



How Emotions and Gender Stereotypes Shape Advertising Effectiveness.

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1. Abstract

Nowadays, people are exposed to large extent to advertisement, whether through online channels or printed ads. Due to such an exposure marketers try their best to encourage consumers to make a purchase. To obtain such a result, marketers apply several emotions in their ads to evoke a specific feeling in viewers. The range of emotions used in advertisement goes from humour to disgust, sadness or even shock. Moreover, very often gender stereotypes and portrayals are applied in advertisement, either as being reinforced or challenged. Those tactics can be successful, however it is relevant how are they are applied and if they are targeting specific gender, as women and men tend to react differently as they do not experience emotions in a same way and have different attitudes towards stereotypes. To understand what the difference between men and women is this paper uses an online questionnaire to analyse how consumers react to nine ads, using different emotions and stereotypes. Findings suggest that women experience stronger emotional reactions to all types of the emotions and are more sensitive towards stereotypes which affects their attitude towards the brand. On the other hand, results showed that men do not attribute high relevance to type of the emotion or stereotype but focus more on the product.

This research is a further contribution to analysis how genders are impacted by advertisement and its tools.

Keywords: gender, stereotypes, emotions, advertisement, gender portrayal

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2. Sumário

Atualmente, as pessoas estão amplamente expostas à publicidade, seja por canais online ou anúncios impressos. Diante dessa exposição, os profissionais de marketing fazem o possível para incentivar os consumidores a realizar compras. Para alcançar esse objetivo, utilizam várias emoções em seus anúncios para evocar sentimentos específicos nos consumidores. A gama de emoções empregadas na publicidade varia de humor a nojo, tristeza ou até mesmo choque. Além disso, os estereótipos de gênero e suas representações são frequentemente aplicados, seja para reforçá-los ou desafiá-los. Essas táticas podem ser bem-sucedidas, mas é essencial como elas são utilizadas e se têm como alvo um gênero específico, já que mulheres e homens tendem a reagir de forma diferente, vivenciam emoções de maneiras distintas e possuem atitudes variadas em relação aos estereótipos. Para entender a diferença entre homens e mulheres, este estudo utilizou um questionário online para analisar como os consumidores reagem a nove anúncios que exploram diferentes emoções e estereótipos. Os resultados sugerem que as mulheres apresentam reações emocionais mais fortes a todos os tipos de emoções e são mais sensíveis aos estereótipos, o que afeta sua atitude em relação à marca. Por outro lado, os homens atribuíram menor relevância ao tipo de emoção ou estereótipo, focando mais no produto.

Esta pesquisa é uma contribuição adicional para a análise de como os gêneros são impactados pela publicidade e suas ferramentas.

Palavras-chave: gênero, estereótipos, emoções, publicidade, representação de gênero

Título: Como as Emoções e os Estereótipos de Gênero Moldam a Eficácia da Publicidade

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4. AI disclaimer

AI tools were used to review the document for linguistic refinement and clarity.

5. Introduction

The goal of my research was to examine how marketers leverage emotional triggers in advertisement, in order to influence purchasing decisions of individuals. As emotions are widely used, I wanted to examine which emotions in particular drive consumers' behaviour the most. Additionally, I decided to focus on the possible differences arising between female and men, as both genders accordingly to research respond differently to emotive advertisement. The aim was to discover if there are any specific emotional tiggers that affect women more than men, and vice versa.

Furthermore, I aimed to explore the role of gender stereotypes in advertisement and evaluate how different genders react to them. The purpose was to discover how stereotypes make recipients feel and whether advertisers and marketers reinforce or challenge them.

The general objective is to gain a deeper understanding of relation between gender and marketing and explore the results of usage of emotions and stereotypes in various types of advertisement. Moreover, this research sheds the light on whether modern advertising perpetuates gender biases or moves towards more inclusive representation.

6. Literature Review

Gender stereotypes and portrayal in advertisement

Regarding the concept of gender, by the dictionary it is defined as **“a group of people in a society who share particular qualities or ways of behaving which that society associates with being male, female, or another identity”** (Cambridge dictionary | English dictionary, translations & thesaurus). Stereotypes, in turn, are defined as **“a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong”** (Stereotype | English meaning - Cambridge dictionary). Both of those concepts often occur together and are referred as: **“wildly shared beliefs about attributes supposed to differentiate men from women and, by doing so, naturalise the power inequality between the two, with women usually being constructed as subordinate to men.”** (Antoniou & Akrivos, 2020, p.4).

Reflecting on the literature on gender stereotypes and portrayals in marketing, it is notable that despite its significance, there is limited number of journals and research on this topic. Furthermore, the literature existing on this topic is predominantly based on European samples (Huhmann & Limbu, 2016, p.2).

To begin, it is important to understand the relation between gender and marketing. Gender can have a significant influence on the strategies of global marketing. Studies have shown that female and male prefer different types of marketing activities, which indicates that marketers should align specific service or product to the targeted gender (Ratten, 2017, p.115). The major emphasis is placed on female in marketing, due to their rising influence in spending habits. For instance, car dealers started to adjust their advertising to acknowledge female role in purchasing decisions (Ratten, 2017, p.118).

Nevertheless, as the concept of gender is constantly evolving, that makes companies re-evaluate and change the way how they portray genders in their campaigns. The researcher Vanessa Ratten concluded her work, that gender had and will continue to impact global marketing and that the development of the concept of gender depends on the social and cultural contexts (Ratten, 2017).

Nowadays, gender stereotyping in advertisement tends to revolve around gender traits and exaggerating and simplifying them. This practice often leads to human classification based on those traits occurring in advertisement. Those traits can be divided into four independent elements: physical appearance, personal characteristics (such as sensitivity or boldness), role

behaviour and occupational status (Antoniou & Akrivos, 2020). However, besides this identification of different elements, it is still not clear which specific stereotypes are the most problematic and harmful. The only major concern evolves around sexualisation and objectification of women. Additionally, advertisers should gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact that gender stereotyping has on the effectiveness and reception of advertising overall (Antoniou & Akrivos, 2020).

Portrayal of women and men in advertisement differs a lot. Most of the stereotypes used in ads are deeply ingrained in our culture and society: men tend to be portrayed as the head of the family, playing dominant role and being more competent, self-reliant and assertive, while women are portrayed as reliant on men, more sociable and open to people. Additionally, the emphasis on women's physical attractiveness is higher in advertisement (Kniazian, 2014). Particularly, we can identify seven female models that appear repeatedly in various advertisement. The first model identified is 'the model mother' where women are portrayed as the primary caretaker for children and home. This image is frequently exemplified through activities like cooking, cleaning and childcare. The second model, known as 'the passive little girl', illustrates little girls sitting with other girls and playing with dolls. According to this concept, boys can play more actively, while girls should be calmer. Moreover, frequently in ads applying this model, colour pink is dominating. Another model is 'the observed women', which portrays women as an object to be watched and comment on by male characters. 'The sexualised woman' builds on the prior model, by limiting the women's value to her sexual appeal or behaviour and ignoring other facets of her. Another model implies that women have nothing more to offer besides the beauty. Often in this kind of ads, women are presented as pretty faces that should accompany men. 'The magical grandmother' model refers to the portrayal of women above the age of 55. Women beyond this age are rarely included in advertising campaigns, and when they are, they are portrayed as charming and lovely grandmother figures, who are typically found in the kitchen cooking for their grandkids. The last model, 'the ticked box' refers to the ads that include women as the background figure, just to 'tick the box' for diversity (shEqual reference group, 2023).

It is crucial to remember that how gender is perceived changes throughout the time. The portrayal of women has improved and became more positive in comparison to earlier times. The feminist movement played a significant role in this, due to which we can view more advertisement that questions those models. However, we still need to be aware and pay attention to how the media perpetuates gender inequalities and stereotypes (Kniazian, 2014).

We can also observe different reactions and responses between males and females towards gender stereotypes and nudity in advertisement. The study of Huhmann and Limbu, aimed to measure the attitude towards it and assess the differences between reaction of females and males. Their conceptual model had been based on the belief that advertising depict women as being less capable and having less potential than men. Moreover, the assumption was that ads with gender stereotypes and nudity element are frequently offensive and irritating. According to their research, consumers believe that advertisement misrepresents both genders, which affects their perception of specific ads, companies and products, as well as their brand perception and purchase intention. Moreover, considering the gender division, the study showed that women evaluated more negatively the advertisement exploiting gender stereotypes or containing nudity, and find it less credible than men do. This leads to the conclusion that women show lower intention compared to men; to purchase a product from the brand, whose advertisement depict gender in a stereotypical manner (Huhmann & Limbu, 2016).

As proven by a study, consumers are willing to boycott brands, if there is a pay gap between their female and male workers. Pay gap refers to the condition when women are paid less for the same work as men and is viewed as unfairness in the workplace. This phenomenon relates to the stereotype that women are less competent as males in work, which is strongly associated with sexism. To tackle this issue, some of the countries introduced a new law that mandates firms to report the wages of their workers to the government. Since this information is publicly available, customers may see which company has a pay gap. Research done by Schlager et al. tested the consumers' reaction to such information. All participants were presented with the brand's merchandise; however, one group received the information on existing pay gap in the company while second group was not disclosed with this information. They were then asked to rate their likelihood of making a purchase from this brand. The analysis demonstrated that when information on pay gap was disclosed the willingness to purchase was lower than when the pay gap was not revealed. Additionally, research found that both genders had a negative reaction to existing pay gap, however women's response were particularly negative. Gender of participants played a significant role in this research, as it impacted how individuals perceive workplace fairness. Generally, women are more punitive in boycotting firms with pay gap in comparison to men. Women find this issue more relevant as it affects their gender, and they are more inclined to speak out against sexist behaviour. Further studies supporting this research, revealed that women are also more likely to talk on

social media (the research tested Twitter) about the gender pay gap and gender-related issues compared to men. The overall results demonstrate that consumers' purchase intentions are influenced by knowing if company pays their workers equally no matter their gender, particularly when it comes to female consumers (Schlager et al., 2021).

