

เพศสภาพและบทบาทการทำงานในโฆษณาทางโทรทัศน์: การเปรียบเทียบระหว่างการโฆษณาทางโทรทัศน์ของญี่ปุ่นและไทย

ปิยะ พงศาพิทักษ์สันติ

บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์การวิจัยคือการศึกษาคือความเหมือนและความแตกต่างของเพศสภาพและบทบาทการทำงานของตัวแสดงในโฆษณาทางโทรทัศน์ของญี่ปุ่นและไทยโดยระเบียบวิธีการวิจัยใช้การวิเคราะห์เนื้อหาของชิ้นงานโฆษณาจำนวน 834 ชิ้น ที่ได้รับรวบรวมในปี 2015 ในทั้งสองประเทศ

ผลการวิจัยของการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหาเปรียบเทียบนี้แสดงถึงผลที่แตกต่างจากงานวิจัยเดิมที่ว่าภาพลักษณ์ในโฆษณาสะท้อนความเป็นจริงในสังคม กล่าวคือ ถึงแม้อัตราการทำงานของผู้หญิงของประเทศญี่ปุ่นและประเทศไทยมีความแตกต่างกันมากแต่อัตราการทำงานของผู้หญิงที่ปรากฏในโฆษณาทางโทรทัศน์ของทั้งสองประเทศไม่มีความแตกต่างกัน นอกจากนี้ผลการวิจัยนี้ยังแสดงให้เห็นถึงภาพลักษณ์ใหม่ของเพศสภาพที่มีความเท่าเทียมกันในลักษณะของบทบาทของงานที่ทำระหว่างเพศชายและเพศหญิงที่ปรากฏในโฆษณาของแต่ละประเทศอีกด้วย

คำ

สำคัญ

โฆษณา, เพศสภาพ, บทบาทการทำงาน, ญี่ปุ่น, ไทย

Gender and Working Roles in Television Commercials: A Comparison between Japanese and Thai Television Commercials

Piya Pongsapitaksanti

Abstract

The research objective of this study is to examine the similarities and differences in the gender and working roles in Japanese and Thai television commercials. The research methodology focuses on content analysis. Eight hundred and thirty-four advertisements within the 2015 time period in Japan and Thailand were collected, coded, and analyzed using the SPSS program, a program used for statistical analysis. As a result, this comparative content analysis suggests a possible reversal from traditional patterns in the literature. Though the proportions of working women in both countries differ, the proportions of working women in Japanese and Thai television commercials are insignificantly different. Moreover, the research results reveal the new appearance of a non-stereotypical gender image in terms of the types of working roles in the commercials in these two countries.

Key words

Television commercial, Advertising, Gender roles, Japan, Thailand

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Television advertisements are a rich source of data for social scientists to investigate as they can be seen as a reflection of prevailing cultural values. Gender value is also one of the critical factors in developing marketing strategies via advertising messages.

Gender-role stereotyping in advertising has been a prominent topic in the literature since the 1970s (Arima, 2003). Over the past decade, gender stereotyping in television commercials has received particular attention (Wolin, 2003). Most studies reveal that men and women are depicted differently in TV ads, and the differences are in accordance with traditional gender roles and reflect the construction of gender roles in society (Milner & Collins, 2000; Sengupta, 1995; Sui & Au, 1997; Tan & Theng, 2002), and although research of gender roles in advertisements is plentiful in the United States, our understanding of sex-role portrayal in an international context is limited because there are so few studies. Since it would seem that the trend of gender roles in Asia would also change into non-stereotypical gender roles, it has been difficult to confirm

the use of advertising stereotypes in Asia. In addition, there has never been any comparative research concerning gender roles in current television commercials between Japan and Thailand. Therefore, this paper compares gender roles in current television commercials between both of these countries.

1.2 Research Objective

The proportion of working women in Thailand (60.8%) is comparatively higher than that of Japan (49.6%) in 2015. Additionally, figure 1 shows the proportion of working women by age in Japan and Thailand in 2014 (International Labor Organization, 2017). It is clear that the shape of proportion of working women by age is also different. In Japan, its shape is called M-shaped curve, while, in Thailand, its shape is called reverse U-shaped curve as in western society. This paper will pursue whether television commercials accurately reflect the realities of gender roles in these countries. Therefore, the research objective is to examine the similarities and differences of gender and working roles in Japanese and Thai television commercials.

