



The Effects of Non-Stereotypical Racially Integrated Advertising  
and Brand Trustworthiness on Brand-Related Attitudes

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Dissertation written under the supervision of

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the  
International MSc in Management at the Universidade Católica

Portuguesa, June 2023

Title: The Effects of Non-Stereotypical Racially Integrated Advertising and Brand Trustworthiness on Brand-Related Attitudes

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Keywords: Brand Trust, (Non-Stereotypical) Racially Integrated Advertisement, Stereotype, Brand-Related attitude, Purchase Intention, Brand Loyalty

## **ABSTRACT**

Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the frequency of racial diversity representations in the marketing communication strategies of various brands. Nonetheless, there appears to be inadequate attention given to the investigation of stereotypes, leading to the unfavourable stereotyping of ethnic minority groups. This study aimed to investigate the significance and impact of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising on brand-related attitudes, as compared to stereotypical racially integrated advertising. The present study endeavours to assess the significance of brand trust in the formation of consumers' brand-related attitudes and evaluations. The findings of the study revealed that brands that are perceived as trustworthy and advertisements that feature non-stereotypical racially integrated content have a more significant and more favourable impact on brand-related outcomes. The findings also suggested that regardless of the type of brand trust, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is associated with higher purchase intention compared to stereotypical racially integrated advertising. The results of this experimental study carry crucial implications for advertisers and marketers, highlighting the importance of prioritising the development of meaningful, trustworthy relationships with customers. Additionally, it is recommended that advertisers invest additional time in researching the racial and cultural backgrounds of specific minority groups to ensure that advertising is delivered in a manner that is not harmful or misleading.

## **RESUMO**

Nos últimos anos, tem havido um aumento na frequência de representações de diversidade racial nas estratégias de comunicação de marketing de várias marcas e empresas. No entanto, parece haver uma atenção inadequada dada à investigação de estereótipos, levando à estereotipagem desfavorável de grupos étnicos e minoritários. Este estudo teve como objetivo investigar a importância e o impacto da publicidade racialmente integrada e não estereotipada nas atitudes relacionadas à marca, em comparação com a publicidade racialmente integrada estereotipada. O presente estudo se esforça para avaliar a importância da confiança nas marcas e na formação das atitudes e avaliações relacionadas à marca dos consumidores. Os resultados do estudo revelaram que as marcas vistas como confiáveis e os anúncios que apresentam conteúdo racialmente integrado e não estereotipado, têm um impacto maior e mais favorável nos resultados relacionados à marca. Os resultados também sugeriram que, independentemente do tipo de confiança na marca, a publicidade racialmente integrada não estereotipada está associada a uma maior intenção de compra em comparação com a publicidade racialmente integrada estereotipada. Os resultados deste estudo experimental têm implicações cruciais para anunciantes e profissionais de marketing, destacando a importância de priorizar o desenvolvimento de relacionamentos significativos e confiáveis com os clientes. Além disso, é recomendado que os anunciantes invistam mais tempo na pesquisa dos antecedentes raciais e culturais de grupos minoritários específicos, a fim de garantir que a publicidade seja entregue de uma maneira que não seja prejudicial ou enganosa.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Problem Definition and Relevance

The increased diversity in contemporary society and the advent of the internet have encouraged brands to integrate and showcase racial minorities more frequently in their advertising and media depictions. Consequently, individuals worldwide are exposed daily to various cultures, as well as racial and ethnic groups (Bush et al., 1974; McDonald et al., 2021; Osanami Törngren et al., 2020). Despite incorporating individuals from diverse racial backgrounds into their marketing communication, the brand appears to place insufficient emphasis on researching stereotypes. As a result, these individuals are often portrayed in stereotypical manners (Cohen-Eliya & Hammer, 2004). According to Allen (2017), advertisers frequently encounter a challenge when attempting to portray complexities of race or ethnicity at a superficial level rather than investigating additional efforts to gain a deeper comprehension of a specific minority group's cultural background. Advertising representation is deemed stereotypical when it depicts individuals in a manner that aligns with a general stereotype, an advertising stereotype, or both (Åkestam, 2017).

Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated that advertisements featuring stereotypical portrayals result in reduced levels of ad, brand, and product attitudes, as well as purchase intentions and brand loyalty, compared to advertisements that do not contain such portrayals (Eisend et al., 2014; Feiereisen et al., 2009; Huhmann & Limbu, 2016; Martin et al., 2007). However, the present study aims to evaluate the effects of racial stereotypes on these brand-related effects through the use of racially integrated advertisement. Using racially integrated advertisement is a relatively new approach to marketing, whereby models from diverse racial backgrounds are featured together in a single advertisement (Gould et al., 1970; Green, 1999; Whittler, 1991). This study examines the effects of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements on consumers and their brand-related behaviours. The significance of examining stereotypes and addressing them correctly in an advertisement is extremely important, given that media has a tendency to influence individuals' attitudes. According to McLeod et al. (1997) and Youn et al. (2000), in cases where consumers perceive advertising as detrimental or harmful to others, they may develop negative attitudes toward the advertisement and, subsequently, attitudes toward the brand.

Brand trust is an important factor that considerably influences brand effects, including brand loyalty, purchase intention, and advertisement attitude. Research has indicated that trust plays a crucial role in fostering higher levels of purchase intention and brand loyalty (Lau & Lee, 1999; Madadi et al., 2021). Based on Lau and Lee (1999), when a consumer puts trust in a brand and demonstrates a willingness to rely on it, that consumer is more likely to develop a favourable intention to purchase from the brand.

The objective of this study is to examine the difference between trustworthy and untrustworthy brands and their influence on consumers' assessment, encompassing their intention to purchase and loyalty towards the brand. Furthermore, there exists an absence of research on the impact of brand trust on consumers' attitudes towards advertising. Consequently, the present study seeks to assess the influence of brand trust on consumers' perceptions of advertising, with a focus on both trustworthy and untrustworthy brands.

Contemporary consumers possess an increased degree of brand awareness. They are inclined to purchase products within a specific category only if they perceive the product to possess favourable attributes, quality, and pricing (Ahmed et al., 2014). The characteristics of a brand are significant in assessing its credibility and reliability. Some of the attributes that are associated with trustworthiness include authenticity, transparency in pricing, active customer engagement, high product quality, ethical and sustainable practices, and a dedication to promoting diversity. In today's time of intense competition among brands, marketers must establish enduring relationships with consumers and earn their trust. Failure to fulfil brand commitments may result in consumers switching to rival brands, as noted by Ahmed et al. (2014) and Lau and Lee (1999).

In conclusion, the researched employed a 2x2 between-subjects design. The present study utilises an experimental design to investigate the impact of two independent variables, namely brand trust and racially integrated advertisement, each with a dichotomous level, on dependent variables, namely purchase intention, brand loyalty, and attitude toward the advertisement. Vakratsas and Ambler's (1999) research demonstrated that advertisements must elicit specific mental reactions, such as the development of brand attitudes, to effectively impact consumer behaviour, including purchase intention. It is proposed that greater mental responses will result in increased behavioural tendencies, but only when the stimulus is positively valenced (Elder & Krishna, 2012). Therefore, the aim of this research was to investigate the potential correlation between purchase intention and brand attitude, as well as to determine whether non-

stereotypical racially integrated advertising can result in increased purchase intention while controlling brand attitude.

Åkestam (2017) posits that non-stereotypical portrayals elicit greater satisfaction among individuals who place significant value on racial diversity happier, which leads to more positive brand-related effects, including ad attitude. Therefore the other relationship that this study tends to examine is a correlation between consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising and positive attitude toward the advertisement. This, in turn, engenders more favourable brand-related outcomes, such as advertising attitude. Thus this study aims to investigate the correlation between consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising and their positive attitude towards the advertisement. The objective is to assess the potential two-way interaction between the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertisement while controlling the degree of significance that consumers attach to racial diversity in advertising.

Although overt signs of prejudice and discrimination have decreased, they still persist in various domains such as employment, wealth, sports, health, and criminal justice (Quillian, 2006). The persistent racial disparity in sports and notable underrepresentation of Black individuals in certain sports, such as basketball and football, alongside their heightened visibility in others, namely tennis and golf (Martin, 2015), has prompted me to explore this issue through the creation of fictitious advertisement stimuli that tackle racial stereotypes in sports. The crucial leading question to be examined in this regard pertains to the assessment of whether exposure to non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement can effectively eradicate implicit racial bias. The subsequent section presents the research questions.

## 1.2. Research Objective and Questions

The main objective of this study is to examine how consumers' purchase intention, brand loyalty, and attitude toward the advertisement are affected by the type of brand trust and by the type of racially integrated advertisement. Furthermore, this research question investigates the effects of non-stereotypical and stereotypical racially integrated advertisement on brand-related factors, for the trustworthy and untrustworthy brand.

**RQ1: Is the degree of brand trustworthiness and type of racially integrated advertisement significant in the establishment of brand-associated variables?**

Additionally, the study seeks to assess the effect of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements on consumer purchase intention while controlling the brand attitude. The decision to utilise brand attitude as a control variable is predicated upon the findings of Vakratsas and Ambler's (1999) research, which demonstrated a significant correlation between these two variables.

RQ2: Does the consumers' perception of a brand play an important role in their purchase intent?

The two subordinate research questions aim to examine the correlation between consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising and positive attitude toward the advertisement, as well as to evaluate the potential for non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements to eliminate implicit racial prejudice.

RQ3: Does the use of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising have the potential to reduce consumers' implicit racial prejudice?

RQ4: Is there a correlation between consumers' positive attitude toward the advertisement and the degree of significance placed on racial diversity in advertising?

### 1.3. Research Structure

The present study is organised into six chapters. The initial chapter defines the research problem and its relevance, and presents main and subordinate research questions and objectives. The following chapter encompasses a comprehensive analysis of existing literature. The third chapter presents the introduction of hypotheses and conceptual framework. Chapter four delineates the methodology used in the research, along with the procedures utilised for data collection. The subsequent chapter pertains to the analysis and evaluation of the collected data, whereas the sixth chapter serves as a conclusive segment, encompassing the summary, implications, and limitations of the study, along with recommendations for future research.

## 2. ACADEMIC LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter entails a comprehensive review of the extant literature relevant to the primary themes and theoretical constructs expounded in the introduction. It discusses concepts

and theories given in pertinent academic publications and journals, which serve as the foundation for the research problem that this thesis intends to investigate.

In the beginning, the concept of brand trust is investigated, followed by an examination of racially integrated advertising. This chapter then addresses racial stereotypes, implicit bias, purchase intention and brand loyalty. Finally, attitudes are analysed and subdivided into attitudes toward the advertisement, brand and diversity.

These findings were used as the basis for the formulation of hypotheses discussed in the next chapter.

