in Business, Department of Management and Marketing, Box # 10025, Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas- 77710, United States. E-mail: vivek.natarajan@lamar.edu.

Acknowledgement: We would like to thank Mr. Ganesh B.E. (FPM Scholar, MICA) for the language editing and proofing the paper at various stages of this project.



categories and gender roles has been reducing to promote greater equality amongst men and women and a more liberalized environment for women. Indians are breaking the shackles of traditional gender roles to destabilize and redefine the gender roles (Khan, 2010). Women are continuously exploring the practices and attributes that have been the privilege of men in India. The biggest impact of this change has been the change in the consumption behavior of women in the economy and their inclination towards the traditionally masculine industry and products (Paul, 2013).

Women in India have penetrated the automobile industry, especially the car market (Chadha, 2011). However, women have not yet explored the motorcycle industry, as it is still highly male dominated. Women are overcoming gender stereotypes to participate in riding motorcycles and superbikes in India. There has been a rise of 40% in the purchasing pattern of bikes by women (Khan, 2010). A group of women bike riders formed a 'The Bikerni: Association of Female Bikers-India' to promote bike riding amongst women and organize events to encourage the desire for adventure and freedom in women (Paul, 2013). The group has more than 600 members across the country, and has been recognized by the Women's International Motorcycling Association (Paul, 2013). The group has a public Facebook page with more than 11,000 followers.

The trend of overlapping gendering of products can be seen across products and brands. This trend was observed in the feminine products such as washing powder where the trendy taglines such as “#ShareTheLoad” were used. This thought process reflects the current culture of blurring the lines of gender roles and bringing this exciting conversation in society to limelight (Purkayastha, 2015). The society is more tolerant and open to gender roles and the change that is happening (Alreck, 1994). Similarly, trends suggest that women are increasingly consuming products ranging from medium segment brands like men's Jockey lowers, men perfumes to premium segment brands like watches made for men by Tag Heuer, Breguet. Trends observed by brands suggest that Indian women are coming out in the open with their inclination towards products that have been hitherto hyper-masculine (Rathore, 2014).

Rathore (2014) suggests that women are interested in masculine products as they provide a sense of adrenaline rush, power and strength to them. Women have become more open about their consumption choices vis a vis masculine products due to changes in the performance of traditional gender roles. This new trend in India is leading to an introduction of more “unisex” products. In line with this, Indian females constitute a small portion of bike riders in India. Despite this, organizations such as Harley Davidson promote their bikes by targeting women (Rathore, 2014).

Women in India are spending more time on social media platform than men do. They have become active participants on social media media, especially the social networks. This has resulted in influencing the consumption behavior of women through social media medium by groups, communities as well as corporate firms (Hargittai, 2007). Women generate more conversation than

men do across all platforms of social media (Walter, 2012). They create content, exchange information and converse about products, brands, services and experiences.

Research has shown that 85% of all brand purchases are influenced by advice from other women consumers (Bischoff, 2015).

To summarize, there are multiple changes undertaken by women in their decision making processes about gendered product. Women have changed their orientation towards these products as they have become more liberal and open about these categories. Despite these changes, there are no scholarly papers that have focused on these women consumers with the primary focus on gendering products. We could only find papers related to gendering of products in advertising (Paek et.al., 2011) and gendered products (Duesterhaus et. al., 2011). This dearth of literature calls for immediate research in this area to fill this gap. Thus, it is imperative to understand this discovery of change. Hence, this study aims to comprehend the discovery of these changes in gendered products primarily bikes with the focus on women community in an emerging nation such as India.

To understand this objective, the subsequent section of literature review will discuss gender and gender roles, identity theory, self- congruency theory, traditional sex roles, gendering of products, femininity and motorcycle community and the role of media platforms in influencing women.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Gender and gender roles

Gender is a social construction where masculinity and femininity are defined through coactions amongst various social forces (Gupta, 1998). Gender is performed through symbolic acts and rituals to reflect masculinity or femininity. Masculinity and femininity are at the heart of gender description in the society.

Individuals engage in attitudes, behavior and practices that define their gender in terms of masculinity and/or femininity, which differs across situations and time. These are practices that can differ according to the various gender relations in a social setting. Connell and Messerschmidt, (2005) suggest that gender is always relational and masculinity can socially be defined in contrariety to femininity.

Masculinity is a social position, a set of practices and the effects of collective embodiment of those practices on individuals, relationships, institutional structures, and global relations of domination (Schippers, 2007). It can be referred to as a position that men construct through practices and discourses culminating in behaviour (Hoffman, 2001). Hyper-masculinity has been defined as male heterosexual behavior and traits that assert male physical strength, aggression and sexuality, in dominance over women and other masculinities (Martin et al., 2006).

Femininity has been described as certain traits, behavior, roles and symbolic practices that have traditionally been associated with women (Wijngaard, 1997). These traits and practices are influenced by the social and cultural factors according to varied times and locations. The fixed roles, behavior, practices and other symbols associated with being feminine as well as masculine have evolved over time. This evolution in social constructs that define gender is leading to reduction in the gap between masculinity and femininity (Wolin, 2003 & Acker, 2012). Butler writes about the concept of performing gender and Gherardi wrote about “doing gender” (Butler, 1990; Gherardi, 1995). They discuss about men and women enacting or performing masculinities and femininities through symbolic acts and practices.

There are two areas of gender involvement that perturb individuals; feminine attachment and masculine freedom (Settle and Alreck, 1987a).

Products are feminine when they further augment or complement the feeling of attachments, which appeals to feminine individuals irrespective of their sex role adherence. A product or brand that provides a sense of freedom and reflects the same in its basic elements is considered to masculine traditionally (Settle and Alreck, 1987b).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS:

Identity Theory

Identity theory (Kanter and Blumer, 1971; Stone, 1962; Strauss, 1959) suggests that individuals confer their social identities and positions by interacting with the members of society and their own perception of social stature with respect to others. According to Connell’s (1987, 1990) theory on gender identity, the identity of one’s gender is the most consequential of all social identities. This gender identity is ingrained through social interactions and mass media communications (Fugate and Phillips, 2010). Thus, mass media communications have become a glass through which individuals identify their self and interpret their identities. This theory suggests that an individual’s gender identity is highly influenced by communications and advertisements across media for gender roles as well as products. The consumers create gender identities for themselves and seek products with gender identities that are most congruent with their own (Dittmar et al., 1995).

Gender roles are long established in early childhood when children and their parents differentiate between toys for males and females (Witt, 1997). There is an increase in single parent families and parents are performing duties of both genders, as traditionally defined.

These changes have highly influenced the concept of redefining of self-identity. These shifts play a crucial role in the way individuals interact with society, leading to a change in the perspective of self-identity (Smulyan, 2004).

Self-Congruency Theory

The theory of self-congruency states that individuals consume goods and services which reflect their identity, characteristic or persona. They invest in

products that reflect their self-identity and express themselves through symbolic meanings instead of just functional facets (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). A product's gender and characteristics can be reflected through the frame, configuration, packaging, shades, visuals, imagery, logos, brand names, taglines etc (Fugate and Phillips, 2010). Marketers and product managers need to design and maintain the personality of a product keeping in mind the concept of gender congruity as well (Fischer & Arnold, 1994). Research has shown that the individual's aspiration for self-congruence is manifested at both at the level of the product and the brand. Consumers prefer brands that correlate more with certain characteristics of themselves (Coward et al., 2002).