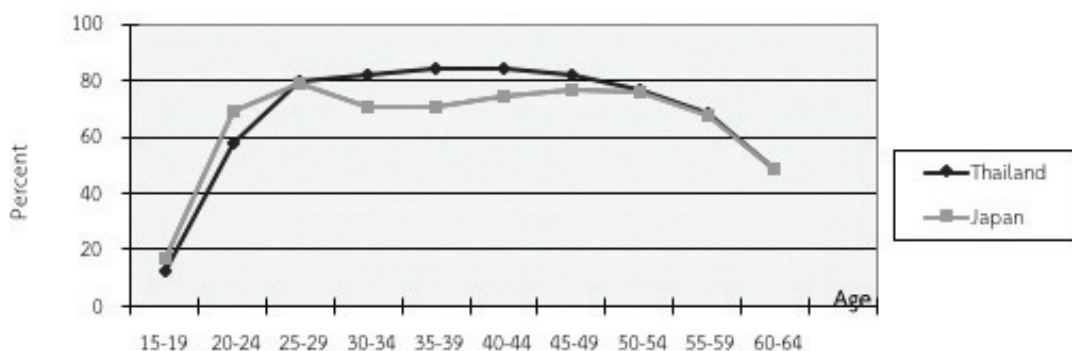


Figure 1: Proportion of working women in Japan and Thailand by age

Source: International Labor Organization (2017)

2. Methodology

The research methodology focuses on content analysis. 834 advertisements within the 2015 time-period in Japan (465 advertisements) and Thailand (369 advertisements) were collected, coded, and analyzed by an SPSS program, a computer program used for statistical analysis, to discover the relationships between their analyzed variables, for example, gender of main character and age/ role/ type of working role/ type of non-working role.

To examine the similarities and differences between Japanese and Thai advertising, ad samples were collected randomly during May to June in 2015 (Table 1). Samples were collected from the

three highest-rated commercial channels in Nagasaki (channels 4, 5, and 8) and in Bangkok (channels 3, 7, and 9). For each day, one channel was picked randomly for each country. The dates included Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays to avoid the biases of television programs that were sponsored by a single company, since the competition for ratings during the weekend is quite high. The same sampling dates were used for both countries, and samples were recorded from programs aired during prime-time (7:00 - 9:00 p.m.) in Japan and Thailand. All commercials were coded and analyzed by an SPSS program.

Table 1 : Record schedule in Japan and Thailand in 2015 (*ch = channel)

	May					June			
	2 (Sat)	8 (Fri)	17 (Sun)	23 (Sat)	29 (Fri)	7 (Sun)	13 (Sat)	19 (Fri)	28 (Sun)
Japan	4 ch	5 ch	8 ch	5 ch	8 ch	4 ch	8 ch	4 ch	5 ch
Thailand	9 ch	3 ch	7 ch	3 ch	7 ch	9 ch	7 ch	9 ch	3 ch

Each sampling was coded into 7 categories: narration, gender, role, type of working role, type of non-working role, age of main character, and product type. In each commercial, only the main character that appeared the most often was selected and coded.

First, the narration of all television commercials was coded as male, female or both/none narration (Figure 2).

Second, the main character of the commercial was classified as male or female main character (Figure 3).

Third, the role of the main character appearing in each sample was coded as working, or non-working role.

Fourth, if the main character was working, the type of working role was

categorized as high-level, middle-level and other kinds of work. High-level work is business owner, executive, director, manager, doctor, professor, lawyer, engineer, and other professional works. Middle-level work is officer, general affairs, accounting, planning, sales administration, clerk, staff, shopkeeper, etc. In addition, other kinds of work are entertainment, labor, stall, etc.

Fifth, if the main character was not working outside, the type of non-working role was categorized as household, recreation, or product introduction role.

Sixth, the age of the main character was coded as 0-18, 19-35, 36-50, or over than 50 year old.