## 2.1. Brand Trust

Trust can be defined as a set of expectations that are established within specific contextual parameters and limitations (Lau & Lee, 1999). It provides a superior lens for examining and evaluating the behavioural reactions of consumers (Kabadayi & Alan, 2012). Brand trust can also be interpreted as the extent to which consumers are willing to put their confidence in a brand's ability to fulfil its intended purpose (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001, as cited in Kabadayi & Alan, 2012). According to the findings of Lau and Lee's (1999) study, brand characteristics have a relatively greater influence on consumers' trust in a brand, thereby acting as an important factor in determining whether a consumer will place their trust in a brand or not. As stated by Sahin et al. (2011), individuals establish trust in a brand based on positive beliefs related to their expectations for the organisation's behaviour and performance of its products. If brands communicate and meet the values of safety, honesty, and reliability about their company to consumers, it is likely that brand trust will be generated as a consequence (Doney & Cannon, 1997). Consumer satisfaction can only be achieved if the consumer has complete confidence in the brand; if the brand fails to deliver on its promises, the consumer will switch to competing brands (Ahmed et al., 2014). Forming relationships with consumers and earning their trust is a fundamental objective of brands. Brand trust plays a pivotal role in establishing brand loyalty (Bennet, 1996, as cited in Lau & Lee, 1999). As with previous studies, Aydin and Taskin (2014) stipulated that the idea of establishing relationships with customers and gaining their trust in a brand is a crucial aspect of building long-lasting connections between the brand and the consumer.

## 2.2. Racially Integrated Advertising

The field of advertising has been significantly impacted by novel approaches and technological advancements, such as the Internet. Consequently, a standard definition of advertising remains elusive and is interpreted in numerous ways (Richards & Curran, 2002). According to Vakratsas and Ambler (1999), advertising can be considered as an input for eliciting a reaction from the audience and may be viewed as a persuasive tool for selling products or services (Jefkins et al., 2000). The increase in diversity in society and the advent of the internet, have encouraged marketers and advertising agencies to incorporate and feature racial minorities more frequently in their advertisements and media portrayals. As a consequence, individuals from all over the world are exposed daily to diverse cultures, as well as racial and ethnic groups (Bush et al., 1974; McDonald et al., 2021; Osanami Törngren et al., 2020). This novel marketing strategy is known as integrated advertising, in which people of various races or ethnic origins appear together in the same advertisement (Gould et al., 1970; Green, 1999; Whittler, 1991). It is essential to differentiate between race and ethnicity. While individuals of the same race can also be members of the same ethnicity, ethnic groups are characterized by shared customs and traditions that differentiate them from other ethnic groups within their racial category. Skin colour remains the most evident physical characteristic used to differentiate races (Bencker, 2021; Thomas et al., 2018).. According to the findings of Green (1999) and Morimoto and La Ferle (2000), advertisements that contain racial or ethnic clues are perceived as more pertinent, elicit more favourable attitudes towards the advertisements, and are deemed to convey a more credible message. Similar to the aforementioned, DeBenedicts concludes that consumers are more receptive to a brand whose advertisements reflect diversity and even expect marketers to accurately portray the various features of society (DeBenedicts, 2018). The concept of integrated advertisements aims to examine the enduring use and existence of racial symbols that convert advertising into a form of sociocultural communication that has the potential to sculpt, reinforce, and/or challenge existing social norms (Bencker, 2021).

## 2.3. Racial Stereotypes

A racial stereotype refers to a shared concept that includes a simplified assessment of differences and specifics. It is a representation of a cultural group that emphasises a specific trait or set of traits that may not necessarily provide an accurate portrayal of the group (Storms, 1979; Yan & Hyman, 2022). The act of stereotyping can lead to oversimplified information

processing within a judgemental framework that obscures the unique attributes and complexities of group members, ultimately denying their individuality (Taylor & Stern, 1997). Individuals are exposed to stereotypes as an aspect of their socialisation, which is the mechanism through which social norms are transmitted from one generation to the next one. The process of socialisation begins within the family and subsequently extends to educational institutions, while also being constantly reinforced through media (Cohen-Eliya & Hammer, 2004). While certain stereotypes may be less harmful than others, the term positive stereotype is inherently contradictory and can result in unintended negative consequences for certain members of society (Yan & Hyman, 2022). Positive stereotypes are often initiated without any spiteful intentions and are detrimental to society as they promote discrimination, social mistrust, prejudices, and dehumanisation (Elliott, 2003; Yan & Hyman, 2022). Grier and Deshpandé (2001) defined stereotype as a generalized and commonly held belief regarding the personal characteristic of individuals belonging to a specific social group, like gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Common stereotypes associated with individuals of Blacks include possessing natural rhythm and athleticism, being lazy, unintelligent, loud and prone to anger. On the other hand, Whiteness is frequently associated with stereotypes that portray individuals as rich, successful, hard-working, lacking in physical strength and homosexual (Fordham, 1993; Hooks, 2004, Pascoe, 2007; Perry, 2001, as cited in Way et al., 2013). Individuals who identify as Black are more prone to being exposed to negative or positive stereotypes in comparison to those who identify as White. Consequently, they have a stronger incentive to resist stereotypes (Way et al., 2013). Stereotypes are influenced by cultural contexts and are thus predisposed to change and develop over time (Eisend, 2010).

#### 2.4. Implicit Bias

Despite a significant reduction in overt signs of prejudice and discrimination, they continue to persist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, particularly in areas such as employment, wealth, sports, health, and criminal justice (Quillian, 2006). According to Allport's (1954) initial description, prejudice can be defined as a form of antipathy that arises from flawed or rigid generalisation. Prejudice refers to the act of forming a preconceived opinion or judgement about an individual based on their involvement in certain social groups. It is comprised of thoughts and feelings, which are often formed without sufficient experiential basis and subsequently applied to all individuals belonging to that particular group. Prejudice has a tendency to be shared due to the fact that

individuals are immersed in the same cultural environment and absorbing comparable messages (DiAngelo, 2022). The concept of bias consists of two components, which are antipathy and stereotype. Antipathy can be conceptualised as a negative affective state directed towards a particular group, whereas stereotypes can be defined as false and inaccurate beliefs held about individuals who belong to that same group (Taylor & Pettigrew, 2000). When prejudice and stereotypes affect people without their awareness or conscious consent, this is known as implicit bias. It occurs when the ideas and thoughts of the social group arouse a stereotype or an attitude. Following this triggering, individuals' reactions are shaped (Moskowitz & Carter, 2018). A fundamental idea in the study of implicit bias is that past associations with members of a certain racial group, which are perceived as a collection of stereotypical beliefs linked to a particular racial category, are present in mind and have an impact on future judgements and actions (Quillian, 2006). According to the findings of DiAngelo's (2022) study, racial prejudice is generally unconscious. Implicit racial bias has the potential to lead individuals to engage in discriminatory behaviours without their awareness. This does not imply that individuals are racist, but rather that their past experiences have influenced their perceptions, which may lead to biased responses, behaviours and actions (Maryfield, 2018).

## 2.5. Purchase Intention

The concept of purchase intention refers to the likelihood that consumers will intend or show a willingness to pay for a specific product or service at some point (Wu et al., 2011). According to Dodds et al. (1991) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2007), a rise in purchase intention is indicative of a higher likelihood of making the purchase. Purchase intention is consistently affected by individuals' feelings and can serve as a significant metric for measuring consumer behaviour (Jurnejo et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2011). The intention to purchase reflects the anticipated buying behaviour of customers (Schlosser, 2003). The measure's ability to accurately predict real purchases has made it a popular tool for sales forecasting and a valuable asset in various managerial decision-making processes (Armstrong et al., 2000; Chang & Wildt, 1994; Jamieson & Bass, 1989). Consumers' purchase intentions are influenced by perceived functional benefits, as well as the degree to which the purchase aligns with their social objectives (Baker et al., 2016). Although there are numerous factors that influence consumers' purchasing decisions, their attitudes toward the product and brand are important indicators of their buying behaviour (Fennis & Stroebe, 2015).

## 2.6. Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty can be defined in numerous ways and is often reliant upon the perspective of different researchers, who may hold divergent definitions of the concept (Morgan, 1999, as cited in TaghiPourian & Bakhsh, 2015). In the past, loyalty has been portrayed as a unidimensional construct, primarily expressed through the behaviour of recurring purchases (TaghiPourian & Bakhsh, 2015). The meaning of brand loyalty has been defined as an aspect of repeat purchase behaviour and a tendency to make future purchases (Brown, 1952). Recent studies have shown a more complex and multi-dimensional understanding of brand loyalty (TaghiPourian & Bakhsh, 2015). Day (1969) was one of the pioneering researchers who introduced the two-dimensional model of loyalty, which evaluates loyalty based on behavioural and attitudinal criteria. Scholars posited that brand loyalty consists of two elements, namely, brand-loyalbehaviour and brand-loyalattitudes. The underlying attitude linked to a purchase holds significance as it influences behaviour. Situational factors, such as availability, have a role in influencing brand loyal behaviour. However attitudes are considered to be more persistent (Brown, 1952; Guest, 1955; Jacoby, 1971). Brand loyalty results in a variety of marketing benefits, including decreased marketing expenses, acquisition of new consumers, significant obstacles to entry for competitors, reduced vulnerability of customers to marketing endeavours by rivals, increased sales, and enhanced trade leverage, therefore it is essential for a brand to build and maintain a strong relationship with its customers (Ahmed et al., 2014; Matzler et al., 2008). In a market where competition is severe, consumer loyalty is the only way for a business to endure. Even during the most difficult periods, loyal consumers purchase the product offered at a high rate (Ahmed et al., 2014).

## 2.7. Attitudes

Attitudes have been a widely investigated subject in advertising and marketing studies for at least two reasons. Initially, it can be observed that attitudes play a crucial role in forecasting consumer behaviour (Mitchell & Olson, 1981, as cited in Spears & Singh, 2004). Additionally, social psychology scholars have developed various theoretical frameworks to facilitate examinations of attitudes (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, as cited in Spears & Singh, 2004). There are

three fundamental components of the definition of attitude that are widely accepted among social psychologists. Firstly, attitudes are considered to be evaluative reactions. Secondly, they are targeted towards a specific attitude object. Lastly, attitudes are believed to originate from or be grounded in three categories of information cognitive, affective or emotional, and behavioural (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 2007; Zanna & Rempel, 1988). Individuals' attitudes are indicative of their assessments of what surrounds them, as well as their preferences and aversions. The formation of attitudes is not solely contingent upon our level of confidence in the possession of certain attributes by an object, but also on the significance we assign to these attributes. Attitudes change over time and tend to be influenced by what people are thinking at any given time (Fennis & Stroebe, 2015).

### 2.7.1. Attitudes Toward the Advertising

Advertising effectiveness is mediated by advertising attitudes (MacKenzie et al., 1986). As stated by Lee et al. (2017), advertising attitude is defined as consumers' favourable or unfavourable reactions to a specific advertisement mediated by various factors. Mediating factors, like motivation and capacity to process information, have the potential to modify or significantly influence an individual's reactions to advertising (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989, as cited in Vakratsas & Ambler, 1999). The idea of attitude towards the advertisement is specific to a particular case of exposure to an ad and does not necessarily reflect consumers' overall attitudes toward advertising or their attitudes towards the specific advertisement at a different point in time.