Self-congruity theory is described as the similarity between the image or perception of a product and individual's self-concept (Sirgy and Su, 2000). The idea of self-concept has been described as the entirety of an individual's thinking, opinions and feelings in reference to themselves as products or objects (Rosenberg, 1979). This theory states that the higher the similarity between self-concept and perception of product or brand, higher will be the desire to purchase or consume that product or brand.

Fugate and Phillips (2010) suggest that an individual who emphasizes on the concept of self-congruity while consuming products will also be affected by the perception of product's gender as compared to those individuals who do not emphasize on self-congruity. Self identity theory primarily focuses on the social stature of the individuals in relation to other members of the society. Additionally, self-congruency theory is associated with the reflection of identity and persona with symbolic meanings. However, both the theories are unable to understand the interactions of the individuals with various media platforms and communities that facilitate the development of these individuals. Therefore, the present study uses these two theoretical frameworks, integrates and extends them to understand the individual interaction with various media platforms and communities. These elements play a significant role in the individuals primarily in the case of gendered product such as bikes.

Synthesis of Traditional Sex Roles

Gherardi (1995) coined the phrase "doing gender" to describe the process through which men and women can enact both feminine and masculine practices, symbols and traits. Traditionally described gender differences can be destabilized and re-stabilized to form new social beliefs with changes in the social and cultural factors that determine these gender differences (Fenstermaker & West, 2002). "Doing gender" involves "shuttling between a symbolic universe coherent with one gender identity and the symbolic realm of the 'other' gender" (Gherardi, 1995). The blurring and synthesis of traditional sex roles leads to a manipulation and re-defining of gender symbols to include the presence of both femininity and masculinity over a period of time (Eagly et al., 2000).

Feminist philosopher, Judith Butler (1990) suggests that gender roles are not fixed and shift to evolve with changing socio-cultural practices and attributes

that defines femininity and masculinity. She theorized the 'Performativity of Gender' that states that gender is performed involuntarily over a course of time through the repetition of certain acts to make them a symbol (Butler, 1990). She suggests that due to the tenuous, performative, and time bound nature of gender, it can be destabilized and re-stabilized to evolve and transform (Ziegler, 2008). Thus, the changes in the attitude, behavior and actions of women have led to changes in the way women "perform gender" and express their femininities. Women are more interested in learning and changing behavior through increased social interactions (Park et al., 2009).

Gendering of Products

"Gendering of products" has been occurring since the fifteenth century (Randolph, 2002). Gendering a product refers to inculcating masculine and/ or feminine identity in the products (Alreck, 1994). The product's visible features, design and packaging, promotions and advertising are altered to use symbols that identify with masculinity and/ or femininity. Products can have characteristics that individuals can identify with a gender that could be exclusive to one gender or both (Worth et al., 1992). The buyers of these products understand the gender of these products and make the purchase according to their understanding (Pine et al., 2003). Words and symbols that convey the gender of the product or brand depend on society's definition of gender roles and culture (Hawkins and Coney, 1976). These definitions are derived from the dominant culture in the society (Alreck, 1994).

Research has been conducted to establish the existing relationship between consumer behavior and gender symbolism (Martin et al., 2006). Research suggests that the characteristics, symbols and practices of both genders were stereotyped sex roles during the first half of the century (Martin, 2004). Now, the gender roles have expanded to redefine gender performance. Women are engaging in traditional masculine activities; performing masculinity through continuously transforming practices, behavior and symbols (Scanzoni, 1977). Women are engaging in this gender transformation and co-opting masculinity to redefine femininity in terms of self-empowerment and strong-woman identity (Ziegler, 2008). Men are equally indulging in femininity and their behavior, traits and desires are reflecting more femininity than earlier.

Socio-economic constructs redefine gender symbols and practices that lead to gendering of products in a certain manner (Debevec and Iyer, 1986). The reverse of this holds true too as gendered products augment gender roles, practices and traits (Martin et al., 2006). Goods have been gendered by brand managers and promoters. However, with the transformation of social constructs of "doing gender", there is a shift in the way goods are being gendered. To understand this shift and use it to the advantage of the marketplace, it is important to understand the trend of transformation of gender roles. It is essential to study the extent of overlap between masculinity and femininity, tolerance level and attitude towards this overlap as well as the target audience for gendered products.

Gender roles have been broadening in society. Products that reflect ‘cross-over behavior’ for gendering have to epitomize one of the two genders, masculine or feminine, more than the other (Debevek & Iyer, 1986). The gender roles are now overlapping and have redefined and broadened the definitions of these roles. Due to the shift in the way masculinity and femininity are now broadly defined in the society, it becomes increasingly difficult for managers to relate to any one gender exclusively (Settle et al., 1981a). Many managers of brands and products are showcasing their brands and products with a gender overlapping behavior in their advertisement campaigns due to a redefinition and overlap of gender behaviors.

The gender of a brand or product has to be decided in a strategic manner and cannot be decided on a short term basis. A lot of effort and strategic thinking has to go in product innovation to make it consistently appeal to the individuals. The gender of the product cannot be changed so easily and requires long-term commitment.

The rationale of studying India with focus on women and gendered product (bikes):

The motorcycle segment has been growing in the two-wheeler segment in India. The increasing size of middle-class, high aspiration values of youth and higher disposable income along with a robust economy of India has led to strong volume growth of two-wheeler industry (ICRA, 2011). Motorbikes epitomize power and style. In the motorcycle segment, Hero Honda, Bajaj, TVS and Royal Enfield lead the market in India (Chadha, 2011). There has been an augmented interest in the features, looks and design of bikes, especially amongst the youth, that has encouraged the entry of international brands in the premium range (Najeemudeen & Panchanatham, 2016). Women from across the country have been high consumers of two-wheelers due to the influx of the trendy, Scooty. However, new trends suggest that woman have taken an interest in indulging in the motorcycle industry not as a pillion rider but as the owners and riders of motorbikes (Sherry et al. 2010). This trend is seen across metros as well as smaller towns and cities.

Motorbike searches exhibited year-on-year growth of 126%, with consumers reading extensively on expert websites with particular interest on superbikes such as Ducati and Suzuki Hayabusa (Chadha, 2011). Women are continuously inclining towards motorbikes and the latter are increasingly becoming a significant part of this search group seeking information and desiring these superbikes (Sherry et al., 2010)). There has been a growing segment of women who are leaving behind the notion of inability to ride geared bikes (Shinde and Khamkar, 2014). They are inclined towards geared bikes due to various reasons such as aesthetic, power and sense of freedom that riding a motorbike provides. The attitudes of women towards motorcycles have been changing.

The primary change is that aspects considered as negative behavior due to stereotypical public opinion about femininity (Astrop et al., 1996) have been

confidently changed. Women now feel much more comfortable in expressing themselves and exploring segments with which they had been disassociated. The misogynist culture had been preventing women from attaining social authority in this segment of the two-wheeler industry (Martin et al., 2006). Thus, hyper-masculinity has been in the substructure of superbike ownership, something that has been a major reason of the struggles that limits the woman in attaining social authority and shift in gendering of the product (Gentry & Harrison, 2010). However, the influence of this culture is diminishing in the motorcycling community in India, resulting in involving woman and femininity in the subculture of powerful bikes (ICRA, 2011).