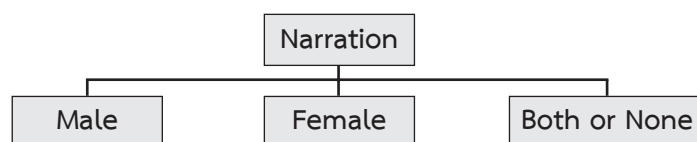


Figure 2: Categorization of gender of narration

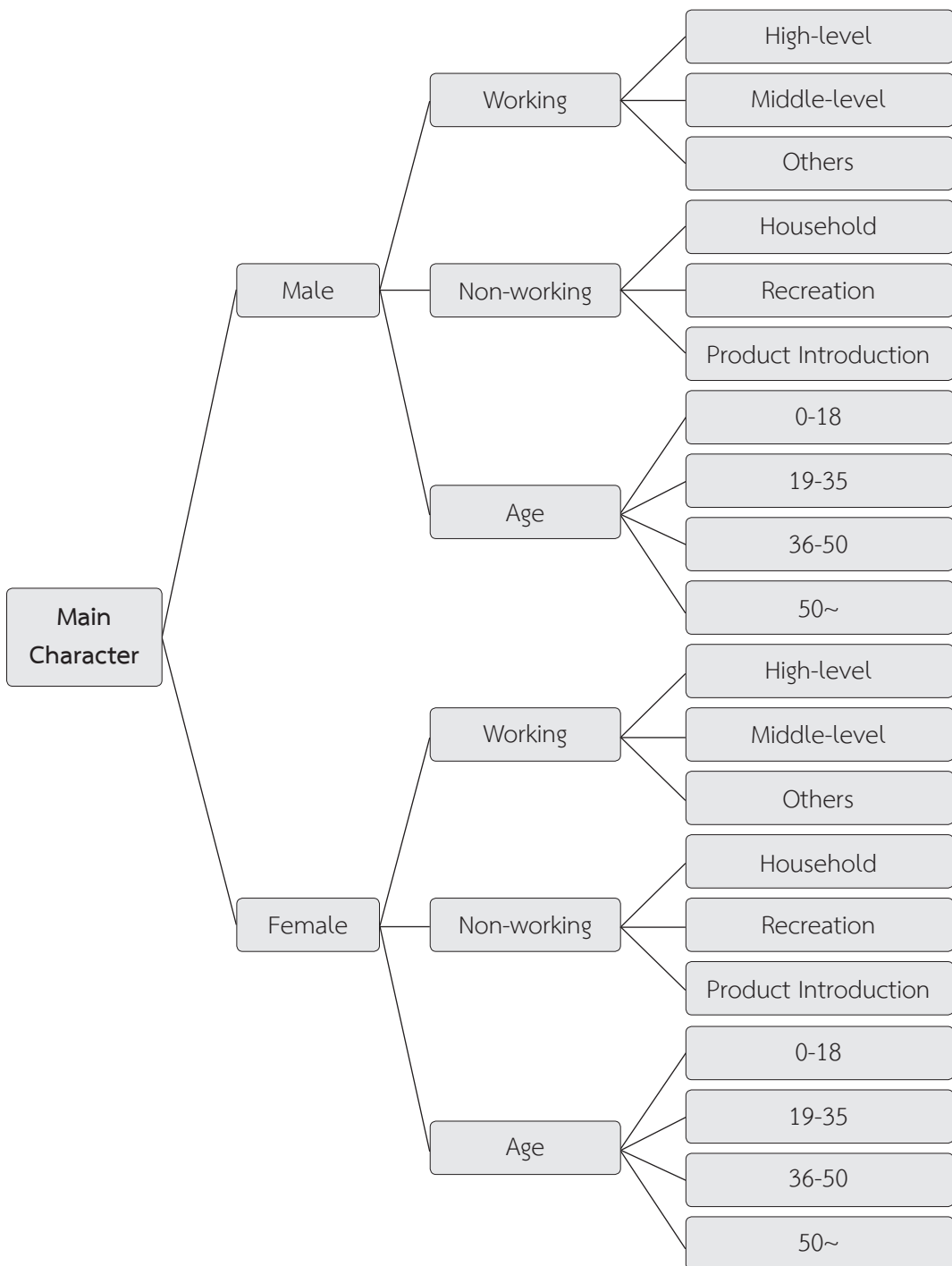


Figure 3: Categorization of role, type of working role, type of non-working role, and age of main character

Seventh, to standardize the characteristics of *advertised products*, as a concept of product types in marketing theory, all samplings were separated into 2 groups (Figure 4): tangible and intangible products. Tangible products were categorized by product involvement theory as the following; high involvement: auto/parts, appliances/furniture; medium involvement: entertainment/toys, cosmetics/fashion apparel, and alcohol/cigarettes; low involvement: household supplies, food/ beverage.