### 2.7.2. Attitudes toward the brand

The attitudes of consumers toward the brands depend on their beliefs, feelings, and expectations regarding the brand (Fennis & Stroebe, 2015). As explained by Mitchell and Olson (1981), attitude toward the brand refers to an individual's inner assessment or evaluation of the brand. It is a lasting and one-dimensional overall evaluation of the brand that is believed to stimulate behaviour (Spears & Singh, 2004). Brand attitude is contingent upon the motivation that is currently salient. Consequently, in the event of a shift in buyer's motivation, the assessment of the brand may also change (Percy & Rossiter, 1992).

### 2.7.3. Attitudes toward racial diversity

Individuals frequently use basic heuristics to develop attitudes towards other individuals or objects. These heuristics are learned through if-then connections or expectations, which can be based on personal experience, shared cultural views (such as stereotypes), or ads. (Fennis & Stroebe, 2015). The attitudes pertaining to racial diversity are indicative of the circumstances under which an individual is situated and do not primarily signify the manifestation of intergroup affective orientations or characteristic beliefs about a particular outgroup (Bobo, 1988). Divergent perspectives on race are frequently observed between public and private attitudes (Krysan, 1998).

## 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Based on the findings obtained from the literature review, the conceptual framework and hypotheses are introduced in this chapter. The development of hypotheses and research questions provided a fundamental structure for the creation of the interview and online survey.

### 3.1. Hypotheses

Studies on advertising research often examine the effects of brand-related factors such as advertisement attitudes, brand attitudes, purchase intention, and brand loyalty (Kim et al., 2014). Furthermore, several studies have consistently indicated that advertisements containing stereotypical portrayals result in decreased levels of aforementioned brand-related factors in comparison to advertisements that do not feature such portrayals (Eisend et al., 2014; Feiereisen et al., 2009; Huhmann and Limbu, 2016; Martin et al., 2007, as cited in Åkestam, 2017). Stereotypes are recognized to have an impact on consumer behaviours and have a strong influence on the assessment and use of the brands (Paek et al., 2011)

#### Purchase Intention:

Aydin et al. (2014) identified a relationship between brand trust and purchase intention, suggesting that an increase in brand trust leads to a corresponding, direct increase in purchase intention. The degree of trust that a consumer has is a factor that precedes and has an impact on their intention to make a purchase (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013; Dam, 2020). Therefore:

H1a: Trustworthy brand results in higher purchase intention than an untrustworthy brand.

H1b: Non stereotypical racially integrated advertising results in higher purchase intention when presented by a trustworthy brand than when presented by an untrustworthy brand.

Based on Vakratsas and Ambler's research (1999), advertisements must elicit certain mental responses, such as the formation of brand attitudes, in order to have an influence on consumer behaviour, including purchase intention. It is expected that greater mental responses will lead to a rise in behavioural inclinations solely in cases where the stimulus is positively valenced (Elder & Krishna, 2012). The relationship between the type of racially integrated advertisement and purchase intention is mediated by the consumer's attitude toward the brand:

H1c: Non stereotypical racially integrated advertisement leads to higher purchase intention than a stereotypical racially integrated advertisement while controlling the attitude toward the brand.

#### Brand Loyalty:

Brand trust and brand loyalty serve as indicators of an individual's level of attachment to a specific brand (Atulkar, 2020). Establishing relationships with customers and gaining their trust can facilitate the growth of repeat purchases and brand loyalty (Aydin and Taskin, 2014; Dam, 2020). According to Lau and Lee (1999) and Ahmed (2014), the development of brand loyalty is contingent upon the level of trust placed in a brand, underscoring the crucial role of trustworthiness as a fundamental factor. Thus, the following hypothesis is posed:

H2 : Non stereotypical racially integrated advertising results in higher brand loyalty when presented by trustworthy brand than when presented with untrustworthy brand.

#### Attitude toward the brand:

In addition, the purpose of this study is to determine whether trustworthiness plays a significant role in establishing consumers' positive attitudes toward the advertisement or reducing their negative attitudes toward advertising. Therefore, the following two hypotheses are posited:

H3: Non stereotypical racially integrated advertisement leads to a higher positive attitude toward the advertisement when presented by trustworthy brand than when presented by untrustworthy brand.

According to Åkestam (2017), non-stereotypical portrayals make individuals, who express high importance toward racial diversity, happier, which leads to more positive brand-related effects, including ad attitude:

H4: The effect of brand trust type on positive advertisement attitude depends on the type of racially integrated advertising while controlling the consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising.

The significance of feelings in the processing of advertising is crucial, given their substantial influence on consumers' advertisement attitudes (Bhat et al., 2018). When consumers perceive advertisements as harmful to others, it can lead to the formation of negative advertisement attitudes (McLeod et al., 1997; Youn et al., 2000). Åkestam (2017) posits that advertising portrayal is deemed stereotypical when it depicts individuals in a manner that aligns with a common stereotype, an advertising stereotype, or both. Consequently, the next hypotheses are formed:

H5: Trustworthy brand leads to lower negative attitude toward the advertisement when presented with non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements than when presented with stereotypical racially integrated advertisements.

*Implicit Bias:*

Additionally, the goal of this research is to determine whether exposure to non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements has the potential to reduce people's implicit racial bias. Therefore the final hypothesis is:

H6: Consumers are more likely to eliminate implicit racial prejudice when exposed to non stereotypical racially integrated advertisement that when exposed to stereotypical racially integrated advertisements.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The fourth chapter describes the methodology used to elucidate and conduct the study, encompassing the research method, sampling, data acquisition methods, stimuli creation, and the variables used to answer research questions and the aforementioned hypothesis.

## 4.1. Research Method

To achieve the desired objectives and derive the intended conclusions, a quantitative research methodology has been used. For the main study, an online survey using the Qualtrics platform has been utilised to conduct an experimental study. The distribution of the survey was facilitated through a link, suggesting an approach of more passive selection rather than an active one. To ensure a more heterogeneous sample, a variety of distribution channels were used. The data was obtained through nonprobability sampling, wherein each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four experimental groups.

## 4.2. Main Study: Experimental Research

In order to conduct the experimental study, an online survey was created utilising the Qualtrics platform. As per Evans and Mathur's (2005) research, online surveys are extensively used and possess various advantages, including worldwide accessibility, quickness and timeliness, ease of use, simplicity of data analysis, diversity of questions, and cost efficiency. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, the survey was distributed through multiple distribution channels, enabling respondents to access it using their personal devices such as smartphones, tablets and computers. This methodology provides participants the flexibility to complete the survey at their convenience, without any limitations related to time or mobility. The survey was accessible until the beginning of May. A total of 220 responses were obtained, of which 172 responses were fully completed.

### 4.2.1. Stimuli Development

Main study used fictitious brands and advertisements as a means of reducing potential bias. Spears and Singh (2004) stated that the utilization of imaginary advertisements was preferred because they have a lower possibility of producing sources of variances in the results that cannot be attributed to the advertisements themselves. Brand descriptions and advertisements were developed using insights obtained from interviews and previous studies. Tools Adobe Photoshop and Canva were used to generate stimuli that could elicit a high degree of reality in participants. The brand description section was constructed from a description that included characteristics indicating the type of brand trust as well as a poster displaying the brand's name, logo, and product. The advertisements featured the brand logo, name, slogan, and depiction of Black and White's athletes wearing the brand's sports watch. (Appendix X)

#### 4.2.2. Variables Description

The present study used two independent variables, the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertisement. The objective was to assess the potential effects of these variables, either independently or in interaction, on purchase intention, brand loyalty, attitude toward the ad, attitude towards the brand, attitude towards diversity, and implicit bias.

##### 4.2.2.1. Independent Variables

Type of Brand Trust – At the beginning of the survey, participants were presented with a description of a brand. When presented with the brand description, the brand name, logo, and product remained consistent across both types of brand trust. Brands differed solely in their characteristics. The description of a trustworthy brand include characteristics such as high quality, the goal to reduce CO2 emissions, the reward for the Best Workplace brand, hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds and other similar attributes. Untrustworthy brand was identified through characteristics like not very high quality, excessive emissions, deleting negative comments, and other similar attributes. In the second, a set of three questions pertaining to the brand trust were posed, including a manipulation check to determine the perceived level of brand trust measured on a scale ranging from 1 (Not trustworthy at all) to 7 (Extremely trustworthy). Two additional questions pertained to the significance of purchasing products from a trustworthy brand, which was also assessed using a 7-point scale, multiple-choice questions regarding characteristics of a trustworthy brand. Participants were given the option to select multiple attributes, encompassing the creation of their responses.

Racially Integrated Advertisement – In addition to the brand description, participants were initially exposed to one of the stimuli of racially integrated advertisement. In the stereotypical condition, a Black basketball player and a White tennis player were presented alongside the slogan “Made for you to do what you were designed to.” Conversely, in the non-stereotypical scenario, a Black tennis player and a White basketball player were portrayed with the slogan “Made for you to break barriers.” The sixth section of the study involved the administration of manipulation check question aimed at assessing participants’ perception of racially advertisement, with the verifying whether the advertisement was perceived in the intended manner. The respondents were instructed to choose the option that most accurately represented the advertisement that was presented to them at the beginning of

the survey. The manipulation block was utilized to evaluate the respondents' perception of the presented advertisement as stereotypical or not.

#### 4.2.2.2. Manipulation Checks

Perceived Trustworthiness – The degree of perceived trust was measured on a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (Not trustworthy at all) to 7 (Extremely trustworthy). Participants were asked to rate the trustworthiness of a brand they were previously exposed to.

Racial Diversity – To check if participants are familiar with the term racial diversity, the question portrayed two images, one featuring models of different race, thus exemplifying racial diversity and another featuring models of the same race, thus lacking diversity. Participants were required to select the option that best represented racial diversity.

Type of Advertisement – The manipulation check for the type of advertisement was conducted by requesting participants to indicate the option that most accurately represented the advertisement stimulus that was presented to them.

#### 4.2.2.3. Dependent Variable

Purchase Intention – Purchase intention was assessed by using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not likely at all) to 7 (Totally likely), where participants were asked to indicate their likelihood of purchasing the product. Variable was measured on two occasions, prior to and after exposure to the advertisement stimulus.

Brand Loyalty – To assess participants' brand loyalty, the present study employed a scale adapted from Kabadayi & Alan (2012). The 7-point Likert scale comprised three statements that evaluated the respondents' tendency to engage in future purchases from the same brand, probability of recommending the brand to others and propensity to praise the brand's greatness to their friends.

Attitude toward the Advertisement – The study employed a modified scale from Madden et al. (1988) to assess the feelings and evaluations. Participants were instructed to recall feelings they experienced during the exposure to stimulus advertisement, utilising a 7-point scale. The assessment of feelings was conducted through the use of ten descriptive adjectives, with half of them being positively valenced and the other half being negatively valenced. The evaluation of individuals' positive attitudes towards the advertisement was conducted through the utilization of descriptors Good, Happy, Cheerful, Calm, and Comfortable. Where, negative attitudes

towards the advertisement were evaluated through utilization of negative adjectives Insulted, Angry, Repulsed/Disgusted, Embarrassed, and Disappointed.