What is more, gender stereotypes not only affect individuals but also brands that identify with a particular gender (known as anthropomorphized brands). Accordingly, to the study, brands anthropomorphized as female are more strongly stereotyped than their male counterparts. When anthropomorphized brands engage in gender-incongruent behaviours, it is regarded by consumers as a breach of expectations. Specifically, consumer showed lower preferences for female brands associated with masculine traits, while male brands associated with feminine traits did not suffer similar negative impacts. Moreover, gender incongruent product features and brand extensions were perceived as a poor fit for female brands but not for male brands, demonstrating an uneven effect in consumer responses (Yang & Aggarwal, 2024).

An intriguing study also revealed that the level of stereotypes in advertisement varies depending whether the ads are published on private or public channel. What can be observed across both channels, is that women are more often subject of stereotyping, with the distinction that on public channels it is more about the role of woman and their occupation status, while on private channels it is more related with female behaviour and physical features (Grau & Zotos, 2016).

Accordingly, to Stefano Puntoni's research, relaying on stereotypical gender cues may lead to the reverse effect of what was anticipated. In his experiment Puntoni presented a group of women with the banners for cancer in which the colour pink predominated or asked them to write gender-related essay. Thereafter he asked women to rate, how likely in their opinion, they were to get a breast cancer or donate to fight against ovarian cancer. His findings showed the opposite what he had anticipated. Women, primed with the pink banners, presented lower belief in their likelihood of contracting breast cancer, compared to women who saw banners in more neutral colours. Additionally, only 42% of women who wrote the gender-related essay stated that they would contribute to ovarian cancer research, whereas 77% of women who wrote gender-neutral essay declared such willingness. As those finding occurred as surprising for Puntoni, he extended the research to assess the recollection of breast cancer banners. Once more, the findings showed that when advertisement was centred on female cues, only 33% of women could recall the ad. Conversely, when adverts were gender-neutral,

66% of women were able to recall it. This has a strong connection to the psychological concept of defensive responses. As pink is largely associated with femininity in our society, when it is used in breast cancer campaigns, women tend to feel triggered by the fact that it is directed at them and can happen to them, not other part of society. Although, it is not about the colour itself, it serves as a cue that women link with the threat of disease or even death (Puntoni, 2011).

However, consumer's perceptions about stereotyping may be less serious than imagined. Results show that by combining gender stereotypes and portrayals with humour, they are seen as less serious and more as a source of humour. Male stereotypes are more common in humorous ads, while female stereotypes are more prevalent in non-humorous ads. This points to the influence of other variables in determining the ultimate effects of stereotypes in advertising (Grau & Zotos, 2016). Furthermore, stereotypes in advertisement are frequently viewed as out of date and unrealistic in its representation of gender roles and family dynamics (Crush & Hollings, 2017).

Emotional appeal in advertisement

Emotions according to the definition of Cambridge dictionary is: “**a strong feeling such as love or anger, or strong feelings in general**” (Cambridge dictionary | English dictionary, translations & thesaurus).

The use of emotions in advertising and marketing has been long known and acknowledged. In practice, they are powerful and effective instrument for shaping consumer behaviour. Ads that play on emotions are twice as successful as those that appeal to rationality. This is primarily due to the creation of a deeper and more meaningful connection with the audience (McAlpin, 2023). It goes without saying that marketers are well aware of this and constantly play with our emotions. Customers frequently believe that their purchasing decisions are taken due to rational thinking, when in reality those decision are highly influenced by emotional factor. In fact, this is the primary factor that leads consumer to favour specific brand or product over other (Asghar & Zar, 2021). Brands are able to establish a long-lasting connection with the consumers through the usage of emotions in their advertising, as emotions arouse feeling of connection between consumer and brand, which foster the consumer loyalty and creates emotional engagement with the brand (Neurons HQ, 2023).

Emotional content is frequently more relevant than the product itself, as emotional factors in advertisement increases the consumers' needs and satisfy their cognitive status. According to a study, humour and fear are the two emotions that are most commonly used and are the most influential in advertisement. Humour tends to improve the viewer's mood, stimulate their observations and suggestions and positively impact customer purchasing behaviour. Therefore, it appears in approximately 35% of radio advertisement and 24% of television ads. Fear on the other hand, increases viewer's interest and engagement with the ad, and makes the ad more memorable. Especially, in advertisement that urge audience to change their habits, like stopping smoking or driving under the influence of alcohol, fear is a powerful tool. Marketers employ fear to first generate a sense of worry in consumers mind, and then provide them with the solution for that fear (Asghar & Zar, 2021).

Furthermore, negative emotions can also be applied in advertisement to achieve a positive effect. Feelings like anger or disgust, can be an effective instrument for achieving a particular outcome. One of the best examples is Always commercial, "Like a Girl", which despite evoking strong feelings of rage makes the female viewers feel proud and inspired (Forrester, 2024).

An intriguing study examined whether AI-generated ads had a comparable emotional score with copywriter-generated ads. The study of Januszkiewicz et al. aimed to compare the emotional level evoked by ads produced by AI versus humans. The researchers began with the assumption that the emotional score between the ads will be identical or very similar, therefore both will be equally effective. Five emotions: sadness, joy, fear, disgust and anger were examined. The findings revealed that the emotional appeal of advertisement generated by AI and human was highly comparable. Out of the five examined emotions, joy scored the lowest similarity in terms of effectiveness, while sadness achieved the highest level of similarity (Januszewicz et al., 2022). These results demonstrate AI's capacity to imitate human emotions and produce the same emotional appeal as humans.

Regarding emotions and their impact on a specific gender, it is commonly accepted that women have stronger reaction to emotive advertisement than men. However, recent studies revealed mixed findings in that regard. Based upon self-reports, women more frequently experience emotions compared to men, as they are more susceptible to their emotional states. Nonetheless, numerous studies have shown that both, men and women exhibit the same intensity of emotions like anger, happiness, guilt or disgust (Fisher et al., 2005). The point is

that women are more inclined to communicate their emotions, both verbally and nonverbally. In contrast, men present the tendency to stay more reluctant to their feelings, especially to those associated with vulnerability or weakness. This has been closely linked with what is perceived as appropriate and socially acceptable by men, therefore it is tied with the masculine stereotype. Therefore, men's emotional reaction is more authentic in private settings, rather than in public. This has implications on their purchasing behaviour as it has been observed that men note the decrescent of enjoyment of using a variety of products and services while taming their real feelings. Moreover, men are more likely to reveal their actual emotional response to advertisement in presence of the female partner rather than a male partner. On the contrary, women have been found to be expressive about their emotions, either low-agency emotions such as anxiety or high-agency emotions like anger or pride. Generally, women present greater freedom in showing their emotional reactions, no matter the type of emotion or setting (Fisher et al., 2005, p.851-852).

According to a different study, female viewers react more to ads that employ feeling of warmth and affection, while male viewers are more reactive towards ads using provocative and aggressive appeal. These patterns are ascribed, not only to biological factors, but in large extent to the societal factors, that resulted in women effortlessly expressing their emotions and men suppressing their emotions to sustain a strong social image (E. Tsihla et al., 2021, p.241). Consequently, men refrain from expressing enjoyment of advertisement that depicts warm emotions, when watching it in a presence of others. An investigation of Tsihla et al., confirmed that advertising containing scenes of authority, competitiveness and violence appealed more to men, while advertisement with warm appeal resonated with women, leading to the increased brand awareness and loyalty (E. Tsihla et al., 2021).

Unquestionably, emotions are a powerful tool used to increase brand recognition and trust. In order to influence and manipulate the consumer, marketers frequently utilise emotion of sadness to create the deep connection with the viewer or employ humour to resonate with audience or use disconcertment to inspire a particular course of action (Kasper, 2020). A study conducted at Elon University, by Richard Kasper examined the impact of those three emotions on women and men. The participants, who were university students, where presented with three advertisements, one for each of the following emotion: sadness, humour and disconcertment. Participants were asked to rate their impression of each ad, as well as the brand and their level of brand trust and assimilation. The findings revealed that women responded more favourably to sad ads in terms of their attitudes towards the ad and their

extent of brand trust. Men, however, presented a higher level of enjoyment and comprehension for the sad ad. On the contrary, the humorous ad noted the lowest scores in all the categories, and men had higher scores than women for each measure. Responses to the advertisement that applied disconcertment, were very similar for men and women. The level of enjoyment was quite low, however the level of brand trust was the highest out of the three ads, for both genders. It has been voted as the most comprehensive advertisement. Exploring those patterns, provides markets with valuable insight into how men and women respond to particular emotions in advertisement (Kasper, 2020).

7. Methodology

Participants and data collection procedures

To assess the impact of emotions and stereotypes in advertisement, I had conducted an experiment which involved exposing people to ads and evaluating their attitudes towards each ad, by answering to the questionnaire. I had selected nine ads from different brands and asked five questions per ad. Three of the advertisements employed gender stereotypes, while six used various emotional appeals such as fear, disgust, scare and humour.

The questionnaire was designed, and responses were collected using the Qualtrics platform and its tools. The survey was divided into eleven sections. The first block included demographic questions such as country of origin, age, and gender, while the final block addressed political affiliation. These questions were designed to explore potential reasons for variations in the responses and were always displayed as first and last, respectively. The remaining nine sections were constituted by chosen ads and the order of these blocks was randomized for each respondent. The questionnaire was distributed via an online link to individuals through communication channels such as text messages or social media platforms. Participation was optional, with the only requirement being proficiency in English, as the experiment was conducted in this language.