The popularity of motorcycles has increased amongst women of middle-income groups with increasing disposable incomes and higher education levels. There is a gradual shift in the ownership of motorcycles. This is seen in the change from husband or family owned motorcycles to personal motorcycles. Credit for this increase in the ownership pattern can be given to more working women gaining access to loans and EMI (Equated Monthly Installments) services (Astrop et al., 1996). The social and economic conditions have been shifting and given women a sense of ownership, freedom and safety.

Martin, Schouten, and McAlexander (2006) have performed ethnographic research. They conducted the same to understand the driving factors behind women being a part of a subculture that is male dominated and hyper-masculine to its core values. Their research led them to findings about women having shadowed men in this community for a long period of time. This has resulted in a forced dependence on men.

Specifically, it took the form of dependence on male to ride at the back of the bikes and experience the true essence of freedom in bike riding. However, they are now willing to take controls in their own hands and establish their own personal bond with their bikes. Women are indulging in fulfilling their deepest desires of experiencing the power and control that had until then been the prerogative of their male counterparts. Subjugation in various aspects of life due to the hegemonic nature of masculinity in the society had shackled them too long. Thus, they now want to explore and redefine femininity on their own grounds and terms. They want to feel the freedom that the experience of consuming hyper masculine products provides them and know freedom from the mundane lifecycles and responsibilities (Martin et al., 2006). Women riders want to overcome the social barriers around the physical risks that are attached with femininity. They want to face risks on their own in that it gives them a sense of freedom over their own bodies. (Worth et al, 1992). Research has shown that such trends are more prominent amongst employed women in the young to middle-aged bracket. The reason for the same is that they do not have gender role constraints as compared to their traditional counterparts (Alreck, 1994).

After analysing the research that has been performed in this area of femininity, it can be observed that there has been a transformation in how

women are “performing gender” to include masculinity to redefine identity of femininity for themselves. Multiple economic and social factors have played a significant role in this shift. However, there is a lack of in-depth research on how this transformation has come about in India and the direction this segment would take forward. Thus, we would like to investigate the following research question:

Research Question 1: How have Indian female consumers changed their orientation towards masculine products?

Role of various media platforms In Influencing Woman Towards Masculine Products

Women have an elaborate process of seeking information. Thus, they tend to integrate information from various sources, especially if it involves learning about new information. Women engage in various offline and online interactions and reviews to garner product trial information (Kempf et al., 2006). Social media has enabled individuals in communicating about companies that provide products and services of their interest. Social media platforms have enabled not just individuals but also firms to efficiently communicate with multiple people about their products. Thus, this significantly increases the relevance of consumer to consumer communication as well as the impact of presence of fan communities and consumer communities on social media platform. Understanding the importance of social media as a part of the promotion mix enables firms to communicate with new or prospective customers with the help of current and satisfied consumers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

Research has shown that women use social networks more than men. Women are more regular users of social network services and they are more active across various platforms and services of social media (Hargittai, 2007). Women use social networks to maintain and establish social connections (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008). This pattern has made it essential for firms to reach their female target audience through online platform as women are more involved in social media. They express themselves more through social media and like being part of communities there. Women consumers can be targeted through communities on social media networks such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008).

Research in the field of social media medium and its consumption pattern amongst women has suggested that women enjoy spending time on social networks.

Women are more likely to engage in communication with speakers, opinion leaders, and acknowledge their communication as compared to the male counterparts. Men are more responsive to fact based communications (Stern, 1992). Women form stronger relations through online communications by sharing their feelings and experiences in contrast to men (Alreck, 1994). They enjoy being associated with communities and groups online, especially the groups that instil a sense of pride, freedom and ownership in their life. They are

active in reciprocal communication with these groups and clubs. Research has already established that women spend much more time on social media than men do for their conversations. Hence, their conversations can include many day to day topics of discussion. Thus, we would like to investigate the following research question:

Research Question 2: How does social media medium influence the female consumers' orientation towards masculine products?

The preceding sections of literature review have suggested that there are dynamic changes related to women and their decision making processes. We have seen that these changes have influenced gendering roles in society. Additionally, women exercise more authority of decision making in the present society. This decision making is affected by the abundance of information that these individuals retrieve from various media platforms. They primarily retrieve information from social media interaction as they are easy and accessible.

These interactions are also related to the various purchases that women make on regular bases. In continuation, these purchases can be associated with the gendered products such as bikes.

Further, these online interactions have transformed the orientation of women towards these gendered products: bikes. Therefore, this new phenomenon of women's perception, interaction, choices and perspective towards the gender products such as bikes is imperative to study. However, the scholarly studies have researched in the field of gendered products (Alreck, 1994; Debevec & Iyer 1986; Pettinger, 2005) and role of gendered products in advertising (Morrison & Shaffer, 2003; Wollin, 2003 and Johnson & Young, 2010). We could not find any study that focuses on the gendered products with an exclusive focus on women and their community that facilitates them in the decision making processes. Thus, this research uses self-congruency and self identity theory as its foundations. This is because they would help understand the construction of different gender roles and why different genders prefer different products. Further, it will lead to the discovery of changing gendered roles and their preferences of products.

Therefore, the objective of the study is to understand the gendering of the products such as bikes with the focus on women and community such as 'Bikerni Community' that influences their decision making about brands and products.

This study addresses two research objectives. First, exploring the orientation and consumption behavior of women in hyper- masculine product market. Secondly, the examination of how communication takes place across social media medium for hyper-masculine products can influence the attitude and consumption behavior of women.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploratory research has been conducted to achieve the research objectives of this study.



The research methodology has been exploratory in nature because the primary purpose of this study is to explore the case of Women Bikers in India. In-depth interviews, projective techniques and Netnography were conducted to collect data for research (Malhotra and Dash, 2011).

In-depth interview, a qualitative data collection method, is useful in garnering insights by capturing data about individual's attitude, behavior and beliefs (Malhotra and Dash, 2011). Projective Technique is a market research method that lets the researcher learn about the respondent's deep-rooted beliefs about a commodity, product or others through interpretation of imagery (Boddy 2005; Hofstede et al. 2007). Projective technique can help delve into attitudes, feelings, correlations and connections (Boddy 2005). Netnography, a branch of ethnography, is a market research technique through which the behavior of subjects of research on internet is studied through observation (Belk et al., 2013). . There have been in depth interviews, online observation of these interviewees along with discussions with some of the interviewees.

Conducting In-depth Interviews

A pertinent feature of in-depth interviews as a research method is that it leads to a naturally comfortable, relaxed and insightful conversation between the interviewer and interviewee (Malhotra and Dash, 2011). In-depth interviews of woman bike riders were conducted to understand their attitude and reasoning behind the indulgence in the hyper- masculine motorcycle market.

These interviews are a useful technique to garner insights on their motivations, women biker groups and their brand association over social media (Malhotra and Dash, 2011).