Implicit Bias – The concept of implicit bias was assessed through the use of projection-based questions. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, the assessment involved asking participants whether individuals' implicit racial prejudices could be eliminated through exposure to the advertisement. Responses were measured on a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (indicating Not eliminated at all) to 7 (indicating Completely eliminated).

#### 4.2.2.4. Control Variable

Attitude toward the brand – the measurement of attitudes towards the brand was conducted by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with seven statements, using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Not agree at all; 7 = Strongly agree). The scale was derived and adjusted from the research of Spears and Singh (2004).

Consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising – to assess consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising, one-statement scale was created. This scale measured the level of importance on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not important at all) to 7 (Extremely important).

#### 4.2.2.5. Demographic Questions

The final segment of the survey was constructed utilizing a set of three demographic questions. Initially, the participants were asked about their gender identity, followed by their selection of the social group with which they most closely associate. Both gender and social group questions were evaluated using a multiple-choice format with a single-answer option. The final demographic question ascertained the age of the participants, utilizing an open-ended question format, and permitted only numeric responses.

#### 4.2.3. Experimental Design

This research aims to investigate the differences between trustworthy or untrustworthy brands using stereotypical racially integrated advertisements or non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements. The 2x2 between-subjects design was used for the purpose of this study. This

experimental design enables the comprehension of the effect of two independent variables, each with a binary level, on dependent variables.

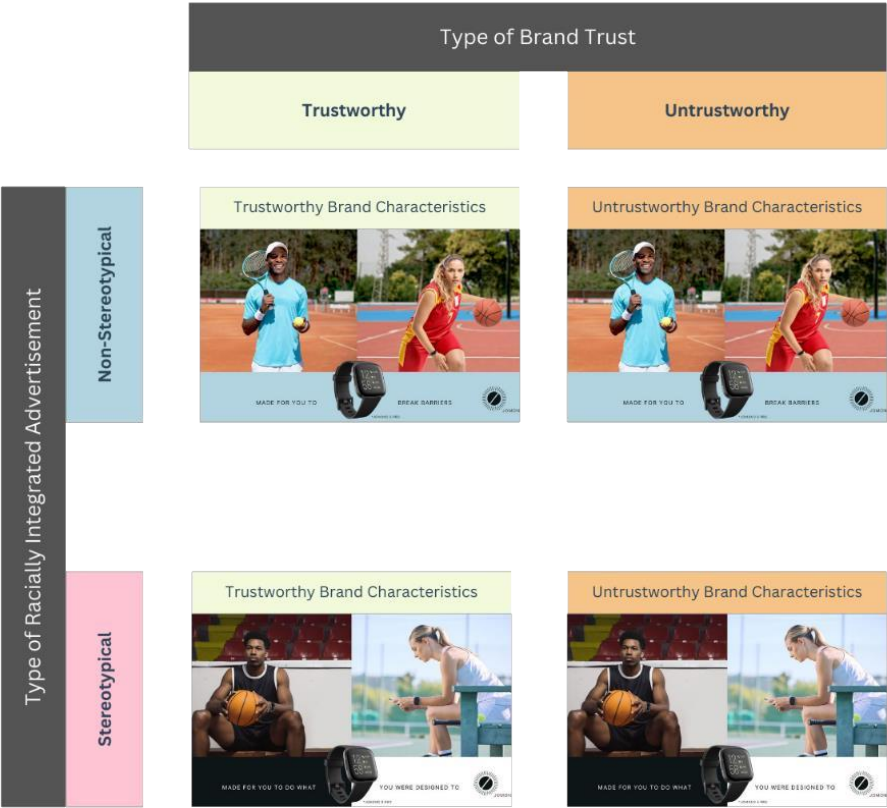


Figure 1: Overview of 4 Experimental Groups: NSRIA TB, SRIA TB, NSRIA UTB, SRIA UTB

4.2.4. Survey Procedure

Prior to the start of the survey, participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. However, they underwent identical procedures and were asked the same set of questions, with the sole distinction being the stimuli that were presented to them. The **figure 2** represented below illustrates the structure of the survey. Following a general introduction, participants proceeded to the first section, wherein they were provided with a description of the fictitious brand, and requested to indicate their probability of making a purchase. Subsequently, they were exposed to integrated advertisements showcasing racially diverse athletes, encompassing individuals belonging to Black and White racial groups. The next block comprised questions related to brand trust and the assessment of respondents’ attitudes toward the brand. The aim of the third section was to gain an understanding of people’s attitudes toward previously observed advertisements, possible alteration in purchase intention,

and evaluation of their intentions regarding future purchases and recommendations to friends (brand loyalty). In the subsequent section, participants were questioned regarding their perspectives on racial diversity, with one question also addressing implicit bias. The fifth part included two control variable questions, aimed at assessing the potential influence of these factors on respondents' answers and the observed effects. The following sections' manipulation check questions were formulated to check whether the individuals have adequately attended to, comprehended, and answered the survey in the intended manner. Finally, the participants were administered a series of questions designed to identify their demographic characteristics.

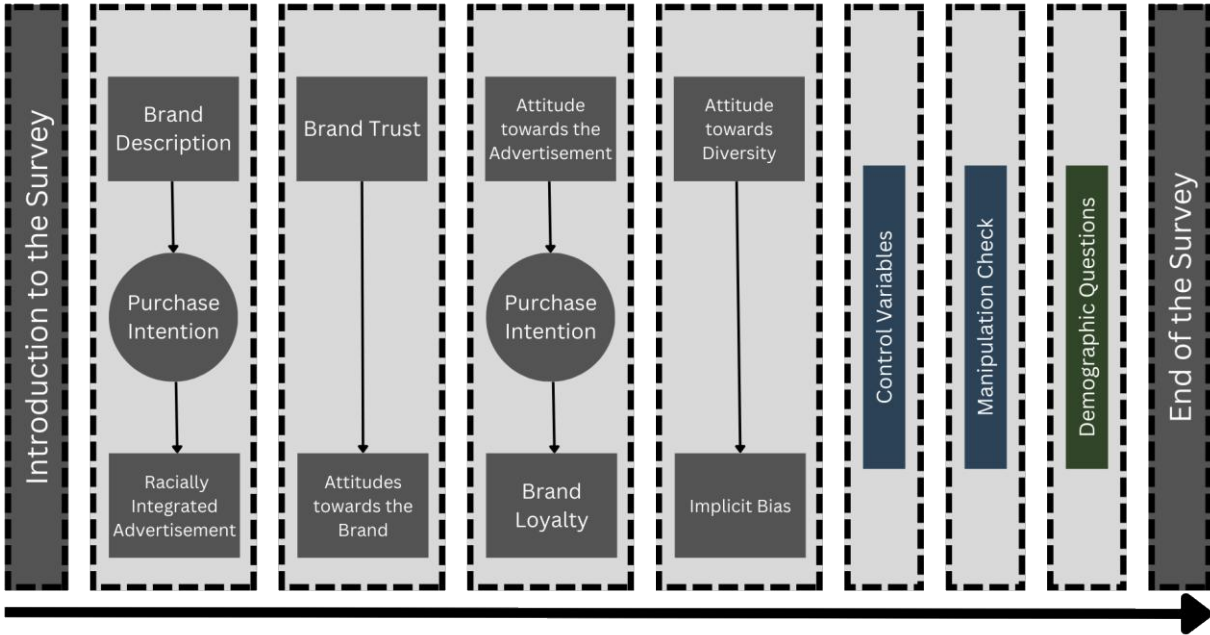


Figure 2: Structure of Online Survey

### 5. Results

The next chapter provides the findings and analysis of the collected quantitative data. Prior to testing the hypotheses, the unprocessed data underwent preparation for analysis, which consisted of assessing and cleaning the inadequate data responses, as well as recoding independent variables. The statistical software program SPSS was utilized to analyze data. The chapter begins with sample characterization, followed by reliability analysis and manipulation check. Lastly, the findings of the hypothesis testing are presented and discussed.

## 5.1. Sample Characterization

There were a total of 220 responses, out of which 172 responses were deemed valid as they were fully and accurately completed. Respondents were evenly distributed among four experimental groups. The findings pertaining to gender indicated that 44,7% of participants self-identified as male, whereas 53,4% identified as female. The remaining respondents either identified as non-binary or opted to withhold their gender identity. Additionally, a diverse age range was attained, encompassing individuals aging from 16 to 80 years old. The majority, 90,7%, of respondents (90.7%) identified with the White social group.

## 5.2. Reliability Analysis

To assess the reliability and internal consistency of the scales with multiple items, the Cronbach's alpha was computed. The principle of internal consistency pertains to the extent to which all items on a given test measure the same concept and is thus associated with the interrelatedness among items in the test. Cronbach's alpha is a number, ranging from 0 to 1. When the items within a test display intercorrelation, the alpha tends to increase (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The present study entailed performing a reliability analysis on six scales (**Table X**), each of which showed an alpha exceeding 0.70, thereby indicating good internal consistency (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). Consequently, no items were deleted from the assessed scales.

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Brand Attitude	7	0,962
Ad Attitude (positive)	5	0,957
Ad Attitude (negative)	5	0,905
Brand Loyalty	3	0,971
Tennis Interest	3	0,890
Basketball Interest	3	0,899

Table 1: Reliability Analysis-Cronbach's Alpha

## 5.3. Manipulation Check

### 5.3.1. Manipulation Check for Type of Brand Trust

The manipulation of brand trust was analyzed using independent-sample t-test with 95% confidence interval. The objective was to assess the perception of trustworthiness among two

distinct brands, with focus on participants' ability to accurately identify the goal of the brand. As previously stated participants were presented with stimuli of a brand that either exhibited trustworthy characteristics or untrustworthy characteristics.

The brand was perceived more trustworthy when participants were exposed to stimuli associated with trustworthy brand (M = 5.85, SD = 0.74) than when they were exposed to stimuli associated with the untrustworthy brand (M = 2.71, SD = 0.96).

There was a statistically significant difference in mean perceived brand trust score between trustworthy and untrustworthy brand  $t(160.30) = 24.03, p < .001$ . The findings suggest that the manipulation was successful.

Two conditions were established within the framework of brand trust manipulation prior to analysis to verify whether participants acted as intended. On a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (Not trustworthy at all) to 7 (Extremely trustworthy), participants needed to rate brand's trustworthiness between 5 to 7 in order to pass the manipulation check. For an untrustworthy brand, manipulation was successful if the respondent chose 4 or less. The findings of the study revealed that the participants demonstrated a high level of proficiency in correctly recognizing the intended objective of both trustworthy and untrustworthy brand, as their responses were in alignment with the pre-established conditions. The following table represent manipulation check for perceived brand trust.