7.1 Methods sections

Stimuli material

The stimuli were selected in a way, that each of them presents something different, advertises different product and is presented visually differently from others. By choosing such a variety of stimuli I was able to assess the impact in a broader way. The aim was to get a better understanding on effect of different emotions (Kasper, 2020) and gender stereotypes on females and males. I had chosen following stimuli:

1. McDonald's

The first stimulus is McDonald's ad, from the campaign titled 'Sand, Tan, Bikini', published in Portugal, in July 2017 (TBWA, 2017). The ad presents an image of a woman, with the headline: "Summer Classis" to promote their ice cream desserts. The focal point of the ad is a zoomed image of a woman with a McFlurry dessert in her hand. The visual twist comes from the fact that her t-shirt is transparent due to the water, showing her bikini top. The ad

combines together a playful and sensual summer vibe by using elements of summer heat and refreshment to connect the McFlurry product with feelings of pleasure and relief from the warm weather and evoking a strong association with summer. The image of the ice cream with chocolate sauce together with the visual of a wet body, aims to strengthen the appeal of the dessert as a perfect treat for hot summer days. Moreover, the tagline "Summer Classics" reinforces the seasonal connection, suggesting that the McDonald's dessert is an essential part of enjoying summer in Portugal and connects the fast-food chain to the ideal summer experience.

I had chosen this stimulus, as in my opinion it reinforces the way that females are often portrayed in the media and marketing, using the objectification of a female body. With this ad I wanted to test how respondents feel about this kind of representation of a woman in the advertisement. I wanted to pay attention to the possible differences in responses between male and female, in order to see if this kind of image of the woman is more appealing to one group, then to the other, and also to see how women react to the female portrayal in this ad. This ad is a good choice for this experiment, as it can evoke emotional responses linked to the summer vibes, relaxing aspects and fun, but at the same time it can also be criticised for its suggestive imagery and reinforcing gender portrayal by focusing on the sexualized representation of the woman's body to sell the product.

2. L'Oréal

The second stimulus is from L'Oréal, a French cosmetic brand, launched in Belgium and the Netherlands in 2018. The ad was created, after L'Oréal together with McCann World group Deutschland conducted research showing that more than 90% of executive boards and management positions in Germany, are held by men. This result inspired French beauty company, to launch the ad for make-up cosmetics aimed at men, who are in position to hire women (Stych, 2019). It is stated very well and in a strong way, to whom the ad is directed to, as at the top of the ad the bold text reads: "THIS IS AN AD FOR MEN". Beneath, the subtext continues: "Hire more women in leadership roles. We're all worth it." The ad with just the text, makes a statement about gender inequality in the workplace, specifically addressing the issue of exclusion of women in the leadership positions. The ad features the image of the nail polish bottle that spills out a strong red colour across the page. The spilled nail polish creates the graph, with the timeline of a year and used markers of January, July and December. The timeline presents the theme of progress and innovation thank to hiring

more woman in the leadership positions. On the vertical “axe” of the graph we have statistics stating: “+20% patents with female leaders”. The statics is accompanied by the word innovation above the spilled nail polish, which reinforces the connection between the business success and female in leaderships.

I used this as stimulus, as it is unconventional by addressing the ad of the mainly female product to men and combines it with gender inequality and stand against the image of a woman in a society that is often duplicated in the advertisement. This ad shifts the focus from a product itself and addresses a broader social issue. By choosing this ad I wanted to measure the attitude towards ads that stand up against this traditional portrait of genders in marketing. To test how respondents who identify themselves as female react to this ad, and if there is any difference with the male respondents.

3. Ash

Another stimulus was the poster for the campaign of ASH (Action for Smoking & Health), created in April 2014 by Justin Hernandez (Hernandez, 2014). The ad employs striking visual aimed at raising the awareness of the harmful effects of having smoking parents or siblings. The imagine presents a Marlboro cigarette box filled with cigarettes in the shape of colourful crayons. Above the image, the headline reads: “Just like mommy” written in a childlike scrawl using a red crayon. Below, the text states: “Children whose parents or siblings smoke are ten times more likely to smoke than children living in a non-smoking household.” The message ends with the invite: “Visit www.ash.org to learn more about smoking and health.”

I selected this ad, as it uses a strong visual metaphor by combing the crayons - a symbol of childhood and creativity- with the box of Marlboro cigarettes which represents unhealthy addiction and harmful effects. This contrast creates an emotional impact, conveying the message that children tend to mimic behaviour of the adults around them. This had allowed me to measure if the use of powerful message motivates people to take action against smoking, and whether the visual metaphor induces feelings of scare or concern. Additionally, this ad enabled me to assess the effectiveness of combing two elements that represent different values and whether this technique generates an emotional response in the audience.

4. Monopoly

The third stimulus I included in the experiment comes from Monopoly campaign from 2022, launched in the Netherlands and Belgium. The campaign was created after research by Hasbro

revealed that eight out of ten people fight while playing a Monopoly board game (Hartzog, 2022). The campaign embraced this finding, stating that fighting in the right circumstances and settings - such as during a Monopoly game - can be a positive experience, helping people to learn how to express their emotions constructively. The specific ad I selected from this campaign, features a young boy captured in the moment of screaming, with his fist clenched as he is about to hit the table in front of him (or has already done it), which has a Monopoly game laid out on it. The boy's facial expression vividly captures intense frustration, with the headline laces above the boy: "FOR LEARNING HOW TO CALM DOWN". Above the text the Monopoly logo is displayed.

I chose this ad as it combines humour with frustration and accurately mirrors the common emotional response that people have while playing the game. My aim was to test whether using relatable emotions like humour and anger or frustration in add is seen as an effective way to communicate the brand's message. It also allowed me to measure whether this approach, which taps into players' real emotions during the game, resonates with the audience and encourages them to purchase the product.

5. Export Dry

The following stimulus is from the New Zealand beer company, Export Dry. Specifically, one of the ads from their March 2012 campaign titled 'Shame, Idiot, Bevan' was presented to the participants of the experiment (Colenso BBDO, 2012). The ad is visually divided into two parts. In the upper part, a man is pictured sniffing a glass of red wine, suggesting that he is trying to assess the taste and aroma of the drink. Below the image, on the left side, the headline reads: "SMELLS LIKE YOU'RE AN IDIOT." To the right of the headline, the small text reads: "What do you hope to smell there, sir? Gooseberry? You don't even Know what gooseberries smell like. Perhaps next time instead of playing pretend, you should ask for an Export Dry. Crisp and refreshing but still full of flavour, Export Dry is a sophisticated lager that tastes incredible and smells like beer. So what are you waiting for? Oh, ok, well how long do you think that will take?". At the bottom, a visual shows a full beer glass alongside a bottle of Export Dry beer with the tagline: "LET NOTHING COME BETWEEN A MAN AND A GREAT BEER".

This ad plays on the gender stereotype, portraying beer as a predominantly masculine beverage and wine as a feminine drink. This implication is supported by the text that ridicules the man for trying to analyse the wine. Moreover, the line: "So what are you waiting for? Oh,

ok, well how long do you think that will take?” could be interpreted as the man is waiting for his female partner, who took him for wine drinking. The sentence suggesting that nothing should come between the man and the beer, may be an allusion that it was not his personal choice for the drink.

I selected this stimulus to explore viewers’ perception of gender stereotypes in advertising. The ad uses humour and sarcasm to reinforce the stereotype that ‘real men’ drink beer and are unconcerned with complex wine aromas. I aimed to examine if female and male respondents reacted differently to the stereotype in the ad, and whether any gender was irritated by it. Additionally, I wanted to measure whether the ‘real man’ stereotype encouraged the male viewers to buy the beer product.

6. Transport for London

The following stimulus was selected from the 2012 campaign for Transport of London, dedicated to the teenager’s road safety (M&C Saatchi, 2012). The ad presented a sombre and emotional image of a young dead girl that has been struck by a car. She is lying motionless on the road, holding her travel card in her hand, with her eyes wide open, seemingly staring directly at the viewer. It appears that she is wearing a school uniform, suggesting that she was either going to or coming from school. Above the image, the headline is divided into three sections, each written in a different colour, respectively in white, grey, yellow: “My friend saw her bus”, “She didn’t see the car”, “STOP. THINK. LIVE.”. The ad conveys a very clear message about the danger of not paying attention while crossing the road, like hurrying to catch the bus and not looking around before crossing the road. Usage of strong visual and verbal cues highlights the serious consequences of careless crossing of the road with the text emphasising the momentary lapse in attention and the image illustrating the fatal consequences of it.

I chose to include this stimulus in the experiment, as it is an excellent example of using strong emotional imagery, particularly one associated with the death to address public safety of teenagers. My objective in using this ad was to gain insight into how the concept of death affects viewers. More specifically, I aimed to examine if it prompts people to be more cautious while participating in road traffic, either as drivers or pedestrians. Moreover, the ad has been selected to measure the impact of fear-based messaging in advertisement.

7. Nutella

The next stimulus selected for this experiment was created by TheSmithLab for Nutella. The ad was part of the project by Behnace – a creative platform for artist to showcase their work. The objective was to design a hand drawn advertisement for a candy or a sweet (The Smith Lab, 2015). This Nutella ad is very simple, featuring the phrase: “PLEASE DO NOT LICK” written with Nutella spread across the whole page. Below this playful text, there is a small image of a Nutella jar, along with knife smeared with Nutella, as if it had been used to write the text above. The humorous message, warning viewers not to lick the page, implies that Nutella spread is so irresistible and delicious that people want to taste it even when it is used as ‘paint’. This playful and light-hearted approach aligns well with brand’s image, as fun and tasty treat enjoyed by families.