On the other hand, intangible products (services) samplings were grouped for analysis. They were composed of: services, image improvement, retail, and other categories (such as television program promotion, which could not be compared between the two countries).

Moreover, to determine the reliability of the coding scheme of television commercial samples, 10% of the data were collected in Japan and Thailand through twenty in-depth interviews with Japanese

audiences and twenty in-depth interviews with Thai audiences. The result shows that the percentage of reliability is more than 85%. Thus, it can be proved that this data is reliable for analysis.

3. Research Findings

In both countries' commercials, the proportions of male and female main characters significantly differ. Male main character (53%) appears in Thai commercial more frequently than in Japanese commercial (44.1%). Moreover, young women (18-35 years old) in both countries appear more frequently than young men. However, young people appear in Thai commercial more frequently than in Japanese commercial, while middle age and older people appear in Japanese commercial more than in Thai commercial. For example, the proportion of young women in Thailand is 90.4%, whereas it is 72.5% in Japan. Additionally, the proportions of male voice-over in Japanese and Thai television commercials

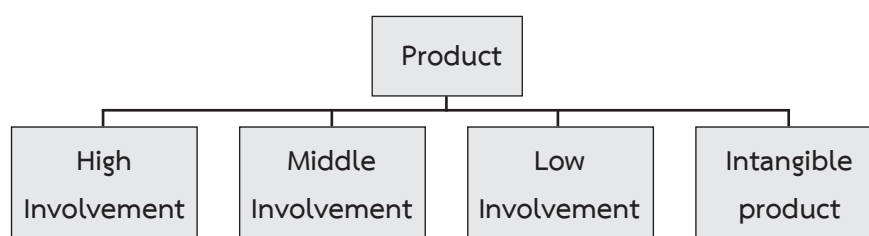


Figure 4: Categorization of Product

are higher than those of female voice-over. The proportion of male voice-over in Thai commercial (72.1%) is higher than in Japanese commercial (54.6%).

Moreover, the proportion of working men in the advertisements of both countries accurately reflects the construction of gender roles in reality. The proportion of Thai working men (77.6%) is comparatively higher than that of Japan (70.3%) in 2015. Table 2 depicts that the proportion of working men in Thai commercials (24.7%) is higher than that of Japan's (9.3).

However, this comparative content analysis suggests a possible reversal from traditional patterns in the literature. Though the proportion of working women in Thailand (60.8%) is quite higher than that of Japan (49.6%) in 2015, this proportion in Thai (7.0%) and Japanese (4.6%) commercials is insignificantly different (Table 2). The

images of role of female characters in these two countries' advertisings are similar. There is also no significant difference in the types of working roles between females and males in both countries (Tables 3 and 4). For example, the proportions of middle-level work of females in Japan and Thailand are 70.0% and 54.5%. In addition, these proportions of males also are in Japan and Thailand 37.5% and 22.7%.

The appearances of non - working roles of male and female main characters differ significantly between Japan and Thailand. The proportions of household role and recreation of Thai males (14.2% and 58.2%) are higher than Japanese males (3.8% and 42.3%). Additionally, the proportion of household role of females in Thailand (18.5%) is higher than in Japan (9.6%), while the proportion of recreation of females in Japan (42.1%) is higher than in Thailand (35.6%).

Table 2: Gender and Working Roles in Japanese and Thai Television Commercials

	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
	Japanese CM	Thai CM	Japanese CM	Thai CM
	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>	<i>n (%)</i>
Working roles	16 (9.3)	44 (24.7)	10 (4.6)	11 (7.0)
Non-working roles	156 (90.7)	134 (75.3)	209 (95.4)	146 (93.0)
Total	172 (100)	178 (100)	219 (100)	157 (100)

$P < .05$, (χ^2) Male= 14.420, $df = 1$; $P > .05$, (χ^2) Female= 1.497, $df = 1$

Table 3: Gender and Type of Work in Japanese and Thai Television Commercials

	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
	Japanese CM	Thai CM	Japanese CM	Thai CM
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)
High-level business	4 (25.0)	7 (15.9)	2 (20.0)	1 (9.1)
Middle-level business	6 (37.5)	10 (22.7)	7 (70.0)	6 (54.5)
Others	6 (37.5)	27 (61.4)	1 (10.0)	4 (36.4)
Total	16 (100)	44 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)