Type of Brand Trust	% of Respondents	Perceived Trust (1-7)
Trustworthy Brand	36.05%	5
	43.02%	6
	20.93%	7
Untrustworthy Brand	9.30%	1
	36.05%	2
	29.07%	3
	25.58%	4

Table 2: Brand Trust Manipulation Check

### 5.3.2. Manipulation Check for Type of Racially Integrated Advertising

Next, two manipulation checks were conducted to assess the second independent variable, the type of racially integrated advertising, using descriptive statistics, and frequencies.

Initially, a manipulation check was conducted to evaluate individuals' comprehension of racial diversity in advertising. Participants were presented with two advertisements, one featuring a Black and White model to signify racial diversity, and the other featuring two White models. The results suggest that a significant proportion of the respondents, particularly 97.7%, responded as intended by selecting the option that aligned with the experimental condition they were assigned to. Thus, the validation of the effectiveness of the manipulation test and the evaluation of understanding of racially integrated advertising were carried out. Despite failing to meet the manipulation check, four participants were retained for further analysis due to their ability to accurately identify stereotype manipulation, as shown in the subsequent section.

Next, a manipulation test was conducted to determine whether or not individuals perceived racially integrated stimuli with the intended mindset. Participants were required to select the option that, in their opinion, best reflected the advertisement they saw at the beginning. They had the option of choosing advertisements that depicted racial stereotypical sports, racial stereotypical organizational contexts, racial non-stereotypical sports, or racial non-stereotypical organizational contexts. The aim was for respondents to choose either stereotypical or non-stereotypical portrayal of sports, based on the type of racially integrated advertisement stimuli they were exposed to. When presented with a non-stereotypical racial stimulus, 92.0% of participants selected the corresponding option, whereas 94.1% of respondents selected the racial stereotypical sport option, when presented with a stereotypical stimulus, indicating that the manipulation check was successful.

As the majority of respondents acted in an intentional manner, it can be concluded that the manipulation of type of racially integrated advertising was successful.

Due to the importance of accurately assessing research questions, twelve participants were excluded from the study as they failed to meet the manipulation check criteria for the type of racially integrated advertising. This exclusion was necessary to prevent any potential bias from influencing the results. Consequently, a sample of 160 participants was analyzed to investigate the hypotheses and research questions.

## 5.4. Hypotheses testing

### 5.4.1. Purchase Intention

The study assessed purchase intention on two occasions, prior to and after exposure to the advertisement stimuli. To assess purchase intention prior to exposure, only the independent variable type of brand trust is manipulated. The evaluation of post-exposure purchase intention involves the manipulation of both independent variables.

An independent-sample t-test was performed to examine whether there existed a difference in purchase intention between a trustworthy brand and an untrustworthy brand.

Results indicated that a trustworthy brand ( $M = 5.35$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ) had significantly higher purchase intention than an untrustworthy brand ( $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ),  $t(158) = 16.81$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Therefore, it is possible to verify the following hypothesis:

**H1a: Trustworthy brand results in higher purchase intention than an untrustworthy brand.**

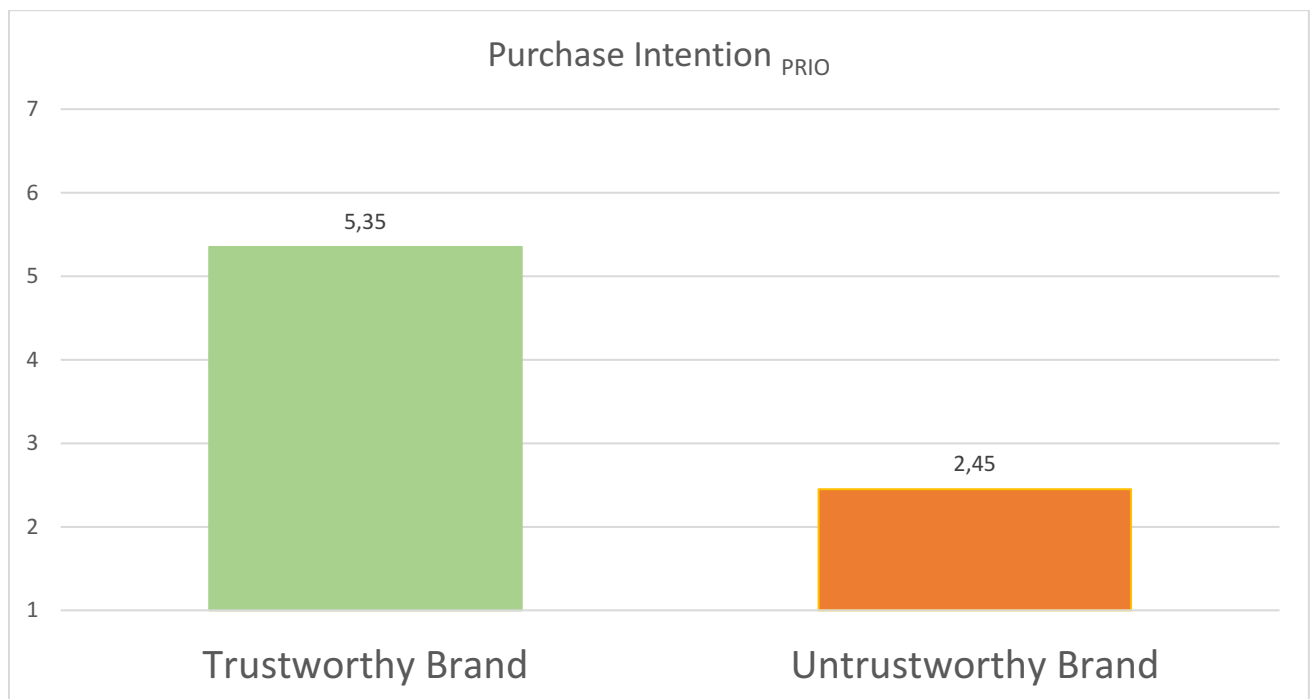


Figure 3: Mean PI\_Brand Trust (Trustworthy Brand; Untrustworthy Brand)

The two-way ANOVA was utilized to analyze the effects of the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertising on purchase intention. The means and standard deviations for purchase intention are presented in Table 4 below.

Findings indicated a statistically significant main effect of brand trust,  $F(1, 156) = 21.22$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .12$ , with a trustworthy brand ( $M = 4.24$ ,  $SD = 1.75$ ) leading to higher purchase intention than untrustworthy brand ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 1.80$ ). Findings also indicated a significant main effect of the type of racially integrated advertisement,  $F(1,156) = 25.87$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .14$ , where non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising resulted in higher purchase intention ( $M = 4.30$ ,  $SD = 2.02$ ) than stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ). The study did not reveal a statistically significant interaction between the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertisement,  $F(1, 156) = 1.33$ ,  $p = .251$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .01$ .

The study investigated the impact of racially integrated advertisement types on purchase intention, considering the moderating effect of brand trust. Independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the means of purchase intention based on different types of racially integrated advertisements. Non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 4.75$ ,  $SD = 1.95$ ) resulted in significantly higher purchase intention than a stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 3.72$ ,  $SD = 1.36$ ), when used by the trustworthy brand,  $t(69.74) = 2.73$ ,  $p = .008$ . Similarly, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 2.01$ ) resulted in significantly higher purchase intention than a stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 2.23$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ), when presented by an untrustworthy brand,  $t(60.41) = 4.49$ ,  $p < .001$ . These results suggest that regardless of the type of brand trust, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is associated with higher purchase intention compared to stereotypical racially integrated advertising. Thus, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is likely to have a greater impact on purchase intention, irrespective of the type of brand trust.

**H1b: Non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising results in higher purchase intention when presented by a trustworthy brand than when presented by an untrustworthy brand.**

In conclusion, we cannot confirm H1b, the study findings indicated that there is no interaction effect between the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertising on purchase intention. The analysis of the main effects however indicated that both of the independent variables have a significant main effect.

Stereotype	Trust	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Non-Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	4.75	1.95
	Untrustworthy Brand	3.85	2.01
<b>Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	3.72	1.36
	Untrustworthy Brand	2.23	1.10

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention

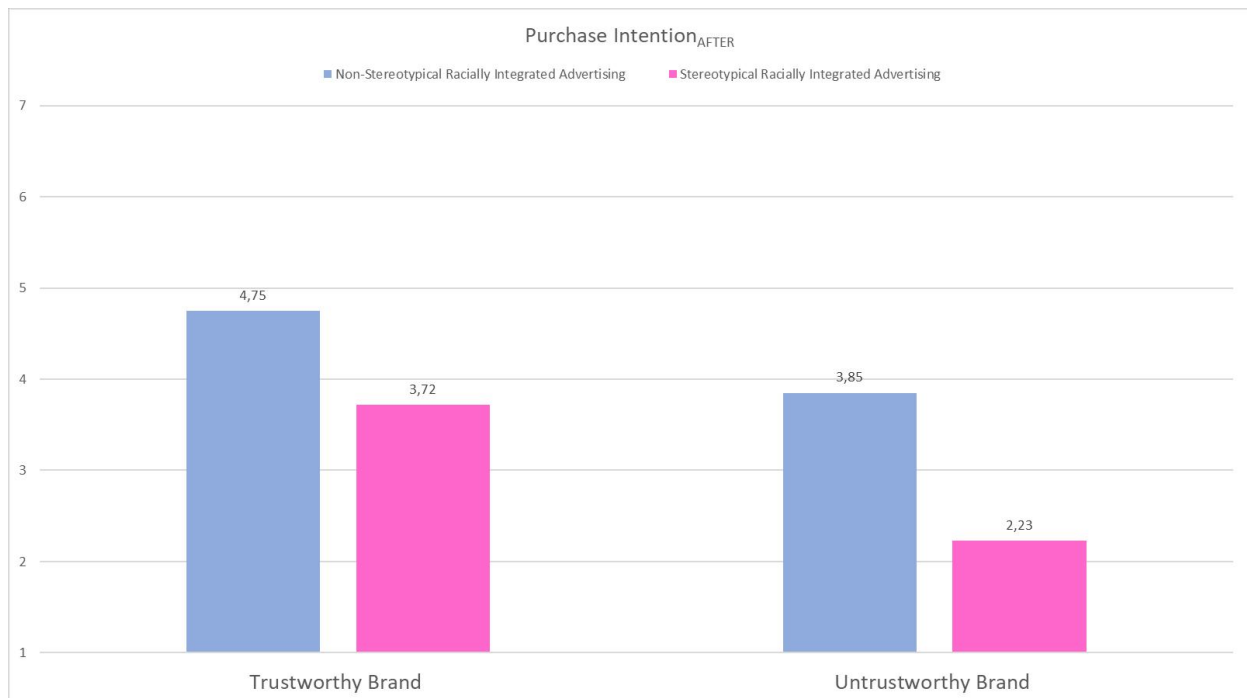


Figure 4: Mean Purchase Intention by Type of Brand Trust and Type of Racially Integrated Advertising

ANCOVA analysis was used to investigate the effect of the type of racially integrated advertisement on purchase intention after controlling the attitude toward the brand. Results suggested that upon adjusting for brand attitude, a statistically significant difference in purchase intention was found across the type of racially integrated advertisement  $F(1, 157) = .98$ ,  $p = .005$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .05$ . The study found that purchase intention was statistically significantly higher for non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = .15$ ) than a

stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = .15$ ),  $M_{diff} = .62$ , 95% CI, [0.19, 1.06],  $p = .005$ .