I selected this stimulus for its ability to engage with the sensory imagination of viewers, which allowed me to measure the influence of creating the ad only featuring the product itself, on viewers’ cravings of the product and desire to purchase it. Moreover, the ad provided me with a chance to explore the effectiveness of humour as a tool in advertising. By playing with both the visual and verbal cues, I was able to test the effectiveness of this combination in capturing attention and prompting a response from the audience.

8. Blend-a-Med

This stimulus from Blend-a-Med was picked from the campaign launched in 2010 in Hungary (Galácz, 2011). The campaign’s overarching aim was to demonstrate that after using brand’s toothpaste, people simply cannot stop smiling, regardless of what they are doing or of the circumstances. This particular ad features the image of the bleak funeral scene, where a group of mourners, dressed entirely in black, looking upset and clearly grieving. However, in the very middle of the group stands a young woman widely smiling and showing her bright white teeth. At the bottom right corner of the image, the tagline reads: “You can’t help but smile” accompanied by the picture of a tube of Blend-a-Med toothpaste. The ad plays on the idea that their product is so effective and good for your teeth that it compels you to smile all the time, including inappropriate moments such during a funeral. The ad by using the contrast between sorrow setting and bright smile, creates a visual juxtaposition, which immediately captures viewers’ attention. Moreover, it plays with the irony and humour. However, the choice of a funeral settings for a toothpaste commercial can come across as a bit shocking.

Precisely for this unconventional nature, the ad can be successful, as it will be more likely to be memorized by the viewers and create a lasting impression.

The stimulus provided me with the opportunity to examine effectiveness of bold advertising strategies. I aimed to investigate whether people found this type of advertisement appealing, and whether it encouraged them to purchase from Blend-a-Med. Additionally, I was able to measure if this kind of contrast shocked people and how does it impact their understanding of the message of the company.

9. Burger King

The last stimulus originates from the fast-food chain Burger King and was published in Sweden in February 2020 (Team, 2020). The ad presents the well-known burger Whopper in a decayed state after 32 days, visibly covered in mould. Among the ingredients of the burger, near the top of the image, the small text states: “The Whooper DAY 32”. At the bottom, the Burger King logo is displayed alongside the sentence: “THE BEAUTY OF NO ARTIFICIAL PRESERVATIVES”. The ad is intended to promote that despite Burger King being a fast-food chain, they are committed to the quality of its products by emphasising the absence of artificial ingredients, proven by the image of the decayed Whopper sandwich. Such a strong and unfiltered visual conveys the message that Burger King prioritizes its customers health by real and fresh ingredients. The ad interestingly uses the emotion of disgust, that typically is an unpleasant feeling, as means to highlight a positive message, namely the absence of preservatives in their food.

By selecting this stimulus to the experiment, I aimed to explore the impact of such a juxtaposition on people, by investigating whether viewers perceive this ad as an effective way of conveying the intended message or not. Additionally, this advertisement allowed me to assess whether the use of such a real and strong image provokes an emotional response from the audience.

Measures and questions

The first block of question contained three demographic questions:

1. “*Where are you from? (country)*” The purpose of this question was to determine whether respondents from the same nations share a similar pattern of responses. This enabled me to assess if the country of origin and cultural background influences how

individuals respond to stereotypes and emotions in advertisement. Given that marketing and advertisement varies from country to country, it is a crucial component to determine where the responders are from. Moreover, gender stereotypes vary by country, which may have an impact on answers. The same applies for emotions, as cultural differences may affect how an emotive advertisement is perceived.

2. “*What is your gender?*” (Asghar & Zar, 2021). Respondents were given three choices to answer to this question: *Female, Male, Prefer not to say*. This question was crucial to ask, since the goal of the experiment was to investigate how different genders react to advertisement featuring gender stereotypes and emotions. This allowed me to determine whether certain gender shared a pattern of responses.
3. “*How old are you?*” The purpose of this block’s final question was to categorise the respondents by age. Five groups were given to the individuals to select from: *below 18, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45 and above*. This information enabled me to examine whether the age impacts viewer’s perception of emotive and stereotypical advertisement.

The last block of question, contained only one question related to the political orientation:

1. “*What is your political orientation?*” The respondents were asked to assignee themselves to a particular political group: *far right, right wing, center, left wing, far left, no party affiliation, prefer not to say*. The aim was to evaluate if political orientation influences the way individuals react to gender stereotypical and emotive advertisement.

After careful selection of stimuli, I formulated the questions that would resonate with the ads. All the questions were designed to assess individual’s attitude towards the stimuli and the brand for which it was produced. Three questions were repeated for each ad, while the two questions varied between ads that employed emotional appeals and those that used stereotypes. The order of questions was repeated for each ad.

1. The first question was: “*On the scale of 1 to 7, how appropriate do you find this ad?*” (adopted Fisher et al., 2005). Respondents were able to indicate whether they perceive the ad inappropriate - 1 at the scale, or very appropriate - 7 on the scale. The purpose of this question was to analyse if the use of specific emotions or the reinforcement or

challenge of stereotypes is considered as a suitable choice or not. Moreover, this information contributes to a deeper understanding of audience perceptions on the ad, by analysing further questions.

2. The following question was: “*On a scale of 1 to 7, how much did this ad make you want to buy something from this company?*” (adopted from Schlager et al., 2021). The goal here was to determine, whether respondents felt a need or desire to buy from the company after viewing their ad. By evaluating the respondent’s level of willingness to purchase from the brand, I was able to assess the effectiveness of the advertisement in terms of driving product sales. Respondents rated their willingness to buy on the scale, where 1 indicated that the ad did not make them want to buy from the company at all, while 7 indicated the strong desire to buy.

For two specific ads – Ash and Transportation for London- the question was adjusted since these two campaigns were designed to promote specific actions, rather than to sell a product. For the Ash ad, the question was modified to: “*On a scale of 1 to 7, how much did this ad motivate you to take action against smoking?*” (adopted from Kim et al., 2023). While for the Transpiration for London ad, it was rephrased: “*On a scale of 1 to 7, how much did this ad make you pay more attention when crossing the road?*”. By altering the question for these two ads, I could assess, the strength of the message conveyed and determine whether it prompted the respondents to take action towards the intended goal of the campaign.

3. The third question was: “*Which specific element of the ad most triggered your response?*” (based on DashClicks Team, 2023). The respondents were presented with four options to choose from: *the text, the image, both, neither*. The aim of this question was to understand which component of the advertisement evoked the strongest reaction from the participant. This gives a valuable insight into which parts of the ad resonates the most with the viewers and contributes to its overall effectiveness. Additionally, this question allows for a deeper exploration of how different elements of advertising appeal to various demographic groups, shedding light on the nuances of consumer behaviour and preferences.

The final two questions in a sequence, varied based on whether the ad focused on emotions or stereotypes. The distinction in questioning enabled me to gain better understanding of how

these two approaches function in advertising. Moreover, it allowed me to gain a more specific assessment of the ads' impact on viewers.

For the three advertisements - McDonald's, L'Oréal and Dry Export - that used the stereotypes, the questions were as followed:

4. *“Do you feel irritation while looking at this ad?”* (adopted from Huhmann & Limbu, 2016). Respondent evaluated his or her level of irritation on the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 indicated no irritation at all and 7 indicated a high level of irritation. I formulated this question to assess whether the portrayal of genders and the use of gender stereotypes in the ad evokes feelings of irritation or some levels of anger among viewers. By examining these responses, I aimed to understand the extent to which individuals react negatively to specific gender representations in advertisements. This question provides valuable insights into the participants' attitudes toward stereotypes, helping to highlight potential discomfort or dissatisfaction with how certain genders are presented in advertising. Ultimately, it contributes to a broader understanding of how gender portrayals can influence audience perceptions and emotional responses.

5. *“Do you think this ad reinforces or challenges gender stereotypes and how genders are portrayed?”* (based on research of Crush & Hollings, 2017). Respondents were given four options to choose from: *reinforces, challenges, neither, both*. The purpose of the question was to analyse how viewers perceive the application of gender portrayals and stereotypes in the advertisement and to determine whether they even recognise such element at all. Furthermore, I aimed to emphasize the differences in perception based on gender-specifically, how the gender being depicted in the stereotype responds compared to how the opposite gender perceives it. Moreover, together with the question 4, it provides valuable insights into whether reinforcing or challenging stereotypes contributes to the viewers higher level of irritation. By understanding these dynamics, I can better assess the overall impact of gender representation in advertising and its emotional effects on different audiences.

Whereas, for the six advertisements - Ash, Monopoly, Transport of London, Nutella, Blend-a-Med and Burger King - that used emotions, the questions were as followed:

4. *“Did you feel [name of the emotion] while looking at this ad?”* (adopted from Tsuchi, 2021). Since the advertisements elicited different emotions, this question was tailored for each ad by substituting the name of the emotion. The question referenced “scare” for Ash and Transport of London, “shock” for Blend-a-Med, “disgust” for Burger King and “humour” for Nutella and Monopoly, with the latter being phrased as: *“Did you find this ad humorous?”*. The selection of each emotion was based on my interpretation of the ad and my assumption about the emotional response it might provoke in viewers. Respondents assessed the degree to which they felt each specific emotion on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing “not at all” and 7 representing “very much”. This question aimed to provide a better understanding of the extent to which the ad elicits the specified emotion, enabling me to compare the impact of different emotions on viewers. Ultimately, this analysis contributes to understanding which emotions are most effective in advertising and how they resonate with the audience.

5. *“On a scale of 1 to 7, how effectively do you think this ad communicates the company's message?”* (adopted from Astre, 2022). This last question sought to evaluate how well viewers believed that the ad conveyed the company’s message. By selecting 1, respondents indicated that they found the ad as ineffective in conveying the message, while a selection of 7 signified that they found it very effective. This question allowed me to better understand whether the emotion used were perceived as appropriate for effectively communicating the intended message or not.