Sampling and Protocol

The evidence of this paper originates from 30 in-depth interviews of respondents from 10 cities. Grounded theory approach was used in this exploratory research because when the data gets saturated without any further changes in the theory development, the sampling has to stop (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory states that the process of data sampling, analysis and theory development have to be continuously repeated until the new data does not change the emerging theory anymore and this helped decide the sample size of this research (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The sample consisted of women bike riders. Some of the interviewees were members of the Bikerni community on Facebook. There are over 200 members of Bikerni club across the country. The age of these woman riders ranges from 18 years to 55 years. Members of the Bikerni community on Facebook were reached on social media platforms. These interviewees were located in 10 different cities. They were recruited without any delimitation based on their location or place of birth. Participants provided their age, city, gender and occupation. The researcher recruited these interviewees on the basis of a pre-screening criterion. The interviewees had to be females who knew bike riding. A judgmental sampling technique was used to recruit only those interviewees who had ridden bikes at least once in two months.

Process of Interview

Multiple platforms were selected by the researcher to conduct interviews. Traditional and digital media were integrated as communication platforms to capture comprehensive data and insights from all respondents (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Interviews were conducted over telephone, Skype calls as well as in-person, depending on the availability and comfort of the interviewee.

The telephonic and Skype interviews were conducted from Ahmedabad as the respondents belonged to multiple cities across India. The personal semi-structured interviews were conducted in Ahmedabad as well as Delhi as around 50% responds were located in these cities. The protocol that was used to interview the respondents was based on their initiating point to ride a bike, their reason and motivation for riding bikes (Refer Appendix 1).

Projective Technique of Woman Bike Riders

Projective technique helps gain admission into the conscious and unconscious thoughts of the respondent (Boddy 2004; Vince and Broussine, 1996). There are five types of projective techniques that are association, completion, construction, expressive and choice ordering (Donoghue, 2010; Hofstede et al. 2007:301; Porr et al. 2011). The association category is a process of relating the research commodity or product with imagery, portraits, words, shades, moods, feelings, concepts and ideas. This technique provides inspiration, space for imaginations, and interpretation. This technique helps explore areas that are difficult to understand and need to be delicately handled (Boddy 2005).

In this study, association projective technique has been integrated with the in-depth interviews to generate deeper understanding of perceptions, emotions and associations of Bikernis (Refer Appendix 1).

Conducting Netnography

Netnography, a branch of ethnography, is a market research technique through which the behavior of the subjects of research over the internet are studied through observation. The 'Bikerni: Association of Female Bikers-India' has spread and reached 604 members on Facebook.

It has more than 200 regular woman bike rider members from across the country. These members actively communicate over social media, such as Facebook and Whatsapp, to express their thoughts, experiences and desires about indulging in the motorcycle industry. They celebrate being a rider and a part of the Bikerni community over social media.

The regular and known faces of the Bikerni club have a large fan base online as well as followers from the media and corporate sectors. These members were observed passively over the internet, not disturbing or influencing the flow of communication. The sample consisted of prominent Bikerni club members who are active on the social media platform to communicate about motorcycles, their experiences and events of Bikerni. A total of 20 Bikernis were observed for content related to communication about motorcycles. Most of these Bikernis were also recruited for in-depth interviews. Netnography

helped understand the behavior of Bikernis on the social network by collecting data and deriving insights. Their behavior over the social media reflected their and the society's perception about woman using masculine products such as bike.

Content analysis was used to analyze the communication messages on the Facebook page of Bikerni India club. The events covered on their page were observed to understand the response elicited by the coverage of these events amongst members of Bikerni club. Content analysis of netnography was combined with the in-depth interview insights to garner the relationship and understand the influence that social media communication has on its members and on non-member biking aspirants.

RESULTS:

Content analysis of all the transcripts of the in-depth interviews was undertaken to gain insights and elucidate the findings related to research questions. Content analysis was used to develop codes, themes and categories by the researcher. Open coding was performed on the data from the transcripts of the interviews. Open coding refers to breaking the data into concepts and labels. These labeled examples are then coded to lead to a theme and a more inclusive concept after theorization (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The author first developed various themes that emerged from the entire collection of data from in-depth interviews and Netnography. Furthermore, categories emerged from the themes that were developed (See table 2 below). These categories were then integrated with the theory of self-identity and self-congruency. The following sections discuss the combination and integration of the crucial themes with the theoretical frameworks of Self-identity and Self-congruency. Final analysis and integration after analysis of the data with theories led to the 'Integrated Model to Understand Orientation of Indian Women towards Biking' (See Figure 1).

Integrated Model to Understand Orientation of Indian Women Towards Biking

Self-Congruency theory emphasizes on the role of self image and perception in the way individuals express their self-identity through the nature of goods and services they use (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). Research has shown the existence of a relationship between an individual's self-identity and the image of the products and services they consume. An individual's knowledge or perception of self-identity alters their behavior as well as their consumption choices. The self develops with the involvement of society and individual's social experiences (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). The self-identity develops with the individual's interaction with family, friends as well as society.

The Indian society has been evolving over the last few years and breaking the shackles of traditional gender roles to destabilize and redefine the gender roles (Khan, 2010). The gender roles are re-stabilizing in Indian society and leading to a shift in the self-identity of women. There are greater opportunities

for women in education, industries, jobs, politics and every other stratum of society.

Indian society is becoming more liberal and evolved; women's interaction with society is also more liberal. An Indian woman's self-identity is progressing to be a more valued self.

Three variables have been identified in this study that influence an individual's self-identity and hence leads to reframing of self-congruency in society. These variables help understand the core theories of self-identity and self-congruency in modern India. The categories and themes that emerged from this research have supported the addition of these variables in theory.

This research has shown that the first variable that figures prominently is Motives. These motives can be internal as well as external. Internal motives comprise of freedom and empowerment whereas the external motives comprise of family, friends and close-knit communities. Evidence from the in-depth interviews and projective techniques suggest that these internal motives and close social groups provide vigor and moral support to empower women in their quest to attain confidence and freedom; to be as they want to be. These internal and external motives help individuals overcome challenges and inspire them further.

Social Media is the second variable that spreads awareness about the changing trends and becomes a medium of expression of the true self. Close-knit communities such as Bikerni communicate through social media and support its members as well as encourage them. Thus, it can be established that motives and social media affect each other to redefine the self-identity of an individual.

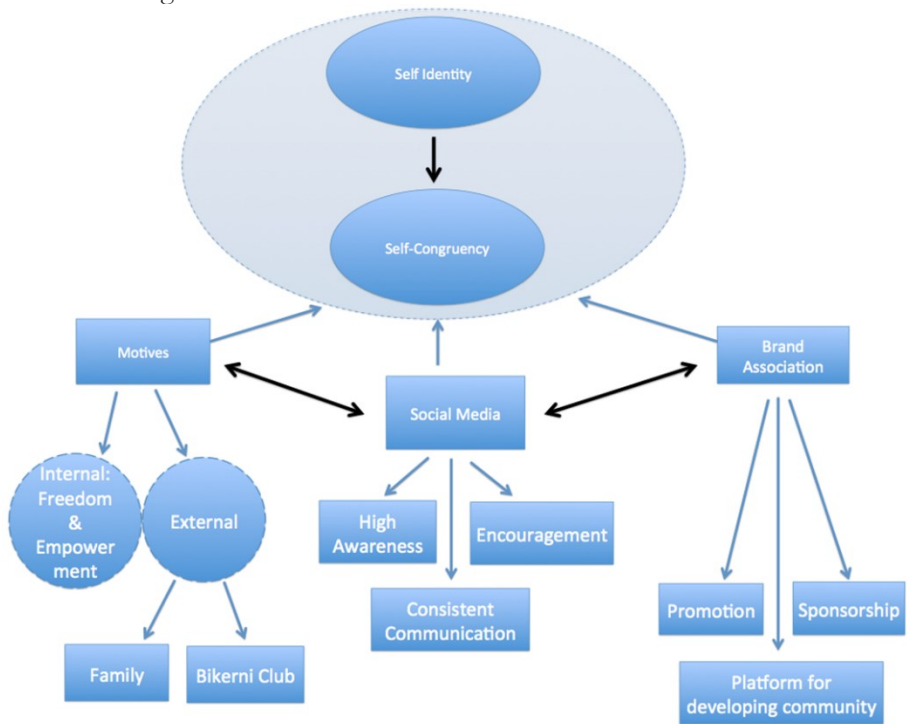
The third variable is Brand Association wherein Brands reflect the society and it's consumers. These brands help promote the shifts that occur in the mindset of the society.

Research has provided evidence that communications from brands help provide a medium for reformation and advancement of individuals and communities. Brands, products and organizations reflect the society and they also take onus on themselves to affect the society. Brands as well as communities communicate on social media to encourage individuals and society. Consumers converse on social media that is fast becoming a part of mass media, to opine on issues that affect them. These moods and trends are then captured by brands to form their product identities.

This research has shown that the first variable that figures prominently is Motives. These motives can be internal as well as external. Internal motives comprise of freedom and empowerment whereas the external motives comprise of family, friends and close-knit communities. Evidence from the in-depth interviews and projective techniques suggest that these internal motives and close social groups provide vigor and moral support to empower women in their quest to attain confidence and freedom; to be as they want to be. These

internal and external motives help individuals overcome challenges and inspire them further.

Figure 1: Integrated Model to Understand Orientation of Indian Women towards Biking



Motivators

Freedom and empowerment as drivers

The present research has identified that women have to follow the conservative, traditional societal norms. They are told to behave in a particular prescribed format and follow the instructions of their male peers. Respondents have expressed that they are expected to evaluate their thoughts and actions to stay within the precedents set by the society. A female from Delhi said, “Indian households have been teaching their children since the very early age difference between what a man and woman can do, what actions are feminine and masculine” (age 24 years). However, with changes in trends, evolvement of society and empowerment of women, more and more women are getting out of the shackles of the society. They want to experience freedom in every form on their own terms. One female from Bengaluru said, “Bike gives me the freedom that every woman always desires for” (age 29 years). She added, “If men can ride then why can’t I.” Many respondents stated that they started riding

because they wanted to get rid of fear, and the idea of “Men only” bikes was not acceptable to them. Another respondent from Delhi said, “I saw a woman riding a bike and was instantly charged with a desire to feel the strength and power of a bike” (age 26 years). She stated, “I haven’t been more proud of myself at any other time than when i started riding independently.” Women biker groups such as ‘The Bikerni: Association of Female Bikers-India’ have become a source of inspiration for Indian women. To summarize, biking has become a way of life for these women bikers, something that provides them freedom, respite, power and confidence to keep moving ahead in life. They are very proud of their decision to ride a bike and do not compare themselves with anyone when it comes to bike riding. Bikes have become a part of them.

Family as a key influencer

Exploratory research has shown that women bikers mostly start riding the bikes of their family members, usually the male members of the family and friends. Most of the respondents stated that their family and friends have been very comforting and encouraging in their journey as a women biker. A respondent from Pune stated, “Competition begins at home at an early childhood stage between siblings” (age 24 years). She added, “I am now the gem of the house. They now say that I have followed my heart and found my place.” Family and friends influence the mindset of women and continue to follow their heart if they have them as external motivators. Another respondent from Hyderabad expressed that “I want a life partner who understands my love for bike. It would be best if he could share the passion for biking too. However, I cannot stay away from bikes at any cost” (age 29 years). The respondents agree that gradual change is occurring in the Indian households, however at a slow pace. The last one and a half years have seen a significant shift in the mindset of Indian society with respect to women bike rides. To summarize, women are focused on following their calling. Further, it is extremely encouraging when they have the support of their family and friends. In fact, they expect such support in their future relations in life.

Bikerni as facilitators and supportive community

Respondents of this research who have been a part of the ‘The Bikerni: Association of Female Bikers-India’ have expressed that groups like these have been a source of inspiration and encouragement for them. They help facilitate each other in every possible aspect of life and not just restricted to biking. It is a network of people across the country who love to come together to ride.

A female based in Surat expressed, “We ride together and grow strong together” (age 31 years). Another female from Delhi said, “We love each other to the core. There are no airs, no attitude, no ego hassles” (age 42 years). Respondent based out of Mumbai recalled, “Bikernis helped me move to the new city, made me feel at home” (age 27 years). Women form strong bonds through these communities and want to raise awareness and support across India. Women riders who are part of groups like Bikerni stand as strong each

other's backbone in short run and long run. Respondents ardently seek each others' help and opinions about various matters of life and encourage each other. The passion for biking has brought them together and they love the idea of this beautiful community for support and unity. To summarize, women biker communities act as facilitators and external support for riders. They raise awareness; teach each other, help each other in various facets of life. These groups are motivators for many women to continue their passion for biking and hence bringing change in the society.

Proposition 1: There are three basic drivers for Indian women bikers: confidence and power, family, and close-knit communities

Role of Social Media in Women Biker Community

This research has provided evidence that social media play a crucial role in the rising awareness about the women biker groups and assists in bringing them together. A female from Delhi stated, "Social media is the reason we are together. I wouldn't have known about Bikernis if it weren't for Facebook" (age 25 years). Social media also help encourage more women to pursue their passion for bikes by exposing them to such trends and shifts in society.

Social media encourages the Bikernis to communicate efficiently with members from across the country. They share information about events, however big or small it maybe. They post photos of themselves, each other, and city rides to share their fervor for bike riding. A rider from Ahmedabad expressed, "We like, share, comment on photos and articles shared on the Bikerni page. We use hash tags for events, rides and other meets" (age 30 years). She added, "Social media has become our lifeline." Communications on Whatsapp and Facebook mostly entail encouraging messages where success stories are shared to motivate each other and keep up the momentum. To summarize, social media has become one of the most important connection between women biker groups. They help raise awareness and maintain consistent communication for constant support and encouragement.

Proposition 2: Social media is an important connecting factor for women bikers across India

Brand Associations

Respondents for this research have expressed their interest in associating biker groups with brands. They suggest that association with brands through events and sponsorships provides them with exposure across media. This coverage helps further reflect the shifting patterns in society and advocates the theory of self-identity in a more liberal manner. However, they believe that any specific brand cannot separate their passion and these brands should bring women bikers closer. A women biker from Mumbai said, "A brand should not separate our passion but instead should bring us together" (age 45 years). Society and products influence each other and this can be leveraged to make a greater number of women and their families comfortable with such concepts.

However, these respondents felt that the industry does not seem well prepared for women bikers in India till date. The industry should propagate liberal ideas to bring a change in society and make it more acceptable of women bikers. To summarize, brand associations provide a personalized and customized platform for women bikers. These brands further propagate the development of communities and Indian society, as there is a reciprocal relation between organizations and society.