To examine the strength and direction of a relationship between purchase intention and brand attitude, a bivariate Pearson correlation test was conducted. The results indicate that there was a statistically significant, large and positive correlation between purchase intention and attitude toward the brand,  $r = .69$ ,  $p < .001$ . An increase in brand attitude correlates with an increase in purchase intention.

H1c: Non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement leads to higher purchase intention than a stereotypical racially integrated advertisement while controlling the attitude toward the brand.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis is supported, indicating that a non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement leads to higher purchase intention than a stereotypical racially integrated advertisement while controlling the attitude toward the brand.

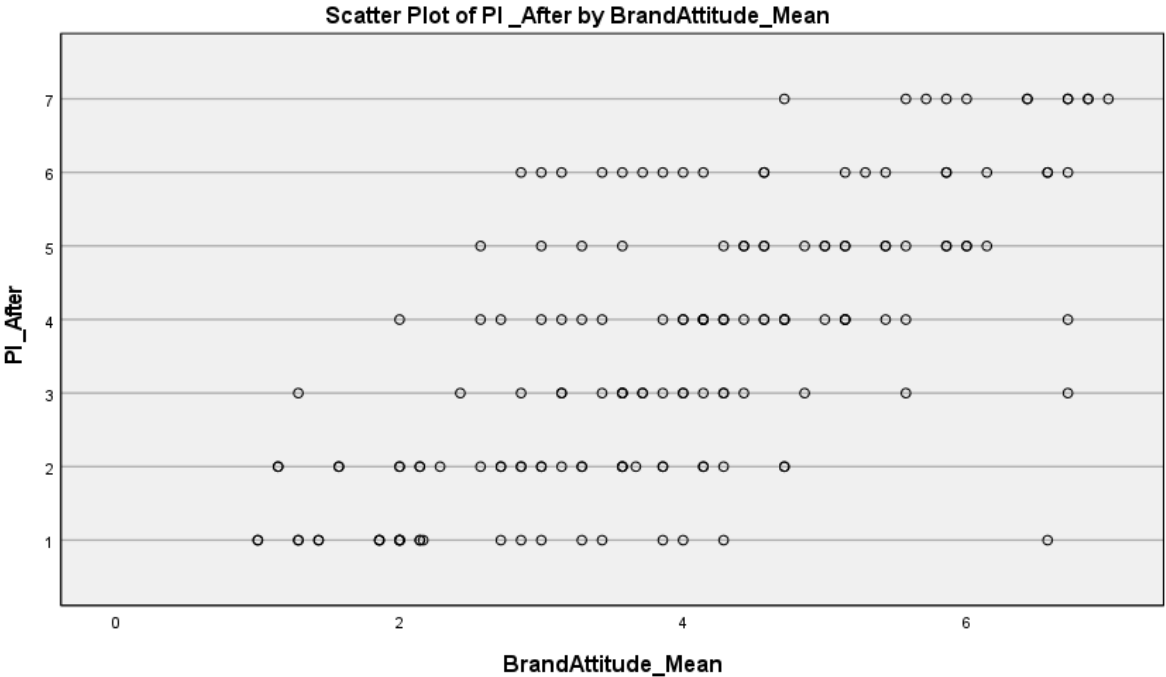


Figure 5: Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention Correlation

### 5.4.2. Brand Loyalty

The two-way ANOVA was utilized to analyze the effects of the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertising on brand loyalty. The means and standard deviations for brand loyalty are presented in Table 3 below.

Findings indicated a statistically significant main effect of brand trust,  $F(1, 156) = 52.83$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .25$ , with trustworthy brand ( $M = 4.48$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ ) leading to greater brand loyalty than untrustworthy brand ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 1.60$ ). Findings also indicated a significant main effect of the type of racially integrated advertisement,  $F(1,156) = 26.35$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .14$ , where non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising resulted in greater brand loyalty ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 1.88$ ) than stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.63$ ). The study did not reveal statistically significant interaction between the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertisement,  $F(1, 156) = .01$ ,  $p = .918$ , partial  $\eta^2 < .001$ .

The study investigated the impact of racially integrated advertisement types on brand loyalty, considering the moderating effect of brand trust. Independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the means of brand loyalty based on different types of racially integrated advertisements. Non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 5.11$ ,  $SD = 1.69$ ) resulted in significantly higher brand loyalty than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ), when used by trustworthy brand,  $t(78) = 3.61$ ,  $p < .001$ . Similarly, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 1.62$ ) resulted in significantly higher brand loyalty than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 2.11$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ), when presented by untrustworthy brand,  $t(75.39) = 3.65$ ,  $p < .001$ . These results suggest that regardless of the type of brand trust, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is associated with higher brand loyalty compared to stereotypical racially integrated advertising. Taken together, this suggests that non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising may be more effective in fostering brand loyalty than its stereotypical counterpart.

**H2: Non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising results in higher brand loyalty when presented by trustworthy brand than when presented with untrustworthy brand.**

In conclusion, we cannot verify H2, the the study findings indicated that there is no interaction effect between the type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertising on brand

loyalty. The analysis of main effects however indicated that both of the independent variables had a significant main effect.

Stereotype	Trust	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Non-Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	5.11	1.69
	Untrustworthy Brand	3.33	1.62
<b>Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	3.84	1.44
	Untrustworthy Brand	2.11	1.34

Table 4: Descriptive Statistic for Brand Loyalty

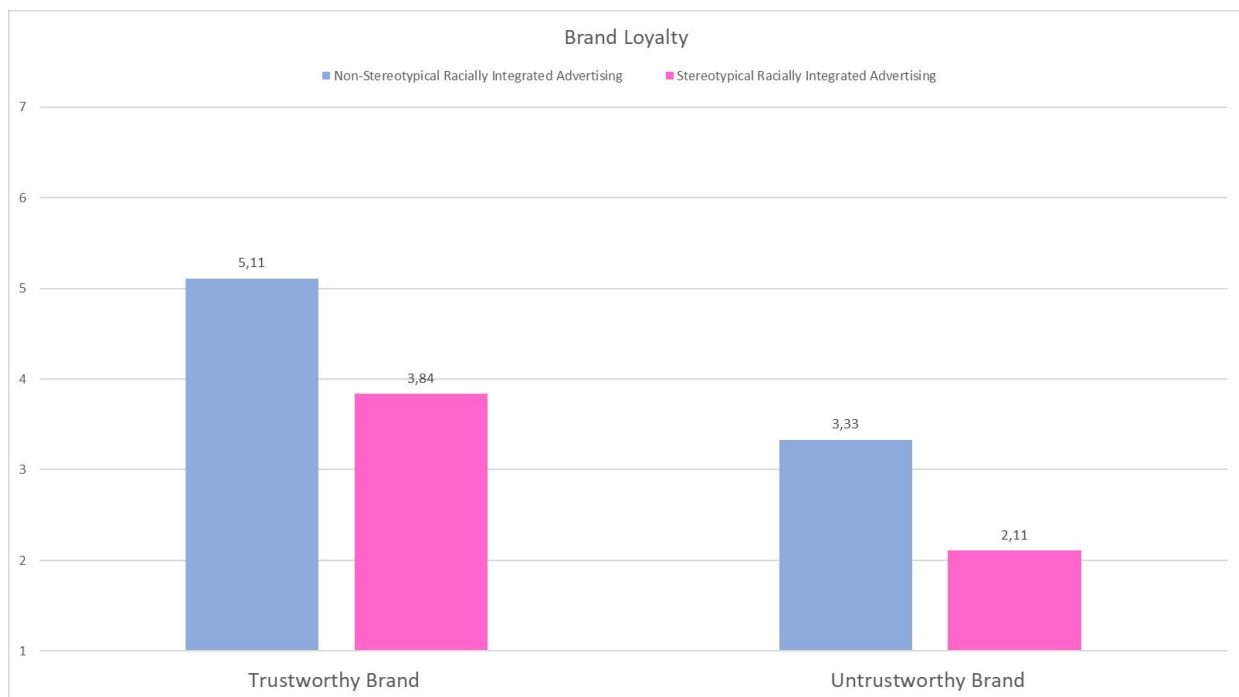


Figure 6: Mean Brand Loyalty by Type of Brand Trust and Type of Racially Integrated Advertisement

#### 5.4.3. Positive attitude toward the advertisement

The two-way ANOVA was utilized to analyze the effects of the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertising on positive attitude toward the advertisement. The means and standard deviations for brand loyalty are presented in Table 5 below.

The study indicated that there is a statistically significant interaction between type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertising for positive advertisement attitude,  $F(1,156) = 5.11$ ,  $p = .025$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .03$ .

Simple main effects tests indicated that positive attitude toward the advertisement were significantly higher for non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement than for stereotypical racially integrated advertisement when presented by untrustworthy brand, ( $p < .001$ ), and also when presented by trustworthy brand ( $p = .010$ ). Thus, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is likely to have higher impact on positive attitude, irrespective of the type of brand trust.

Simple main effects tests indicated that positive attitude toward the advertisement were significantly higher for trustworthy brand than for untrustworthy brand when stereotypical racially integrated advertising was used ( $p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between positive attitude toward the advertisement of trustworthy brand and untrustworthy brand when non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising was used ( $p = .230$ )

In order to determine the interaction effect and establish the dependence of independent variables, sub-comparison independent-sample t-tests were executed.

Findings indicated that non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 4.87$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ) resulted in significantly higher positive attitude towards the advertisement than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ ), when used by trustworthy brand,  $t(78) = 2.73$ ,  $p = .008$ . Similarly, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 4.46$ ,  $SD = 1.69$ ) resulted in significantly higher positive attitude toward the advertisement than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 2.51$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ), when presented by untrustworthy brand,  $t(78) = 5.59$ ,  $p < .001$ . The results indicates that non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising will result in higher positive attitude toward the advertisement than stereotypical racially integrated advertising regardless of the type of brand trust. There was no significant difference between positive attitude toward the advertisement of trustworthy brand ( $M = 4.87$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ) and untrustworthy brand ( $M = 4.46$ ,  $SD = 1.69$ ) when non-stereotypical

racially integrated advertising was used,  $t(78) = 1.11, p = .269$ . Trustworthy brand ( $M = 3.99, SD = 1.30$ ) resulted in significantly higher positive attitude towards the advertisement than untrustworthy brand ( $M = 2.51, SD = 1.43$ ), when stereotypical racially integrated advertising was used,  $t(78) = 4.84, p < .001$ . We can therefore accept hypothesis:

**H3: The effect of brand trust type on positive attitude will differ for a non-stereotypical and stereotypical racially integrated advertising.**

The study indicated that there is a statistically significant interaction between type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertising for positive advertisement attitude.