Limitations

While collecting the responses, I had considered the possibility of one limitation. The fact that the stimuli were in English, which was not the mother tongue of practically all the respondents, might have affected the participant’s answers. Even if the respondents are proficient in English, this may still impact their perception and understanding of the stimuli. Cross-cultural communication research suggests that advertisement in person’s second language may be harder to process as the conceptual links may be harder to make, making the ad less memorable. Furthermore, some of the words are interpreted with greater emotional or meaningful connection, when presented in native tongue. This may cause the respondent to create different associations for the same message (Noriega & Blair, 2008).

7.2 Hypothesis

During the creation of the experiment and selecting the ads, I developed a few hypotheses based on researches, personal expectations, perceptions and experience. Those hypotheses were developed before the collection of the responses, and I had tested them with the results of the experiment.

Women exhibit higher level of irritation and show higher level of sensitivity to gender stereotypes, in comparison to men. Women tend to be targets of stereotypes more often than men. As a result, stereotypes are perceived more offensively by females and makes them more sensitive to the reinforcement of gender stereotypes. Specifically, L'Oréal advertisement is viewed more favourably by women, as for the majority the ad challenges gender stereotypes and portrayals.

Women assigned higher scores for the intensity of the emotions felt, as generally women have stronger immediate emotional reactions. The fear-based ads are the most effective in conveying its objectives, therefore the ads by Ash and Transportation for London, are the most powerful in altering viewers behaviour.

Moreover, the country of origin influences how men and women interpret use of various emotions and stereotypes in advertisement. This relates to the degree to which gender norms and roles are culturally accepted and expected and which gender stereotypes and portrayals are common in a specific country.

8. Analysis of the results

The experiment's results were analysed using reports from the Qualtrics platform and the SPSS software tools. The data was easily and directly exported from Qualtrics to SPSS, providing the accurate information collected in the experiment.

The 7-point Likert scale, with 1 being the lowest number and 7 the highest, was used to calculate all averages. Additionally, I described one survey respondent using the terms answer, reply, vote, and reaction in the analysis.

Demographic questions

I had collected the total of 230 responses. The majority of the respondents came from Poland - 184, followed by Italy - 21 and Germany - 9. The excess of respondents from Poland could be explained by the fact that it is the country of my origin. Then, I received replies from countries such as Portugal, Australia, Great Britain, Ukraine, The United States of America, Bulgaria, Serbia, Belgium, Netherlands and Pakistan.

160 replies were given by female respondents, posing for 70% of total number of respondents. Then 63 responses were given by men, posing for 27% and 7 respondents preferred not to share their gender (3%).

Most of the respondents, were aged from 18 to 24 years old, posing for 60% (138 respondents). The second largest group pose for 24%, was aged between 25-34 (17 respondents). Subsequently, 6% (14 respondents) were aged below 18 and 3% (6 respondents) were classified 45 and above years old.

For the political orientation, most of the respondents classified themselves for the right wing, 51 respondents, posing for 31% of answers. Followingly, 33 respondents (20%) claimed not to have party affiliation and 29 of respondents (17%) preferred not to say. Then, 25 respondents (15%) stated to belong to the center and 23 (14%) to the left wing. The two smallest groups were far left 3% (3 respondents) and far right 1% (2 respondents).

Stimuli

1. McDonald's

Based on 183 responses, the McDonald's advertisement was perceived as rather inappropriate, with the mean of 3,45 on a 7-point Likert scale. In the matter of how men and women reacted to this ad, males on average rated the appropriateness of the ad on 3,78, while women rated it for 3,28.

Out of 183 replies, 145 which is 80% of individuals voted on the image to be the most tiggering for their feelings towards the ad. These findings were also true for both sexes, demonstrating that the image was without a doubt the primary cause of the emotive reaction to the advertisement.

People were generally mildly irritated by this ad, as indicated by the mean of 3,85. Looking at different gender responses, women's average level of annoyance was 4,33, while men's was 2,76.

Regarding the perception of gender stereotypes in this advert, 35% of the respondents (63 individuals) stated that the ad reinforces stereotypes, whereas 31% of respondents (57 individuals), stated that it neither challenges nor reinforces them. The third most often selected answer, with 24% of all responses (43 individuals), was that the advert both challenges and reinforces gender stereotypes. The least selected answer was "challenges" as it was selected by the 10% of the respondents (19 individuals).

2. L'Oréal

The second stimuli based on 178 responses was deemed to be sufficiently appropriate with the mean of 4,30 and with most of the responses falling between point 4 and 7 on the Likert scale: 33 votes at point 4 and 5, 28 at point 6 and 27 and point 7. Those findings suggest that the advert was mainly rated as being between moderately to extremely appropriate. On average, men rated the appropriateness for 3,88, while women gave it a rating of 4,52.

On average the ad did not arouse a strong demand to buy from the brand, as the average desire was 3,38. Moreover, the most frequently selected point at the scale was point 1 (43 answers), indicating that individuals did not want to make a purchase at all, after viewing the ad. Men's desire was particularly low, with the mean of 2,31 and the majority of votes positioned at point 1 of the scale. This could be related to the fact that L'Oréal sells cosmetics

that men are generally not interested in purchasing. In contrast, women rated their desire for the purchase at 3,81 with point number 5 being the most often chosen response.

Regarding a specific component of the ad, 46% of respondents (81 respondents) chose the text as the element triggering their emotional response. Furthermore, it has been intriguing to observe that men and women shared the same attitudes regarding the emotional triggers.

The respondents' average level of irritation was 3,12, indicating that they did not find the advertisement particularly annoying. Out of 178 answers, the biggest number of 57 was allocated at point 1 at scale suggesting that most people did not find the advert annoying. The remaining responses were spread evenly along the scale. On average, females presented less annoyance (mean of 2,89), compared to men (mean of 3,55).

Whether the ad reinforces, or challenges gender stereotypes has not been made unambiguous as the answers were split evenly. According to 52 respondents (29%) the ad challenges stereotypes, 51 respondents (29%) believe it does both, 38 respondents (21%) believe it reinforces them, and 37 respondents (21%) think it does neither.

3. Ash

The anti-smoking campaign has been highly appropriate, with the average of 5 based on 178 replies. Generally, points 4-7 attracted the most responses, indicating the ad was found largely appropriate. On average, men thought this advert was more appropriate than women, although for both genders it was mid-high level appropriate. Men rated its appropriateness on 5,12 and female at 4,96.

The ad encouraged respondents on a mid-effect level to take action against smoking, given that the average was 4,35. The majority of the votes fell between points 3 and 7, indicating that the advertisement's overall impact on individuals was between moderate and strong. The average for females was 4,39, while the average for males was 4,25, indicating that females were marginally more motivated than males to take action against smoking.

For this stimulus, individuals found that the combination of the text and image were the most triggering, as 44% of respondents (77 answers) claimed so and 35% of respondents (62 answers) selected only the text. Moreover, both text and the image were found to be the most emotionally eliciting for both sexes. Furthermore, the language itself ranked as the second-

largest trigger, indicating that the ad's words had the greatest influence on the viewers' emotions.

Surprisingly to me, the ad did not evoke a strong feeling of scare, as the average score was 3,04. The number of answers placed on the scale, were decreasing, showing that most people felt scared from low to mid-levels. In fact, the point 1 received the most (46) answers. Women presented a higher average level of fear, with the mean equal to 3,07, while the average for male respondents was 2,90. The majority of the respondents, both male and female selected point 1 of the Likert scale while assessing how scared they felt.

The ad has been found as rather effective in conveying its message, as the average of all responses was 5,08. Here, I found an increasing pattern, which indicates that as the number of points increased, so did the number of responders who placed themselves on the scale. Both sexes rated ad as very effective, with women presenting slightly higher average. The majority of female respondents selected point 7 and in general the mean was 5,21. Male respondents placed the largest group of votes at point 5 and presented the average of 4,87.

4. Monopoly

Based on 180 responses, the Monopoly stimulus was deemed to be fairly acceptable, with the mean of 4,45. The biggest groups of respondents were gathered at point 4 and 5. This ad had been found more appropriate by men, as their mean was 4,70 and for women it was 4,34.

The degree of desire to purchase from the company was rated slightly below the middle, with the mean equal to 3,60 and with the largest group positioned at point 4. Men rated their desire to purchase at 3,55 and most of their votes were spread in the first half of the scale. On average, women rated their desire at 3,64 and allocated their answers in a manner similar to men.

The image with the text was chosen as the most emotionally triggering element of the ad, with 81 replies (45% of total answers). With 63 replies (35%), the image itself was selected as the second most triggering part of the ad. The text was selected by only 9 respondents (11%), and 16 times (9%), “none” was selected. Both genders, replicated the same pattern in their replies.

The advert can be regarded as humours with the mean of 4,58 and with the majority of replies falling into three last points of the scale –5 (37 answers), 6 (36 answers) and 7 (35 answers), which can be concluded that people viewed it as funny. The mean score for men

was 4,91, showing that they considered ad as humorous, also as most of their votes were placed at the bottom three points of the scale. The mean for females was equal to 4,47, and the answers also accumulated at the last part of the scale. However, a considerable number of replies were placed at point 1, showing that big group of females did not find this ad humours at all.

Respondents found that the message was rather effectively communicated, as on average it had been rated for 4,15. Men and women evaluated the advert's effectiveness very similarly, with men's average of 4,17 and women's average of 4,16. However, the distribution of their answers differ. The most frequently selected point of the scale for women was point number 6, while for men the most chosen point was point 4.