Proposition 3: Brand associations act as catalysts for changing behaviors in the society

Bikes as Gendered Products:

Exploratory research through in-depth interviews, projective techniques and netnography has resulted in a deeper understanding of the perception of consumers towards the gendering of products. This research has revealed that women bikers perceive bikes as a product that does not belong to any particular gender. They believe that bikes are for men as well as for women. A biker from Delhi said, “Bikes are not manly, they are strong. We women are strong too” (age 23 years). Another respondent from Bengaluru opined, “My bike has become an integral part of me. I have seen change happening when men and women come to congratulate us women riders” (age 30 years). They believe that societal changes will occur through small steps and this shift is one step towards that change. They perceive bikes to be strong machines that are supposed to be driven irrespective of the gender of the biker. They have quoted many examples of women bike riders from the lower strata of society, trying to convey that bikes are used as a medium for expression across all segments of Indian society. Women identify with bikes as much as men do. In summary, bikes can no longer be considered as masculine products. These bikes stand for strength, speed and power; traits that women find congruency with in the modern times in India.

Proposition 4: Indian women do not consider bikes as masculine products

Analysis from Association Projective Technique:

In association projective techniques, respondents were asked to imagine an Indian women biker and describe her in five words at the very minimum.

The responses to the projective technique were similar to the in-depth interviews and helped understand the intensity of their responses. Their perception of women bikers were similar and showcased the motivations of women bikers in India. Respondents imagined Indian women bikers to be very strong and confident riders who could deal with all situations of life. They are trendy women who do not succumb to societal pressures and are willing to stand for other women too. The respondents imagined women bikers treating their bikes as a part of themselves: a bike that was customized to reflect their strong and beautiful personality. They believed that the average Indian women could ride a medium range bike.

Table 1: Themes and Categories from Content Analysis

Category	Theme	Codes
Motives	Freedom and empowerment: Drivers	<i>"Bikes provide a sense of freedom which a woman always wants",</i> <i>"If men can ride then why can't I",</i> <i>"I did not kick-start a movement that empowers women through motorcycles just like that"</i>
	Family as a key influencer	<i>"My friends and family were very supportive",</i> <i>"I want a life partner who can understand my love for bikes",</i> <i>"My parents say that now she found her place"</i>
	Bikernis as facilitators/ supportive community	<i>"Bikernis are very encouraging",</i> <i>"We love each other to the core. No airs, no bad attitude, no ego hassles",</i> <i>"We have our beautiful community with lot of support and unity. We ride strong together."</i>
Communication Strategy	High awareness, consistent communication and appreciation	<i>"Thanks to social media and Bikerni, there are more than 300 registered Bikernis",</i> <i>"Helps in creating awareness and encouraging women bike riders",</i> <i>"We get to know about all events through Social media. We congratulate and encourage"</i>
Brand Association	Promotion, Sponsorship and platform for developing community	<i>"Sponsorship helps us and gives us exposure",</i> <i>"They call us for product launches",</i> <i>"Industry is not ready and prepared to accept women bike riders"</i>
Challenges	Economic and Social hurdles are abundant	<i>"They try to pull you down, taunt you, scare you",</i> <i>"Monetary backup was a issues",</i> <i>"There are no safety merchandise and helmets for women",</i> <i>"Women still have a little bitch about family and society"</i>
Bikes a gendered product	Bikes for women and men	<i>"I am all for speed and it has become a part of me",</i> <i>"We don't have to compare. Otherwise it becomes an acknowledgement of existence of gender inequality",</i> <i>"Bikes are not manly, bikes are strong"</i>

Respondents were also asked to name their top five bike brands available in India. After stating these brands, participants were asked if they could relate any of those brands with women in India. Their responses to projective technique concurred with responses to in-depth interviews. There is a major passion amongst women for bikes. However, the availability for specific bikes and safety merchandise for women does not exist in India yet. These

respondents expect that the industry should also include women bikers in India in their focus and encourage this phenomenon further.

To summarize the framework, three variables, namely Motives, Communication and Brand Association, affect each other and reflect on each other to redefine the self-identities of individuals. This redefinition of self-identities leads to newer dimensions and orientations of individuals towards products and services (See Figure 1 above). Individuals alter their behavior and consumption choices to express themselves through brands and products for self-congruency in the new liberal environment. This framework is called the Integrated Model to Understand Orientation of Indian Women Towards Biking.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS:

The present study has found that Indian women are motivated by their quest for freedom, independence and empowerment. They are also influenced by their family, close-knit communities such as Bikerni Association of India. These groups have changed the perception of women regarding hyper-masculine products (Sherry et al. 2010). They have also promoted the purchase and consumption of these masculine products. These changes have redefined the concept of self identity among women. These concepts are in variance with the literature as these are the basic motivators for women (Butler, 1990 & Ziegler, 2008). However, the present study has added a new dimension of social media and brand association to the concept of self-identity and self-congruency.

The present study has extended the self-identity theory (Kanter and Blumer, 1971; Stone, 1962;

Strauss, 1959 and Dittmar et al., 1995) and self-congruency theory (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967; Fugate and Phillips, 2010 and Fischer & Arnold, 1994). This extension is related to social media and brand association. They are the key drivers for consuming hyper-masculine products. This study found that social media influences the perception and awareness levels of individuals that affect the concept of self-identity for Indian women.

The present study found that brand associations and brand imagery in terms of gender influences the society to be more liberal and provide a new dimension to an individual's perception, identity and consumption patterns.

This study found that women use social media efficiently to learn new concepts of self and develop their identity. Representation or reputation of brands and products in the society affects the perception of those products and consumers. These new variables help create the self-identity of individuals and further encourage individuals to consume brands and products in accordance with their self-congruency (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). These new variables play a crucial role in the consumption and purchase decisions of such brands and products (Eagly et al., 2000).

Subsequently, the implications for scholars and managers are based on the new insights that were developed from the present research. Managerial

implications include the scope and need for corporations dealing with masculine product to address woman as a relevant and significant segment. This research serves as a basis to initiate online communication to target women and include them in the consumer segment. This research helps facilitate online communication for multinational firms to address and engage more women as purchasers and consumers. Thus, firms can plan their communication strategy on the basis of this study. This is because the scope of this study entails a detailed analysis of online communication in the Bikerni community in India.

Further implications of this study include changes in product designs or production of new variants of the masculine products to the tastes and preferences of woman consumer. Product design, looks and comfort are major factors that influence the consumption behavior of woman towards products. This study can help marketers and managers of corporations conceptualize and reformulate the marketing mix for their masculine products.

This could include the look and feel of the showrooms to make the ambience more welcoming and encouraging for women. The communication messages, promotions and services can also be customized in accordance with the women bikers. Additionally, managers can facilitate the women consumers' redefinition of their gender and roles while they use masculine products.

This research can be used by future scholars interested in studying other categories of hyper-masculine products such as cigars, men watches, men perfumes and others. The scope of this research can be used as a basis to understand the shift to feminine tendencies to include masculine traits and behavior and its result on marketplace. Scholars can develop exclusive studies for men and women, as their orientation towards non-gender specific products can be different. Scholars can also study the extent of influence of social media on men and women independently.

This study forms the starting point of future studies on how the gendering of products influences men and women in a liberal socio-cultural environment. Future studies can be developed to find more variables that influence the orientation of men and women towards gender specific products. This study can be extended to include more women biker groups across India. The present research has focused on women bikers from urban cities of India. A similar research can be conducted to include Indian women from rural areas to understand the orientation of women bikers towards hyper masculine products.

References

- Acker, J. (2012). Gendered organizations and intersectionality: problems and possibilities. *Equal Div And Incl: An Int J*, 31(3), 214-224. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02610151211209072>
- Alreck, Pamela L. 'Commentary: A New Formula For Gendering Products And Brands'. *Journal of Product and Brand Management* 3.1 (1994): 6-18. Web.
- Astrop, A., Palmner, C., Maunder, D., and Babu, D. M. (1996). The urban travel behaviour and constraints of low income households and females in Pune, India. National Conference on

- Women's Travel Issues (pp. 1-38). Baltimore, Maryland: Overseas Centre Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne Berkshire, United Kingdom.
- Banerjee, I. (2011). *Automobility in India: A Study of Car Acquisition and Ownership Trends in the City of Surat*. Berkeley: University Of California, Berkeley.
- Belk, R., Fischer, E., and Kozinets, R. (2013). *Qualitative consumer and marketing research*(p. 240). Sage Publications.
- Bischoff, K. (2015). Tech Investors Should Take Note - The Female Consumer Is Changing Her Online Behavior. The Huffington Post. Retrieved 15 February 2015, from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kirsten-bischoff/tech-investors-should-tak_b_2865082.html?ir=India
- Boddy, C. (2004). From brand image research to teaching assessment: using a projective technique borrowed from marketing research to aid an understanding of teaching effectiveness. *Quality Assurance In Education*, 12(2), 94-105.doi:10.1108/09684880410536468
- Boddy, C.R. (2005). 'Projective techniques in market research: valueless subjectivity or insightful reality?' *International Journal of Market Research*, 47 (3), 239-254.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism And The Subversion Of Identity*. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc.
- Chadha, O. (2011). Study Of Consumer Buying Behavior Towards Bikes. *International Journal of Research in Finance and Marketing* , 1 (2), 86-101.
- Connell, R. W., and Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender and Society* , 19 (6), 829-859.
- Connell, R.W. (1987), *Gender and Power*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.
- Connell, R.W. (1990), "An iron man: the body and some contradictions of hegemonic masculinity", in Messner, M. and Sabo, D. (Eds), *Sport, Men and the Gender Order*, Human Kinetics Books, Champaign, IL.
- Cowart, K.O., Fox, G.L. and Wilson, A.E. (2002), "A structural look at consumer innovativeness and self- congruence in new product purchase", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 25 No. 12, pp. 1111-30
- Debevec, K., and Iyer, E. (1986). Sex Roles and Consumer Perceptions of Promotions, Products, and Self: What Do We Know and Where Should We Be Headed? *Advances in Consumer Research* , 13, 210-214.
- Dittmar, H., Beattie, J., & Friese, S. (1995). Gender identity and material symbols: Objects and decision considerations in impulse purchases. *Journal Of Economic Psychology*, 16(3), 491-511. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870\(95\)00023-h](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870(95)00023-h)
- Donoghue, S. (2010). Projective techniques in consumer research. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences* /TydskrifVirGesinsekologie En Verbruikerswetenskappe, 28(1). doi:10.4314/ jfec.v28i1.52784
- Duesterhaus, M., Grauerholz, L., Weichsel, R., & Guittar, N. (2011). The Cost of Doing Femininity: Gendered Disparities in Pricing of Personal Care Products and Services. *Gender Issues*, 28(4), 175-191. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12147-011-9106-3>
- Eckes, T. & Trautner, H. (2000). *The developmental social psychology of gender*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Fenstermaker, S. & West, C. (2002). *Doing gender, doing difference*. New York: Routledge.
- Fischer, E. & Arnold, S. (1994). Sex, gender identity, gender role attitudes, and consumer behavior. *Psychology And Marketing*, 11(2), 163-182. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/mar.4220110206>
- Fugate, D., and Phillips, J. (2010). Product gender perceptions and antecedents of product gender congruence. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 27(3), 251-261.doi:10.1108/07363761011038329
- Gherardi, S. (1995). *Gender, Symbolism and Organisational Cultures*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Grubb, E., and Grathwohl, H. (1967). Consumer Self-Concept, Symbolism and Market Behavior: A Theoretical Approach. *Journal of Marketing*, 31(4), 22.doi:10.2307/1249461
- Gupta, C. (1998). Articulating Hindu Masculinity and Femininity: 'Shuddhi' and 'Sangathan' Movements in United Provinces in the 1920s. *Economic and Political Weekly* , 33 (13), 727-735.

- Hargittai, E. (2007). Whose Space? Differences Among Users and Non-Users of Social Network Sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13 (1), 276-297.
- Hawkins, D.I. and Conroy, K.A. (1976), "Advertising and Different Sex Roles in Contemporary American Society", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 4, pp. 418-28.
- Hofstede, A., van Hoof, J., Walenberg, N., and de Jong, M. (2007). Projective techniques for brand image research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 10(3), 300-309. doi:10.1108/13522750710754326
- Hoffman, R. (2001). The Measurement of Masculinity and Femininity: Historical Perspective and Implications for Counseling. *Journal Of Counseling & Development*, 79(4), 472-485. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2001.tb01995.x>
- ICRA. (2011). Two-Wheeler Industry: Growth Drivers Intact. ICRA. Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai: *ICRA Rating Services*.
- Johnson, F. & Young, K. (2002). Gendered voices in children's television advertising. *Critical Studies In Media Communication*, 19(4), 461-480. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07393180216572>
- Kanter, R., and Blumer, H. (1971). Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method. *American Sociological Review*, 36(2), 333. doi:10.2307/2094060
- Kempf, D.A., Lacznia, R.N. and Smith, R.E. (2006), "The effects of gender on processing advertising and product trial information", *Marketing Letters*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 5-16.
- Khan, S. (2010, December 14). No. of bikes bought by women in India rises 40% in 2010 - Economic Times. Retrieved from http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2010-12-14/news/27632983_1_bikes-150cc-royal-enfield
- Malhotra, K.N. and Dash, S. (2011), *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation*, 6th ed., Dorling Kindersley India, Noida and Pearson Education.
- Mangold, W. G., and Faulds, D. J. (2009, April 10). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 357-365.
- Martin, D. M., Schouten, J. W., and McAlexander, J. H. (2006). Claiming the Throttle: Multiple Femininities in a Hyper-Masculine Subculture. *Consumption Markets and Culture*, 9 (3), 171-205.
- Morrison, M. & Shaffer, D. (2003). Gender-Role Congruence and Self-Referencing as Determinants of Advertising Effectiveness. *Sex Role: A Journal Of Research*, 49(5), 265-275.
- Paek, H., Nelson, M., & Vilela, A. (2010). Examination of Gender-role Portrayals in Television Advertising across Seven Countries. *Sex Roles*, 64(3-4), 192-207. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11199-010-9850-y>
- Park, Jooyoung, Yeosun Yoon, and Byungtae Lee. 'The Effect Of Gender And Product Categories On Consumer Online Information Search'. *Advances in Consumer Research* 36 (2009): 361-366. Print.
- Paul, D. (2013, January 21). Bikerni: Vrooming Ahead - Indian Express. Retrieved from <http://archive.indianexpress.com/news/bikerni-vrooming-ahead/1062341/>
- Pettinger, L. (2005). Gendered Work Meets Gendered Goods: Selling and Service in Clothing Retail. *Gender Work & Org*, 12(5), 460-478. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2005.00284.x>
- Pine, K. & Nash, A. (2003). Barbie or Betty? Preschool Children's Preference for Branded Products and Evidence for Gender-Linked Differences. *Journal Of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, 24(4), 219-224. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1097/00004703-200308000-00001>
- Porr, C. Mayan, M. Graffigna, G. Wall, S. and Ramos Vieira, E. (2011), 'The Evocative Power of Projective Techniques for the Elicitation of Meaning', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10 (1), 30-41
- Purkayastha, B. (2015). Ariel Share The Load campaign: Dhobi Ghat. Financial Express. Retrieved from <http://www.financialexpress.com/article/industry/companies/ariel-share-the-load-campaign-dhobi-ghat/41003/>
- Randolph, A. W. (2002). *Engaging symbols: Gender, politics, and public art in fifteenth-century Florence*. Retrieved from <http://books.google.co.in/books?id=ArSU39x6IBwCanddq=Engaging>