Stereotype	Trust	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Non-Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	4.87	1.57
	Untrustworthy Brand	4.46	1.69
<b>Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	3.99	1.30
	Untrustworthy Brand	2.51	1.43

Table 5: Descriptive Statistic for Positive Ad Attitude

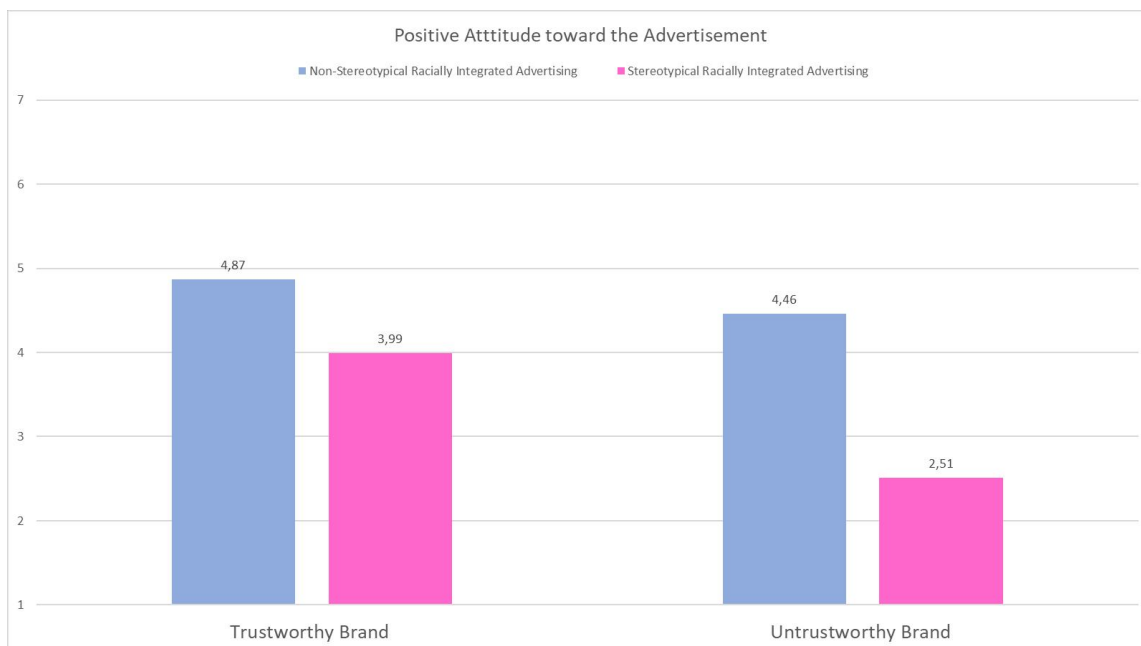


Figure 7: Mean Positive Attitude toward the Advertisement by Type of Brand Trust and Type of Racially Integrated Advertisement

#### 5.4.4. Importance of Racial Diversity in Advertising

A two-way ANCOVA analysis was used to investigate whether there is an interaction between type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertising on positive attitude toward the advertisement, after controlling the consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising.

There was a significant interaction between type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertisement on positive attitude toward advertisement, whilst controlling consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising,  $F(1,155) = 4.69$ ,  $p = .032$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .029$ .

Simple main effect tests indicated that positive advertisement attitude were significantly higher for non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising than for stereotypical racially integrated advertising (after controlling for consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising), when presented by untrustworthy brand ( $p < .001$ ) and when presented by trustworthy brand ( $p = .005$ ). Thus, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is likely to have higher positive ad attitude, irrespective of type of a brand.

Simple main effects tests indicated that positive advertisement attitude were significantly higher for trustworthy brand than for untrustworthy brand (after controlling for consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising), when stereotypical racially integrated advertising was used ( $p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between positive advertisement attitude of trustworthy brand and untrustworthy brand when non-stereotypical racially advertisement was used.

Therefore, we can confirm below hypothesis:

H4: The effect of brand trust type on positive advertisement attitude depends on the type of racially integrated advertising while controlling the consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising.

To examine the strength and direction of a relationship between positive attitude toward the advertisement and consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising, bivariate Pearson correlation test was conducted. The results indicate that there was a statistically significant, weak and positive correlation between positive attitude toward the advertisement and consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising,  $r = 0.16$ ,  $p = 0.04$ . An

increase in level of importance to racial diversity in advertising correlate with the increase in positive attitude toward the advertisement.

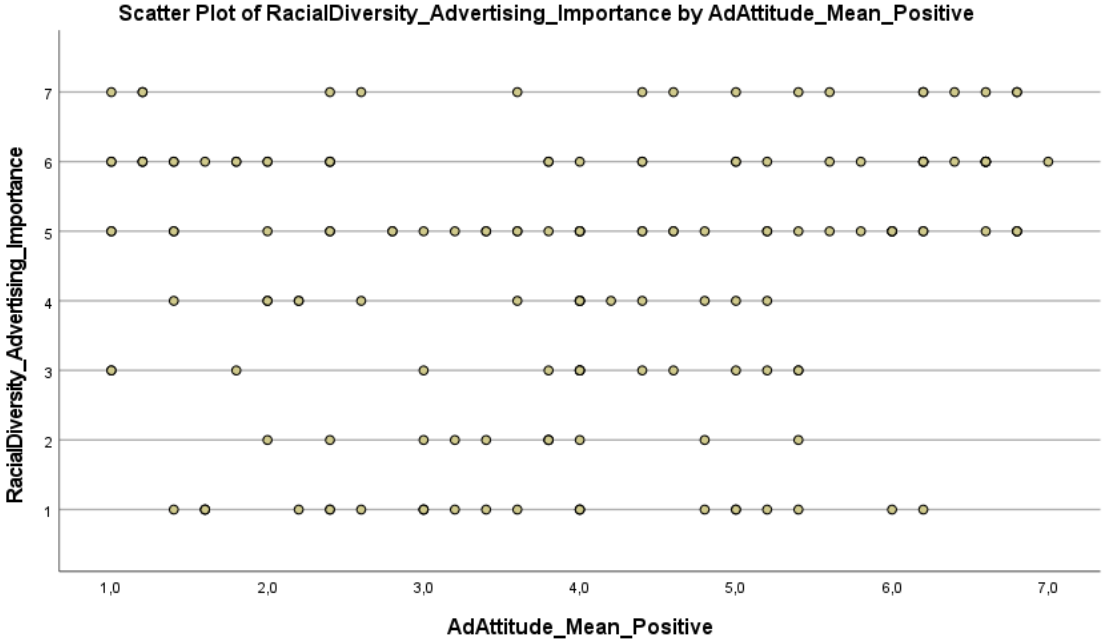


Figure 8: consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising and Positive Ad Attitude Correlation

5.4.5. Negative attitude toward the advertisement

The two-way ANOVA was utilized to analyze the effects of the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertising on negative attitude toward the advertisement. The means and standard deviations for negative ad attitude are presented in Table 3 below.

Findings indicated a non-significant main effect of brand trust on negative attitude toward the advertisement,  $F(1,156) = 2.67, p = .104$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .02$ . There was no significant difference between negative attitude toward the advertisement of trustworthy brand ( $M = 1.93, SD = 1.36$ ) and untrustworthy brand ( $M = 2.26, SD = 1.38$ ). However, findings indicated a significant main effect of the type of racially integrated advertising,  $F(1,156) = 22.63, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .13$ , where non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising resulted in lower negative attitude toward the advertisement ( $M = 1.61, SD = 1.14$ ) than stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 2.58, SD = 1.42$ ). The study did not reveal statistically significant interaction

between the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertisement,  $F(1, 156) = .19, p = .668, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .001$ .

The study examined the effect of racially integrated advertisement type on negative attitude towards the advertisement, considering the moderating role of brand trust. Independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare the means of negative attitude towards the advertisement based on different types of racially integrated advertisements. Non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 1.40, SD = 0.98$ ) resulted in significantly lower negative advertisement attitude than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 2.46, SD = 1.49$ ), when used by trustworthy brand,  $t(67.37) = -3.74, p < .001$ . Similarly, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising ( $M = 1.82, SD = 1.26$ ) resulted in significantly lower negative advertisement attitude than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 2.11, SD = 1.34$ ), when presented by untrustworthy brand,  $t(78) = -3.00, p = .004$ . These results suggest that regardless of the type of brand trust, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is associated with lower negative attitude toward the advertisement compared to stereotypical racially integrated advertising.

H5: Trustworthy brand leads to lower negative attitude toward the advertisement when presented with non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements than when presented with stereotypical racially integrated advertisements.

In conclusion, the study findings indicate that there is no interaction effect between the type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertising on negative attitude toward the advertisement. Thus we cannot confirm H5.

Stereotype	Trust	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Non-Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	1.40	0.98
	Untrustworthy Brand	1.82	1.26
<b>Stereotypical</b> Racially Integrated Advertising	Trustworthy Brand	2.46	1.49
	Untrustworthy Brand	2.70	1.36

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Negative Attitude toward the Advertisement

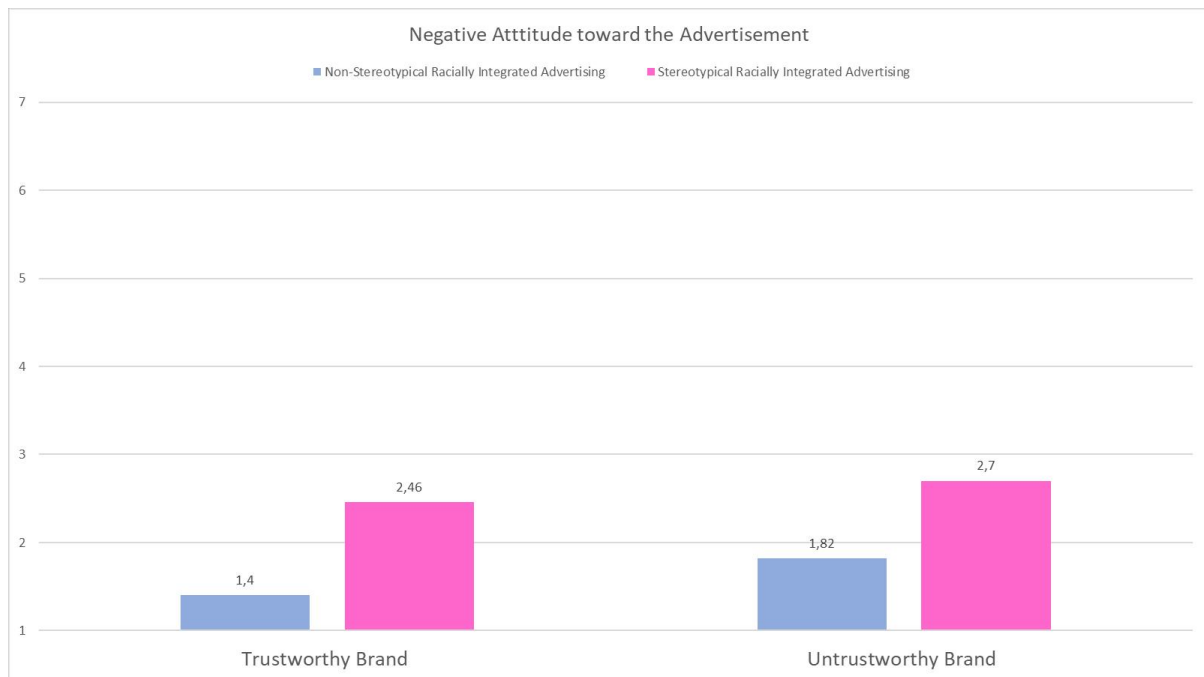


Figure 9: Mean Negative Attitude toward the Advertisement by Type of Brand Trust and Type of Racially Integrated Advertisement

#### 5.4.6. Implicit Bias

A one-way ANOVA was used to assess potential difference in implicit racial bias in relation to the type of racially integrated advertising utilized. The means and standard deviations are presented below, Table 7.