$P > .05$, (χ^2) Male= 2.704, $df = 2$; $P > .05$, (χ^2) Female= 2.168, $df = 2$

Table 4: Gender and Non-Working roles in Japanese and Thai Television Commercials

	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
	Japanese CM	Thai CM	Japanese CM	Thai CM
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)
Household role	6 (3.8)	19 (14.2)	20 (9.6)	27 (18.5)
Recreation	66 (42.3)	78 (58.2)	88 (42.1)	52 (35.6)
Product Introduction	84 (53.8)	37 (27.6)	101 (48.3)	67 (45.9)
Total	156 (100)	134 (100)	209 (100)	146 (100)

$P < .05$, (χ^2) Male= 24.488, $df = 2$; $P < .05$, (χ^2) Female=6.195, $df = 2$

Moreover, a difference between male and female roles in television commercials in each country still exists. The proportions of outside working males in Japan and Thailand (9.3% and 24.7%) are higher than those of females (4.6% and 7.0%). In contrast, the proportions

of household role females in Japan and Thailand (9.6% and 18.5%) are higher than those of males (3.8% and 14.2%). These research results show that the roles of male characters in both countries' advertisements are of outside "working" people, while the roles of female characters are those of a

“housewife” (Table 2 and 4). For instance, male characters appear dressed in suits and neckties in the work sphere, whereas female characters appear doing housework in the household sphere.

However, there is no significant difference of type of working role between males and females in both countries and type of non-working role in Japan (Table 3). For example, the proportions of high-level work of males and females in Japanese commercial are 25.0% and 20.0%. Additionally, the proportion of recreation role of males and females are similarly 42.3% and 42.1%. These results show the appearance of non-stereotyping image in term of type of working role in these two Asia commercials and type of non-working role in Japanese commercial.

In addition, the advertised product is significantly different between these two countries (Table 5). The proportions of middle and low involvement product in Thailand (34.4% and 36.0%) are higher than those in Japan (13.1% and 27.7%), while the proportions of high involvement product and service in Japan (30.8% and 28.4%) are higher than those in Thailand (16.3% and 13.3%). However, though the product type differs between these two countries, in each product type, there is no difference of the role of female character between Japan and Thailand and there is difference of the role of male character only in the middle involvement product. Therefore, the advertised product hardly affects to the difference of the role of main character in these two countries’ television commercials.

Table 5 : Type of advertised product in Japanese and Thai Television Commercials

	High involvement product <i>n</i> (%)	Middle involvement product <i>n</i> (%)	Low involvement product <i>n</i> (%)	Service <i>n</i> (%)	Total <i>n</i> (%)
Japan	143 (30.8)	61 (13.1)	129 (27.7)	132 (28.4)	465 (100.0)
Thailand	60 (16.3)	127 (34.4)	133 (36.0)	49 (13.3)	369 (100.0)
Total	203 (24.3)	188 (22.5)	262 (31.4)	181 (21.7)	834 (100.0)

$P < .05$, (χ^2) = 85.308, $df = 3$

4. Discussion

Most of the findings of this research are similar to previous results in the literature (Arima, 2003; Duff, 2003; Milner & Collins, 2000; Pongsapitaksanti, 2008; Sengupta, 1995; Sui & Au, 1997; Tan & Theng, 2002; Wolin, 2003) in terms of the gender of voice-over, gender and age of main character, and the roles of male and female characters. However, the results regarding gender with regard to working roles in both countries are different.

Though the proportions of working woman in Japanese and Thai societies differ, the proportions of working woman in television commercials in both countries do not differ (Figure 5). Television commercials in both countries utilize the image of a working male and housewife. Japanese advertisements portray an image of the Japanese woman with her family. On the other hand, though the proportion of working women in Thailand is very high, Thai advertisements reflect a trend of gender roles by constructing an ideal image

of the non-working woman and housewife in an urban area. Thus, this advertising and marketing process would marginalize the nearly 60% of Thai women who work in the agricultural sector.

Moreover, type of working role between males and females in both countries and type of non-working role in Japan do not differ. These research results suggest the new appearance of non-stereotyping gender image in term of type of working role in these two Asian commercials. In Japanese society, though the proportion of high-level working women is relatively low and the proportion in full-time housewife is relatively high in reality, the image of gender equality of type of working role in Japanese television commercial reflects the current policy of Japanese government to encourage and support Japanese women to work outside according to low proportion of labor population, influenced from the low birthrate and high proportion of aging population in super aging society in Japan.