5. The Export Dry

Based on 178 responses, the average appropriateness of the beer ad was rated at 3,62. Men had found this ad more acceptable than women, with the mean for men of 4,15 and the mean for women of 3,39. The majority of women rated the ad as rather inappropriate, as their answers were merely placed at the first half of the Likert scale, with point 2 being the most often selected answer (26 out of 122 respondents). Furthermore, we can see that the number of votes for women's responses decreases as the scale number increases. For men, on the other hand, the most frequently selected points were 2 and 5, and the majority of votes allocated at the second part of the Likert scale. This shows that men evaluated the ad as mid-level to very appropriate.

The advert noted a very low score in creating a need for a purchase, as on average respondents rated it at 2,63. Point 1 and 2 collected the majority of votes (113 out of 178). Women with a mean of 2,24 and most of the answers falling into first two point (1 and 2). Men, on the other hand showed a higher level of desire with the mean of 3,48.

The text was chosen as the emotional trigger for the respondent's reaction by 89 respondents (50%). 59 of individuals selected both (33%), 17 only the image (10%) and 13 none (7%). In this instance, there is no discernible gender difference because both male and female votes followed the overall response trend.

The average level of irritation was placed at 3,93 with the answers split rather equally across the Likert scale, indicating that respondents found the ad to be anywhere from not irritating at

all to extremely irritating. On average, women had higher levels of irritation compared to men. The female mean was 4,36, while the male mean was 3,06.

The largest proportion of respondents - 37%, 65 answers, stated that the gender stereotypes in this ad are neither challenged nor reinforced. With 58 answers (33%), the second most often selected response was that it reinforces.

6. The Transportation for London

Based on 177 responses, the campaign of road safety had been evaluated on average of 4,75 in its appropriateness. Point 4, has been the most frequently selected (52 answers). Both, men and women generally found the ad as acceptable. Female mean was 4,66 and the most often chosen point was point 4 (34 answers). The mean for men was slightly higher, at 5,04 and point 4 (18 answers) and 7 (15 answers) receiving the majority of their votes.

The ad has been found as effective in encouraging people to pay more attention when crossing the road, with the mean of 4,98. Number 5 was the most commonly chosen point (44 answers) and in total 117 answers were allocated to the three last points of the scale (point 5, 6 and 7). The general pattern had been substantially altered by the responses of both men and women. The average was 5,07 for females and 4,90 for males and both genders placed the majority of their answers from point 5 onwards.

The majority of respondents, 83 (47%), found the combination of the text and image as the most triggering for their emotive response, and 68 respondents (39%) chose just the image. Both sexes, replicated the general pattern, as both men and women responded most strongly to the image with the text: 48% of female respondents and 47% of male respondents.

Respondents found the ad to evoke feeling of scare to the medium extent, as shown by the mean of 3,80 and point 3 and 4 accumulated the majority of the answers (83). The mean for women was 3,90 and for men 3,49, with the most often voted point for both genders were 3 and 4. This indicates that the level of fear was mild for both.

On average, the ad has been perceived as effective in conveying its message, with the mean of 5,28. Most of the votes fell between point 5 and 7 (being the most often selected point). The mean score for men and women was 5,33 and 5,31, respectively. Answers from both sexes, were low for the points 1, 2 and 3, which indicates that little respondents evaluated the message to be ineffectual.

7. Nutella

The Nutella stimulus, based on 178 responses was rated at 4,90. With a female mean of 4,80 and a male mean of 5,11, the advertisement was generally deemed suitable for both sexes, with the point 6 and 7 being the most often selected points.

The average desire to purchase Nutella after seeing this ad was rated at 4,02 and point number 5 was the most frequently selected point of the scale (41 answers). The mean for female was 4,13 and the most answers were placed at number 5. The mean for men was equal to 3,72 and the most voted placed at point number 6.

The text has been selected as the most triggering for the emotions, as 44% of respondents (83 individuals) claimed so. Also, both genders found the text as the most triggering element of the advertisement.

The ad was given an average rating of 4,70 for its humour. The most frequently selected points were 6 and 7, with both receiving 40 answers. Women rated the ad for 4,72 for its humour and most of their votes fell between points 5-7. Based on the overall distribution of answers, men found this ad to be less humorous, with the mean of 4,64 and the most frequently selected point 6.

The effectiveness of communicating the message was rated at 4,35 and point 5 was the most often selected point (36 answers). The distinction between men and women is evident in this instance. Women gave this advertisement an average rating of 4,52, while males gave it an average rating of 3,98. The majority of female answers fell into the second part of the scale and the most frequent answer was point 7, showing that women found the ad as very humours. On the contrary, men's votes were spread more equally along the scale with point 5 being the most often selected.

8. Blend-a-Med

The appropriateness of the toothpaste's ad has been rated at 3,03 from the average of 179 responses. Men perceived the ad slightly more appropriate than women, as their mean was 3,25 and for women 2,94. Point 4 was the most often selected by men and point 1 by women.

The ad did not much compel viewers to buy from the brand, as on average desire was rated at 2,98 with the largest group being placed at point 1 (66 answers). Men felt more inclined for

the purchase, with the average of 3,42, however the most frequent point was point 1. Women presented lower average of 2,77 and point 1, also being the most often selected.

With 84 people choosing the image (47%), it turns out to be the greatest trigger for the respondents' emotion. Then, 65 people (37%) voted for the image with the text as their trigger. Regarding the ad's emotional triggers, there were no gender-specific variances. The answers that were recorded for all respondents were the same for both men and women, indicating that the image was the most triggering aspect of the ad.

Respondents rated the extent to which they felt shocked for 3,89. Women on average experienced shock more than men, with female mean being 4,26 and male 3,09. The difference comes from the allocation of the votes on the scale, as women placed most votes on the second half of the scale, and men on the first part.

The average rating for this advertisement's communication effectiveness is 3,55. Men rated the communication of the message higher than women. Men's mean was 4,06 and points 4 and 5 being most often selected (12 answers each). On the contrary, women rated it for 3,33 and most frequently selected was point 1 (28 answers).

9. Burger King

The appropriateness of the Burger King stimuli was rated at 3,45 based on 183 replies. Respondents most frequently selected point 1 (46 answers), the second most common answer was at point 2 (33 answers) and the remaining answers split along the scale. Women rated the acceptance of the ad for 3,40, while men for 3,56. Point 1 has been the most often selected by women (35 answers), for men, point 2 was the most often chosen answer (14 answers).

The ad had a low rating for creating a desire to purchase from the company, as the mean was 2,19. Point 1 dominated other points of the scale and collected 102 answers (56%). Similar results were presented by women and men. For both sexes, point 1 was the most often selected point that had been dominating over the other points. Men distributed 75% of their votes between point 1 (50%) and point 2 (25%), and 58% of women selected point 1.

There has been a significant discrepancy in the responses regarding the factor that triggered the viewers' emotional response. The image was selected as the trigger by 78% of respondents (143 respondents). Both sexes, selected the image as the main trigger for their emotions, with 77% of women stating so, and 81% of men.

On average, the level of disgust was rated at 5,04 with point 7 being the most frequently chosen option (59 answers). Women, on average rated disgust higher than men, with the female mean of 5,25 and male mean of 4,50. Furthermore, when it came to the distribution of votes, women showed the highest degree of disgust, with most votes going to points 6 and 7. On the contrary, point 5 was the most often selected point with 31% of male's votes.

The effectiveness of communicating the message was rated for 3,53, with points 1 and 2 being the most frequently options (38 and 37 answers, respectively). This advert had done a little better job of conveying the company's message to males than to women, as the average for men was 3,73, while the average for women was 3,44.

Feedback from respondents

During the survey distribution and response collection processes, some of the respondents expressed their personal and detailed feedback to the advertisement that impressed them, the most.

Blend-a-Med's advertisement, featuring a young women smiling at the funeral, with the caption "you can't help but smile" was commented the most often. The majority of individuals (the one that connected me after filling the survey) found this advertisement as hilarious and shocking at the same time but also effective in communicating its message. As remarked by a 19-year-old girl: "this ad seemed so shocking at first, that it turned into ridiculous and funny as no one would smile at the funeral because they have white teeth". Another 19-year-old girls said that she found the ad funny and memorable due to unconventional approach to advertise toothpaste. Moreover, I could observe my mother's (49 years old) reaction to this ad. Initially, as she saw the picture I could detect a bit of shock and wonder what is being advertised, but as she read the text at the bottom of the ad she started to laugh. Furthermore, she pointed out that even if the image is startling, when combined with the wording, it makes ad humours. However, a 47-years-old woman found this advertisement inappropriate, as in her opinion the event such as funeral should not be exploit for commercial reasons.

Another ad, on which I received feedback was the commercial of Burger King. A 35-year-old man stated that although he was greatly disgusted by this ad, it made him recognise that Burger King is a worthwhile fast-food chain. 49-year-old women provided me with very

similar feedback, saying that the message of this ad is very clear, however she found the image repulsive.

One of the respondents, a 20-year-old girl left a remark on the campaign by Ash. In her perception, the ad is powerful conveying the message and she found the combination of visual and text excellent as it caused her to reconsider cigarettes consumption.

Additionally, a 35-years-old man shared his thoughts on the L'Oréal advertisement. For him the question whether this ad challenges or reinforces gender stereotypes was tricky to answer. He argues that although the advertisement's objective is challenge stereotypes and promotes hiring more women in managerial roles, the use of the red lipstick reinforces the idea that women are simply not hired for these roles.

It is important to acknowledge that these were personal thoughts of a small number of respondents who chose to share them with me. Nevertheless, no specific conclusion or pattern could be drawn from that feedback. However, I found those insights intriguing and chose to include them in the analysis as this information could be used to comprehend how specific people respond to the stimuli and compare it to the overall findings.

Limitations

As technology may be tricking sometimes, I experienced minor problems with recording of a few responses. Despite, setting all the questions to be displayed and mandatory to answer, some of the responses were not complete, as they did not record answers to all the questions in the survey. In the place of the response, I see following information: "*This question was not displayed to the respondent.*". I tried to fix the technological glitch immediately after noticing it. However, besides screening the collected answers (apply the filter for only completed questionnaires), investigating the cause of the issue and checking myself the questionnaire, the incomplete answers were still recorded.

9. General Discussion

It was hard to identify if the country of origin has a big impact on how men and women perceive stereotypes and react to different emotions used in advertisement, as the results obtained in the experiment mostly came from Poland which did not allow me to analyse in depth the impact of the cultural norms across different countries. However, it was observable that Polish women were very sensitive towards gender stereotypes and portrayals used in adverts. They presented high irritation level after viewing ad of McDonald's but showed great appreciation for the L'Oréal ad. It may be associated with the fact that in Poland women still fight with the traditional image of women and need to stand up against gender stereotypes. Unfortunately, I found it insufficient to compare those results with the results of respondents of other nationalities, as their number was much lower than number of Polish respondents.

9.1 Theoretical Implications

In general, women presented greater extent in types of emotions felt, either sad or humour. When it comes to fear used in advertisement by ASH, women showed bigger motivation to take up action against smoking, suggesting that the emotions that were evoked were stronger in comparison to men. This could be linked with the motive of child used in the stimulus which could appeal to female more, as typically they more experience feelings associated with parenthood. Even though, the extent to which the respondents felt scare was not so high, women had higher average, suggesting they emotions were more intense compared to men. Similar results apply for the advertisement for Transportation for London, where women presented higher need to be more careful while crossing the road than men. This proves that women feel emotions more or feel them quicker than men when seeing the ad and therefore feel more inclined to take up the new course of action. Moreover, the results were comparable for the ad of Nutella, using humour as the primary emotion. Women expressed with the higher mean the feeling of humour; however, the ad was viewed as less acceptable for them in comparison to men. This is an interesting finding, suggesting that even if females found the ad as humour, a specific element of the ad made them view it as less appropriate. This was also found in the case of Monopoly advertisement, where women again saw the ad as less appropriate than man, however here women also found it less humour. It could be linked with the usage of the image of an angry child, which could affect the perception of women, as generally, they are more sensitive about children image. When it comes to the ad by Blend-a-Med, women with no doubt experienced stronger emotional reaction. Female respondents not only stated they felt shock to the greater extent, but also found the ad inappropriate and

ineffective in conveying its message. The low result for women shows that they are more attentive and analysing the adverts which intensifies their emotive reaction. The same applies to the feeling of disgust that was used in the Burger King ad, where again women noted higher scores in the question regarding the range of their feelings.

9.2 Managerial Implications

Women respondents presented a higher irritation in terms of the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and also, identified them more often in comparison to men. As women tend to be objects of stereotypes in advertisement more often than men, they had been more attentive towards them. Therefore, the advertisement of McDonald's met with the lower perception of being acceptable by female as it exploits the image of their body and objectifies them. In fact, women predominantly interpreted the advertisement as reinforcing gender stereotypes, while in contrast, men were more likely to perceive the advertisement as neutral. Also, the irritation level presented by women was higher, which may be linked with the fact that males are less aware of the sexualised representation of women in advertisement. This may additionally be seen by analysing the distribution of the answers along the Likert scale. Women tend to select higher points, indicating strong irritation level, while men commonly voted at the first three points, meaning no irritation at all or low level. In the case of L'Oréal advert, women found it more to be fighting and challenging the stereotypes, while men did not see the stereotype in this advert. Moreover, the women's irritation level was lower compared to men. This discrepancy might result from the advertisement's criticism of men for lacking to hire women for higher-level roles. Furthermore, women's comprehension of the issue and potential ability to relate to it, may determine their low level of annoyance. It can also be presumed that the part of female responses, showing high level of irritation are connected to irritation that those problems occur at the workplace. For women this ad was more acceptable, which may be linked with the men's disbelief about the work inequalities between genders. In the case of the advert of The Export Dry that exploited the stereotype that "real men" should only drink beer, once more women spotted the stereotype while men claimed it does neither reinforce nor challenges gender portrayals. What is more, most women allocated their votes at the second half of the scale, indicating that they were irritated by this advert from moderate to high rate. On the contrary, men allocated most of their votes at the first part of the Likert scale, showing that even if the stereotype was aimed at them, they did not find it annoying or irritating. Men presented high level of desire for the purchase compared to women, showing that they mostly focused on the product advertised, rather than the whole message.

9.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, those findings exhibit that women have stronger emotive reactions to advertisement in comparison to men, regardless of the type of emotion being evoked. Women demonstrate greater intensity in their feelings. Additionally, women are more likely to identify and negatively react to gender stereotypes and portrayals. Conversely, men demonstrated lower irritation level and did not focus on ad's message but more on the product. Those results suggest that there is a divergence in how men and women process and respond to advertising.

Limitations and Future Research

The main limitation of the experiment was that Polish respondents dominated in the collected replies. This limited the exploration of the influence of cultural factor on gendered reactions to advertisement and impacted the potential this research could provide for future studies. Therefore, the future research could explore the topic in more diverse settings and moreover, analyse how marketers take advantage of existing discrepancies between genders and offer the guide for creating more inclusive marketing.

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11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Visual for McDonald's stimulus



Appendix 2 – Additional analysis of results for McDonald's stimulus

Moreover, the commercial did not persuade the respondents to buy something from the company, as on average the desire was rated at 3,15. The majority of respondents rated their willingness to buy at 1 and 2 (86 out of 183 respondents), suggesting that the advertisement does not really encourage viewers to make a purchase. In contrast, only 11 respondents stated that they are strongly encourage for a purchase (selected point 7).

There is a significant disparity between men's and women's want to buy, with males rating willingness at an average of 3,47 and women at 2,97. Men dispersed their replies more evenly along the scale, with the largest group at point 5, whilst women were generally placing their replies at point 1 and 2, indicating that men were encouraged more to buy after seeing this ad than women.

Out of 183 replies, 145 which is 80% of individuals voted on the image to be the most tiggering for their feelings towards the ad. Then, 17 (9%) stated that both the image and the text impacted their emotions and 15 (8%) claimed that none of the two triggered them. Just 5 of the respondents of the sample (3%) stated that the text is the primary element that evokes emotions in them.

People were generally mildly irritated by this ad, as indicated by the mean of 3,85. The answers were distributed along the Likert scale, mostly at the first two points 1 and 2, and two last points – 6 and 7. Points 1 and 2, gathered in total 64 answers, suggesting that a large group of respondents did not find the ad irritating at all. On the other hand, points 6 and 7 collected 51 answers showing that the ad was also found by another group rather bothersome.

Appendix 3 – Visual for L’Oréal stimulus



Appendix 4 - Additional analysis of results for L’Oréal stimulus

On average, men rated the appropriateness for 3,88, while women gave it a rating of 4,52. The difference between response of genders were evident in the distribution of responses along the Likert scale. Female responses were solely scattered at the last four points of the scale (point 4,5,6 and 7) indicating that women deemed the appropriateness at a mid to high level. Conversely, men placed their votes at point 3 and 4, indicating that the advert is quite appropriate.

Regarding a specific component of the ad, 46% of respondents (81 respondents) chose the text as the element triggering their emotional response. Following that, 26% (46 respondents) claimed that both, the text and the image affect their reaction. 16% (29 respondents) voted for the image itself and 12% (22 respondents) that nothing made them react (12%).

Furthermore, it has been intriguing to observe that men and women shared the same attitudes regarding the emotional triggers. In terms of the total number of votes, both sexes distributed their votes in the same order: text, both, image and none.

Appendix 5 – Visual for Ash ad



Appendix 6 - Additional analysis of results for Ash stimulus

The anti-smoking campaign has been highly appropriate, with the average of 5 based on 178 replies. Additionally, point number 7 on the scale had the most responses (46), and point number 4 received the second highest number of replies (40). Generally, point 4-7 attracted the most responses, indicating the ad was found largely appropriate. On average, men thought this advert was more appropriate than women, although for both genders it was mid-high level appropriate. Men rated its appropriateness on 5,12 and female at 4,96. These findings demonstrate that the anti-smoking campaign has been viewed as accurate and truthful representation for the cause it advocates. The majority of males gave the appropriateness a score of 7, whereas women gave it a score of 5.

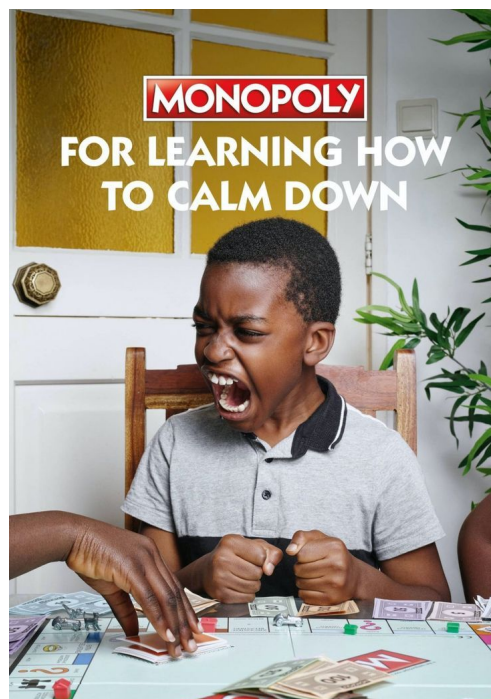
The ad encouraged respondents on a mid-effect level to take action against smoking, given that the average was 4,35. Of the 34 respondents, point 3 was the most frequently chosen point. The majority of the votes fell between points 3 and 7, indicating that the advertisement's overall impact on individuals was between moderate and strong. After viewing this advertisement, only 29 of the respondents showed very little willingness to engage in anti-smoking behaviour. The average for females was 4.39, while the average for

males was 4.25, indicating that females were marginally more motivated than males to take action against smoking.

For this stimulus, individuals found that the combination of the text and image were the most triggering, as 44% of respondents (77 answers) claimed so and 35% of respondents (62 answers) selected only the text, 15% (27 answers) selected the image and 7% (12 answers) said that none triggered their reaction (7%).

Point 7, which indicates that the advertisement's message was effectively communicated, received 46 responses and has been the most frequently selected point of the scale.

Appendix 7 – Visual for Monopoly stimulus



Appendix 8 – Additional analysis of results for Monopoly stimulus

Based on 180 responses, the Monopoly stimulus was deemed to be fairly acceptable, with the mean of 4,45. The biggest groups of respondents were gathered at point 4 and 5, which is reflected in the average. Only 10 respondents thought that the ad is quite improper (selected point 1) and 20 thought it was extremely appropriate (selected point 7). This ad had been found more appropriate by men, as their mean was 4,70 and for women it was 4,34. The appropriateness level for women has generally been medium to high, as most votes fell between 4 and 6 on the Likert scale. For men votes were merely distributed between point 4 and 5.

The degree of desire to purchase from the company was rated slightly below the middle, with the mean equal to 3,60 and with the largest group positioned at point 4. In general, respondents did not present interested in buying from Monopoly after seeing their ad, as most responses fall within the first four point of the scale. Men rated their desire to purchase at 3,55 and the majority of their votes were spread in the first half of the scale, indicating the want to buy was rather low.

Respondents found that the message was rather effectively communicated, as on average it had been rated for 4,15. 39 of the respondents created the largest group, which was positioned at point 4 of the scale. The remaining votes were evenly distributed among the other points, suggesting that the effectiveness of this ad cannot be evaluated explicitly, and that viewer's perceptions vary greatly. Men and women evaluated the advert's effectiveness very similarly, with men's average of 4,17 and women's average of 4,16. However, the distribution of their answers differ. The most frequently selected point of the scale for women was point number 6, which suggest the message was communicated very effectively. Additionally, most of female answers fell between points 4 and 6. For men the most chosen point was point 4, indicating the advert was of average efficiency. The remaining male replies were spread evenly across the scale, suggesting that advert's communication was both ineffective and effective for men.

Appendix 9 – Visual for Export Dry stimulus



Appendix 10 - Additional analysis of results for Export Dry stimulus

Based on 178 responses, the average appropriateness of the beer ad was rated at 3,62. The mean falls below the half, as point 2 has been the most frequently selected point (37 answers), indicating the ad is rather inappropriate. Moreover, point 7, meaning that the ad is very appropriate has been selected the fewest times (13 answers). The remaining responses were split equally across the other opinions. Based on those replies, the ad can be considered as mid-level of appropriate.

A largest proportion of respondents - 37%, 65 answers, stated that the gender stereotypes in this ad are neither challenged nor reinforced. With 58 answers (33%), the second most often selected response was that it reinforces. Then, 40 of the respondents (22%) perceived the ad as both, challenging and reinforcing gender stereotypes (22%) and just 15 answers (8%) were placed that it challenges them. Men and women have varied perspectives on how this advertisement portrays gender stereotypes. While female viewers perceive it reinforcing the gender stereotypes that real men drink beer and not wine, male viewers see it as neither reinforcing nor challenging for stereotypes.

Appendix 11 – Visual for The Transportation for London stimulus

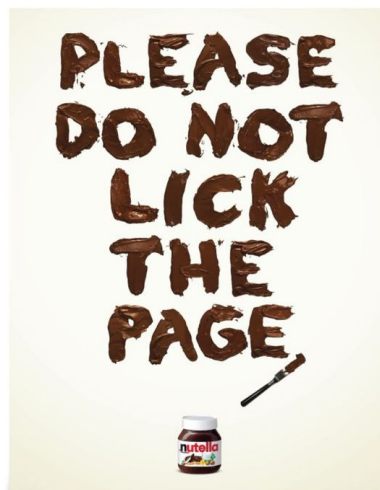


Appendix 12 - Additional analysis of results for The Transportation for London stimulus

The majority of respondents, 83 (47%), found the combination of the text and image as the most triggering for their emotive response, and 68 respondents (39%) chose just the image. 20 respondents (11%) selected the text as the most triggering and 5 respondents (3%) were not triggered by any element of the advert (3%).

Respondents found the ad to evoke feeling of scare to the medium extent, as shown by the mean of 3,80. Point 3 and 4 accumulated the majority of the answers (83) and point 4 was the most frequently selected (45 answers). Points 5,6 and 7, which indicate the high level of scare, were the least selected points. Once more, by examining responses of men and women, I observed the adherence to the overall pattern.

Appendix 13 – Visual for Nutella stimulus



Appendix 14 - Additional analysis of results for Nutella stimulus

The Nutella stimulus, based on 178 responses was rated at 4,90. Moreover, two largest groups were placed at point 6 (41 answers) and 7 (42 answers), which indicates that people found the ad as very appropriate.

The average desire to purchase Nutella after seeing this ad was rated at 4,02. Point number 5 was the most frequently selected point of the scale (41 answers), indicating that the want to buy was a bit above the medium level. The remaining answers were spread equally across the scale. The mean for female was 4,13 and the most answers were placed at number 5, with the rest of the answers allocated equally between the points. This shows that female felt average

need for Nutella purchase. The mean for men was equal to 3,72 and the most voted placed at point number 6. Generally, based on the allocation of men' answers on the Likert scale, their desire was going from very low to high.

The text has been selected as the most triggering for the emotions, as 44% of respondents (83 individuals) claimed so. Subsequently, 27% (48 individuals) stated that the text with the image is the most triggering, 13% (23 individuals) opt for the image itself and 13% (23 individuals) selected none. Also, both genders found the text as the most triggering element of the advertisement. Females replicated the general findings, and men had one difference – the image was votes as the fourth most triggering element and no element was selected the third.

Appendix 15 – Visual for Blend-a-Med stimulus



Appendix 16 - Additional analysis of results for Blend-a-Med stimulus

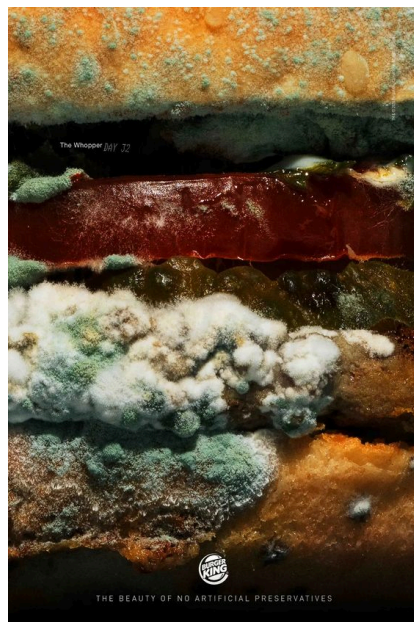
The appropriateness of the toothpaste's ad has been rated at 3,03 from the average of 179 responses. Point 4 was the most frequently selected answer, which shows that the ad has been assessed to have medium level of acceptance.

With 84 people choosing the image (47%), it turns out to be the greatest trigger for the respondents' emotion. Then, 65 people (37%) voted for the image with the text as their trigger, 23 people (13%) opt for just the text and only 6 (3%) voted for none.

Respondents rated the extent to which they felt shocked for 3,89. The distribution of votes had been equal along the scale, with point 3 collecting the most answers (42).

The average rating for this advertisement's communication effectiveness is 3,55. Even though the mean is not low, many of the respondents rated the ad as ineffective and placed their vote at point 1 (36 answers), making it the second most often answer. Point 4 was the most frequent answer, with 37 replies. Moreover, point 6 and 7, meaning that the ad very effective received 14 and 15 replies, respectively. Men rated the communication of the message higher than women. Men's mean was 4,06 and points 4 and 5 being most often selected (12 answers each). On the contrary, women rated it for 3,33 and most frequently selected was point 1 (28 answers). However, the second most often selected point was point 4 (25 answers), indicating that a big group of women found the message being communicated on the medium level.

Appendix 17 – Visual for Burger King stimulus



Appendix 18 - Additional analysis of results for Burger King stimulus

Neither woman, nor men felt encouraged to purchase from the company. Men distributed 75% of their votes between point 1 (50%) and point 2 (25%), and 58% of women selected point 1 and 12% point 2.

There has been a significant discrepancy in the responses regarding the factor that triggered the viewers' emotional response. The image was selected as the trigger by 78% of respondents (143 respondents). Later, 12% (22 respondents) selected the image itself, 6% (11 respondents)

the text and 4% (7 respondents) claimed that no element triggered them. Both sexes, selected the image as the main trigger for their emotions, with 77% of women stating so, and 81% of men.

On average, the level of disgust was rated at 5,04 with point 7 being the most frequently chosen option (59 answers) and the majority of votes between points 5, 6 and 7. On average women rated disgust higher than men, with the female mean of 5,25 and male mean of 4,50. Furthermore, when it came to the distribution of votes, women showed the highest degree of disgust, with the majority of votes going to points 6 and 7, with the remaining points obtaining only 7% of the total. On the contrary, point 5 was the most often selected point with 31% of male's votes. The remaining answers were split on the contrary placed the biggest amount of votes at the point 5 (31%).

This advert had done a little better job of conveying the company's message to males than to women, as the average for men was 3.73, while the average for women was 3.44. Female allocated their answer mostly in the first part of the scale, indicating they did not find it effective in message spreading. Men's answers were evenly dispersed on the scale, with point 2 receiving the highest number of answers.