Findings show that racial implicit prejudice level was higher for non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 3.88$ ,  $SD = 1.98$ ) than stereotypical racially integrated advertisement ( $M = 2.81$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ). The ANOVA was significant at alpha level .05,  $F(1,158) = 16.63$ ,  $p < .001$ .

H6: Consumers are more likely to eliminate implicit racial prejudice when exposed to non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement than when exposed to stereotypical racially integrated advertisement.

These results indicate that consumers are more likely to eliminate implicit racial prejudice when exposed to non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement than when exposed to stereotypical racially integrated advertising.

Stereotype	M	SD
Non-Stereotypical Racially Integrated Advertisement	3.88	1.98
Stereotypical Racially Integrated Advertisement	2.81	1.23

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Negative Implicit Racial Bias

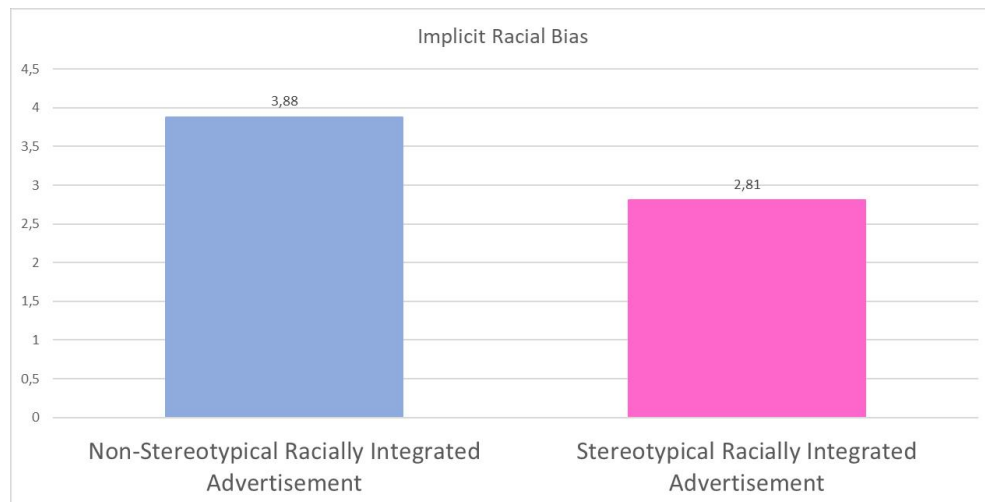


Figure 10: Mean Implicit Racial Bias\_Type of Racially Integrated Advertisement

## 6. Discussions

### 6.4. Main Findings & Theoretical Implications

The primary aim of this study was to explore the impact of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising and brand trustworthiness on consumers' purchase intention, brand loyalty, and attitude toward the advertisement. This study also aimed to evaluate the effect of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements on consumer purchase intention, while controlling the brand attitude. The study aimed to examine two subordinate objectives, namely, to explore the correlation between the importance of racial diversity in advertising and consumers' positive perception of the advertisement, and to evaluate the potential for non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements to eliminate implicit racial bias.

RQ1: Is the degree of brand trustworthiness and type of racially integrated advertising significant in the establishment of brand-associated variables?

Present study showed the alignment with already anticipated outcomes from previous studies, which suggest that trustworthy brand is more likely to generate higher purchase intention and brand loyalty (Ahmed et al., 2014; Dam, 2020; Lau & Lee, 1999; Madadi et al., 2021). Trustworthy brand lead to higher purchase intention than untrustworthy brand. This evaluation of purchase intention happened directly after participants were exposed to brand type stimulus, therefore It did not take into consideration exposure to the advertisement. When assessing the purchase intention after both stimuli have been presented, both, participants showed higher purchase intention for trustworthy brand (than untrustworthy brand) and non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising (than stereotypical racially integrated advertising). However, there was no statistically interaction between the type of brand trust and the type of racially integrated advertising on purchase intention. Results suggests that regardless of the type of a brand trust, non-stereotypical advertising is associated with higher purchase intention and regardless of the type of racially integrated advertising, trustworthy brand results in higher purchase intention. Based on analysis for brand loyalty, we can apply the same pattern to that brand-related effect.

The present study has also focused on positive and negative attitude toward the advertisement. It was found that stereotypical racially integrated advertising is likely to have higher impact on positive attitude, irrespective of the type of brand trust, but we cannot state the same for trustworthy brand, for trustworthy brand it depends on the type of racially advertisement used, Trustworthy brand resulted in significantly higher positive attitude towards the advertisement than untrustworthy brand, when stereotypical racially integrated advertising was presented. Findings suggest that regardless of the type of brand trust, non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is associated with lower negative attitude toward the advertisement compared to stereotypical racially integrated advertising. Where there was no significant difference between negative attitude toward the toward the advertisement of trustworthy brand and untrustworthy brand. Research have found that stereotypical racially integrated advertisement elicit lower levels of purchase intention, brand loyalty, and attitude toward the advertisement, (Eisend et al., 2014; Feiereisen et al., 2009; Huhmann and Limbu, 2016; Martin et al., 2007, as cited in Åkestam, 2017). The results of the present study suggest that the consumers exhibit higher purchase intention, brand loyalty, and positive attitude toward the advertisement when exposed to non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements

RQ2: Does the consumers' perception of a brand play an important role in their purchase intent?

The study has revealed a significant and positive correlation between purchase intention and attitude toward the brand. Findings suggest that non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising leads to significantly higher purchase intention than a stereotypical racially integrated advertising, while controlling the brand attitude. The present observation aligns with the research conducted by Vakratsas and Ambler (1999), which posits that advertising should generate some type of mental effect, such as brand attitude, prior influencing behaviour, like purchase intention.

RQ3: Does the use of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising have the potential to reduce consumers' implicit racial prejudice?

At present, there exists a shortage of conclusive and unambiguous evidence regarding the impact of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising on implicit racial bias. The present study posits a preliminary framework for forthcoming scholars by evaluating the potential of addressing implicit racial prejudice through the utilization of non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement. The findings are promising as they indicate that implicit racial bias is reduced through exposure to non-stereotypical advertisements, as evidenced by the statistically significant difference in means.

RQ4: Is there a correlation between consumers' positive attitude toward the advertisement and their degree of significance placed on racial diversity in advertising?

Last research question examined the potential relationship between consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising and positive attitude toward the advertisement. According to Åkestam (2017), non-stereotypical portrayals make individuals, who express high importance toward racial diversity, happier, which leads to more positive brand-related effects, including ad attitude. The Pearson correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant, yet weak relationship between two variables. Moreover, the study revealed a significant two-way interaction between the type of brand trust and type of racially integrated advertising, while controlling for consumers' level of importance to racial diversity in advertising. Results show that non-stereotypical racially integrated advertising is likely to have higher positive attitude toward the advertisement, irrespective of type of a brand.

## 6.5. Managerial Implications

The findings of this study provide significant insights for marketers and advertisers. The study effectively demonstrates the significance of being perceived as a trustworthy brand, it serves as a predictor for greater purchase intention and brand loyalty. It is imperative for managers to devise strategies aimed at enhancing customers' brand satisfaction. This is because customers who are content with a brand are more likely to cultivate trust and loyalty towards it. As per the findings of both preliminary and primary investigations, the significant attributes related to brand trust are transparency, product quality, dedication to diversity, ethical conduct, and authenticity. It is imperative for companies to prioritize the establishment of strong and enduring relationships with their customers.

It is hypothesized that heightened cognitive stimulation will result in an increase in behavioral intentions, contingent upon the valence of the simulation being positive. According to Elder and Krishna (2012), it is anticipated that augmenting cognitive stimuli will lead to a decline in behavioral intentions when negative stimuli are present. The potential impact of consumers' negative attitudes and scepticism on the processing of advertising has been noted by Nan and Faber (2004). The current study's findings suggest that racially integrated advertisements that deviate from stereotypical portrayals elicit greater purchase intention, brand loyalty, and attitude toward the advertisement, irrespective of the type of brand trust. This discovery suggests that a brand, despite its current lack of trust, can still yield positive brand outcomes by incorporating non-stereotypical advertisements into its marketing approach. Hence, it is vital for advertisers to conduct more extensive research and gain a more comprehensive understanding of what is deemed stereotypical.

As the stimuli presented in the study are fictitious, it is simple to comprehend and applicable for brands to use it as a foundation for creating marketing or advertising strategies.

## 6.6. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research

The principal objective of this study was to examine the influence of racially integrated advertising that deviates from stereotypical portrayals, as well as brand trustworthiness, on consumers' purchase intention, brand loyalty, and attitude toward the advertisement. The present study was designed to examine the disparities between trustworthy and untrustworthy brands through the utilization of stereotypical racially integrated advertisements or non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisements. To achieve this objective, a 2x2 between-subjects design was employed. Results indicated that non-stereotypical racially integrated advertisement leads to higher purchase intention, brand loyalty, and ad attitude. Similarly, trustworthy brand results higher in brand-related attitudes than untrustworthy brand. This study has some limitations.. The present investigation exhibits certain constraints.

During the course of this investigation, certain constraints were encountered, primarily pertaining to the temporal and sample dimensions. The duration of data collection was limited to less than a month, resulting in a relatively small sample size. The majority of respondents were identified as belonging to the White social group. As a result, future research could explore the impact on individuals from diverse minority groups or conduct a cross-cultural study. Enhancing the reliability and generalizability of findings can be achieved by addressing the limitations through augmenting the sample size and incorporating ethnically/racially diverse samples.

Subsequently, the study primarily concentrated on racial stereotypes, indicating a potential avenue for future research to explore other significant stereotypes, including those related to gender, age, and socioeconomics. Individuals exhibit varying responses to advertisements depending on their level of interest or desire for the product being promoted, as opposed to products that are deemed irrelevant to their needs or preferences. The absence of control analysis in this study raises the possibility that individuals' preferences may have influenced the findings. For future research, it is recommended that the control test be taken into account.

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