- +Symbols:+Gender,+Politics,+and+Public+Art+in+Fifteenth-century+Florenceandhl
 =enandsa=Xandei=Ty5iVPjeHcOKuwSZroDgAwandved=0CB0Q6AEwAA
- Rathore, V. (2014). Women eyeing products like Harley-Davidson motorcycles, cigars, Tag Heuer, Breguet watches, cufflinks made ostensibly for men. *Economic Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-04-19/news/49252128_1_men-tag-heuer-trousers
- Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Conceiving the Self*. Basic Books, New York, NY.
- Scanzoni, J. (1977). Changing Sex Roles and Emerging Directions in Family Decision Making. *J CONSUM RES*, 4(3), 185. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/208698>
- Schippers, M. (2007). Recovering the Feminine Other: Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Hegemony. *Theory and Society*, 36 (1), 85-102.
- Settle, R.B. and Alreck, P.L. (1987a). Marketing to Male Fantasies. *Marketing Communications*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 13-8, 81.
- Shinde, D. K., and Khamkar, S. K. (2014). Pre-Purchase Behavior Amongst The Youth For Two Wheelers – With Special Reference To Mumbai City. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences*, 3 (8), 104-109.
- Sirgy, M., and Su, C. (2000). Destination Image, Self-Congruity, and Travel Behavior: Toward an Integrative Model. *Journal of Travel Research*, 38(4), 340-352. doi:10.1177/004728750003800402
- Smulyan *, L. (2004). Redefining self and success: becoming teachers and doctors. *Gender And Education*, 16(2), 225-245. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09540250310001690591>
- Stern, B. (1992). Feminist Literary Theory and Advertising Research: A New “Reading” of the Text and the Consumer. *Journal of Current Issues and Research In Advertising*, 14(1), 9-21. doi:10.1080/10641734.1992.10504976
- Stone, G.P. (1962), “*Appearance and the self*”, in Rose, A.M. (Ed.), *Human Behavior and Social Processes*, Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, MA.
- Strauss, A., and Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Strauss, A. (1959), *Mirrors and Masks*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- Subrahmanyam, K., Reich, S. M., Waechter, N., and Espinoza, G. (2008). Online and offline social networks: Use of social networking sites by emerging adults. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29(6), 420–433. doi:10.1016/j.appdev.2008.07.003
- Vince, R., and Broussine, M. (1996). Paradox, Defense and Attachment: Accessing and Working with Emotions and Relations Underlying Organizational Change. *Organization Studies*, 17(1), 1-21. doi:10.1177/017084069601700101
- Walter, E. (2012). Women Rule Online and Offline. The Huffington Post. Retrieved 15 February 2015, from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ekaterina-walter/women-and-social-media_b_1645091.html?ir=India
- Wijngaard, M. (1997). *Reinventing the sexes: The biomedical construction of femininity and masculinity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Witt, S. (1997). Parental influence on children's socialization to gender roles. *Adolescence*.
- Wolin, L. D. (2003). Gender Issues in Advertising An Oversight Synthesis of Research: 1970-2002. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 43(1), 111-129. doi:10.1017/S0021849903030125
- Worth, L., Smith, J., & Mackie, D. (1992). Gender schematicity and preference for gender-typed products. *Psychology And Marketing*, 9(1), 17-30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/mar.4220090104>
- Yancey Martin, P. (2004). Gender As Social Institution. *Social Forces*, 82(4), 1249-1273.
- Ziegler, K. A. (2008, August). “*Formidable-Femininity*”: *Performing Gender And Third Wave Feminism In A Women’s Self Defense Class*. Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University Carbondale , 1-184.

Appendix 1. Interview Schedule

- Introduce self. Find out the name, occupations, location and age
- Explain the purpose of research

Pre-screening criteria:

Sex- Female

Bike ownership- Yes or No {Yes-> What motivated you to buy a bike? |

No->Which bike do you plan to buy first and why?}

Brand of bike-

Personal Information/ Demographic

Name:

Age:

City:

Projective technique for phase 1: Imagine the picture of women riding bike. What words come to your mind when you see this picture?

{To study the intensity}

Phase 1: Perception about biking

When did you start riding bike?

How did you feel about riding bike?

How often do you drive?

What are the motives to ride bike?

What is the drive?

What does bike riding mean for you? (In general) {Do bikes mean being manly? How is bike riding different from car driving? }

What do you feel about women bikers in India? What stage are they at?

Do you encourage other women to drive?

Yes-> How and what is the reaction by other women?

No->Do you wish to play a stronger role in this trend?

Which brand you associate your identity with? What other products/ brands do you associate with bike riding?

Projective technique for phase 2: What social media comes to your mind when you think of biker groups?

Phase 2: Women Biker Group & Social Media (Max time)

Are you associated with any biker group? Which one?

How do you feel about being associated with these groups?

How do these groups and communities aspire you to become a better biker?

How does digital media help in enhancing the bikers experience?

What messages interest you from these groups?

How does this communication help in increasing the experience related to bike?

How do u communicate via digital and social media? How often

How do u respond to the visuals/ comments/ videos/ articles related to the biking experience shared on these groups?

Who are people you follow on these groups? Any opinion leaders in the group? How do they influence your perception? Do they influence you to ride often?

Projective technique for Phase 3: What are the top 5 brands comes to your mind? Do you associate these brands to women?

Phase 3: Brand Association with Biker group

How do you associate the top bike brands with your group?

What is the perception of the members about these brands?

Would you want brands to associate with these groups and its members? Do you want these brands/ products to promote these groups/ members to propagate/ encourage women bike riders?

What are your expectations as a women biker to enhance this experience in Indian market?

How do we relate the biking experience with Indian women?

Phase 4: Challenges

What are the different challenges that u face when you ride the bike?

How do u manage to overcome these challenges?

What limitations have you faced? What do you want to change the most/ what needs immediate attention? {Societal/ family/ marriage/ moral police/ financial/ structure of a bike?}

Thank the respondent.