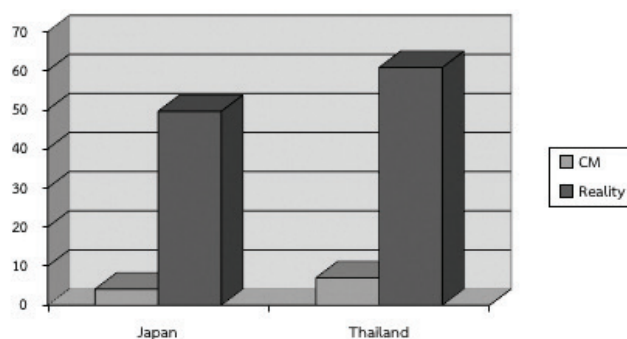


Figure 5: Proportion of working woman in television commercial and in reality

5. Conclusion

In summary, though the proportion of working women in Thailand is relatively higher than that of Japan, these proportions in Thai and Japanese commercials are insignificantly different. Therefore, this analysis refutes the conclusion that the roles of males and females in advertising correspond accurately to the construction of gender roles in reality. In contrast, advertisements reflect an ideal image of gender roles in society. Additionally, this research result reveals that the similarity of working roles between males and females in these both countries, showing the non-stereotyping gender image in Japan and Thailand.

Moreover, according to the trend of “being housewife” in Asian society, this research suggests further study to pursue the appearance of the housewife in television commercials in other Asian countries as well. This analysis also suggests that an understanding of the background and situation of gender roles in each society is crucial in interpreting and analyzing statistical results in this field.

6. Acknowledgement

This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 26780280, Grant-in-Aid for Young Scientists (B), The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan.



เอกสารอ้างอิง (References)

- [1] Arima, A. N. (2003). Gender stereotypes in Japanese television advertisements. *Sex Roles*, 49(1), 81-90.
- [2] Darley, W. K. & Smith, R. E. (1995). Gender differences in information processing strategies: An empirical test of the selectivity model in advertising response. *Journal of Advertising*, 24(1), 41-56.
- [3] Duff, Desiree (2003). Gender Role Portrayals in Prime-Time Television Commercials in Thailand. Retrieved from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p111925_index.html
- [4] International Labor Organization (2017), *Population and labor force*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilo.org/global/lang-en/index.htm>
- [5] Kotler, Philip (1991) *Marketing Management; Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- [6] Milner, L. M. & Collins, J. M. (2000). Sex-role portrayals and the gender of nations. *Journal of Advertising*, 29(1), 67-79.
- [7] Pongsapitaksanti, Piya (2008). Image of gender and working roles in Television Commercial: A Comparison of Japan and Thailand. *Sociology*, 52(3), 71-86. (in Japanese). ポンサピタックスанти・ピヤ「テレビ広告におけるジェンダーと労働役割—日本とタイの比較から—」『ソシオロジ』第52巻3号、2008年(71—86頁)。
- [8] Sengupta, S. (1995). The influence of culture on portrayals of women in television commercials: A comparison between the United States and Japan. *International Journal of Advertising*, 14(4), 314-333.
- [9] Siu, W.-s. Kai-ming Au, A. (1997). Women in advertising: A comparison of television advertisements in China and Singapore. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 15(5), 235-243.
- [10] Tan, T. T. W., Ling, L. B. & Theng, E. P. C. (2002). Gender-role portrayals in Malaysian and Singaporean television commercials: An international advertising perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 55(10), 853-861.
- [11] Wolin, L. D. (2003). Gender issues in advertising. *Journal of advertising research*, 43(1), 111-130.
- [12] Wongboonsin, Kua. (2004). The Demographic Dividend and M-Curve Labor Force Participation in Thailand, *Applied population and policy*, 1(2), 115-122. 『アジアにおけるジェンダーの比較研究—日本・韓国・中国・タイ・シンガポールを対象に』182-207。

ศาสตราจารย์ ดร.ปิยะ พงศาพิทักษ์สันติ

หน่วยงานผู้แต่ง : คณะสังคมวิทยา มหาวิทยาลัยเกียวโตซังเกียว

Professor Dr. Piya Pongsapitaksanti

Affiliation : Faculty of Sociology, Kyoto Sangyo University

Corresponding e-mail : piyatom@yahoo.com, piya@cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp