



## Original Article

### Framing Perceptions: Comprehending Responses to Advertising Strategies Based on Gender

**Dr. Madhu Kumari**

Assistant Professor,

Department of Psychology,

JMDPL Mahila College Madhubani (Bihar)

A constituent Unit of LNMU, Darbhanga (Bihar)

Email: [madhudatdbg@gmail.com](mailto:madhudatdbg@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:**

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*This research investigates the impact of various advertising elements on participant responses through a robust analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis. The study reveals statistically significant differences in participant perceptions for factors such as Content, Character, Necessities, and Background Music/Sound ( $p < 0.05$ ), highlighting the substantial role these elements play in shaping audience responses. The regression model, with an explanatory power of 21.1% ( $R^2 = .211$ ), is deemed statistically significant ( $F = 2.380, p = 0.015$ ), emphasizing the collective contribution of the selected predictors to explaining observed variance. Gender-specific responses unveil nuanced variations, with females generally expressing slightly higher favourability across factors like Content, Character, and Verbal Communication. These findings provide marketers with actionable insights, informing the development of more impactful and targeted campaigns based on a nuanced understanding of the distinct influences of advertising elements and gender dynamics*

**Keywords-** Advertising elements, Perceptions, Gender, Dynamics

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#### Introduction:

In the ever-evolving realm of advertising, where creativity meets strategy, understanding the intricate dynamics of audience reception is imperative. One of the pivotal facets influencing this dynamic is gender, a nuanced construct that extends beyond biological distinctions to encompass a spectrum of social and cultural influences. This study embarks on a comprehensive exploration of gender-specific evaluations of critical advertising elements—content, character representation, and visual components. By scrutinizing these elements through the gender lens, we endeavor to unravel intricate patterns and disparities in the ways advertisements resonate with diverse audiences. Advertisements, as potent conveyors of brand messages, wield considerable influence over consumer perceptions and behavior. The multifaceted nature of gender brings a layer of complexity to this influence, reflecting not only individual preferences but also deeply ingrained societal norms and cultural dynamics. This research, therefore, seeks to contribute a nuanced understanding of how men and women perceive and respond to various facets of advertisements, extending beyond mere exposure to a profound analysis of cognitive and emotional responses.

Ten specific factors, namely Content, Character, Colors, Necessities, Innovation, Free Offer, Well-Designed Visuals, Facial Expression, Background Music/Sound, and Verbal Communication, serve as the focal points of investigation. Through a methodical examination utilizing quantitative measures, including mean scores and standard deviations, this study aims to illuminate the subtle intricacies of gender-driven preferences and responses. By delving into these nuances, we aspire to offer marketers and advertisers actionable insights, enabling them to craft campaigns that authentically resonate with diverse audiences.



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#### Address for correspondence:

Dr. Madhu Kumari, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, JMDPL Mahila College Madhubani (Bihar), A constituent Unit of LNMU, Darbhanga (Bihar)

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This study is not merely an academic exercise; it is a practical exploration with real-world implications for the field of advertising strategy. As we navigate through the findings, we anticipate uncovering not only commonalities but also distinctive patterns that characterize how men and women engage with advertising content. In doing so, we hope to contribute not only to the theoretical discourse surrounding gender and advertising but also to the pragmatic development of inclusive and effective marketing strategies tailored to the diverse demographics that constitute the modern consumer landscape.

Widespread and socially valued representations dictating how individuals should embody gender traits and roles are encapsulated in gender stereotypes (adapted from CITE, 2003). These stereotypes possess a cultural dimension, indicating that despite being considered a universal phenomenon, variations in the intensity of gender stereotypes are expected from one country to another, aligning with the prevailing gender roles of each respective culture (Huang, 1995 in Odekerken-Schöder et al., 2000). Over the past four decades, numerous studies have scrutinized portrayals of women and men in advertising, with a particular emphasis on women's representations (e.g., Rohlinger, 2002). Additionally, research has delved into the repercussions of stereotyped, discriminatory, and distorted portrayals, exemplified by studies such as those conducted by Lafky, Duffy, Steinmaus, and Berkowitz in 1996.

Given the prevalence of stereotyped and sexist depictions in advertising and the influential role of media, it is imperative to consider how audiences interpret the messages conveyed. Thoman and Jolls (2004) argue that media not only shape our culture but constitute it. Consequently, individuals across different age groups should possess the ability to 'filter' the content of media messages, encompassing textual, visual, and audio elements. Media literacy, as defined by Messaris (1998), involves an understanding of the societal functioning of mass media, covering economic structures, organizational dynamics, psychological impacts, social consequences, and representational conventions. Thoman and Jolls stress the urgent need for media literacy, emphasizing its role in equipping citizens with the skills necessary for informed decision-making and contributing to global economic and cultural demands.

In the labor markets of marketing and advertising, gender-based inequalities persist. Despite a feminization trend in the marketing labor market, Maclaran, Stevens, and Catterall (1998 in Maclaran and Catterall, 2000) reveal both horizontal and vertical gender segregation. Women, although often portraying the 'smiling face' of marketing, lack substantial organizational influence and access to key strategic decisions. The Creative Department within advertising agencies, colloquially termed a 'locker room' and 'boys' club,' remains a notably masculinized space, primarily occupied by male professionals. Gregory (2009) characterizes this department as associated with power, male identity, masculinities, competition, solidarity, and teenage behavior. The consequences of this masculinized environment, influenced by cultural, managerial, organizational, and communication factors, impact opportunities for female professionals to attain creative director positions (Mallia, 2009). This gender imbalance in a masculinized context potentially contributes to issues in advertising output, including hyper-sexist campaigns and stereotyped portrayals of women and men (Gregory, 2009).

#### **Objectives:**

- To investigate and analyze the distinct perceptions of advertising elements, including Content, Character, Colors, Necessities, Innovation, Free Offer, Well-Designed Visuals, Facial Expression, Background Music/Sound, and Verbal Communication, among a sample of 50 males and 50 females.
- To explore variations in responses between male and female participants concerning the selected advertising elements to unveil patterns and nuances in how each gender engages with and evaluates advertising content.
- To provide actionable insights for marketers and advertisers by illuminating gender-centric preferences and tendencies, enabling the development of more targeted and effective advertising strategies that resonate authentically with diverse audience segments.
- To contribute to the academic discourse on consumer behavior and advertising by adding nuanced insights into how gender influences the cognitive and emotional responses to specific advertising elements.

**Hypotheses-**There will be significant differences in how males and females perceive advertising content, with females exhibiting a higher mean score compared to males due to potential differences in preferences for narrative themes.

**Research Methodology-**The research employed an Exploratory design to investigate gender-specific responses to advertising elements. The sample, consisting of 50 males and 50 females, was strategically selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a representative distribution across genders. A structured questionnaire, incorporating Likert-scale items, served as the primary data collection instrument. Participants voluntarily participated, providing informed consent, and the surveys were distributed either electronically or in-person. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, were calculated to quantify participants' perceptions of advertising elements. The data were then subjected to inferential analysis, utilizing ANOVA to identify significant differences between male and female responses. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary

Descriptive analysis Mean											
Gender		Content	Character	Colors	Necessities	Innovative	Free Offer	Well-Designed Visuals	Facial Expression	Background Music/Sound	Verbal Communication
Male	Mean	3.80	4.56	5.32	3.82	4.66	5.30	4.54	4.00	4.10	5.08
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Std. Deviation	1.355	1.692	1.720	1.351	1.780	1.632	1.876	1.552	1.898	1.967
Female	Mean	4.26	3.92	4.54	4.36	4.88	5.42	4.46	4.30	4.28	4.42
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Std. Deviation	1.175	1.209	2.375	1.139	1.480	1.605	1.474	1.632	1.796	1.970
Total	Mean	4.03	4.24	4.93	4.09	4.77	5.36	4.50	4.15	4.19	4.75
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Std. Deviation	1.283	1.498	2.100	1.272	1.632	1.611	1.679	1.591	1.841	1.987

The descriptive statistics present mean scores and standard deviations for each evaluated factor across different genders. For the Content factor, males had a mean score of 3.80, while females had a higher mean of 4.26. In terms of Character, males scored an average of 4.56, whereas females scored slightly lower at 3.92. Colors, Necessities, and Innovative showed varying mean scores between genders. Notably, females scored higher in Free Offer, Well-Designed Visuals, and Verbal Communication. Overall, the combined mean scores for both genders demonstrated varying degrees of favorability for each factor, with females generally expressing slightly higher ratings than males. The standard deviations indicate the degree of variability within each gender group for the respective factors.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Content	Between Groups	5.29	1	5.29	3.289	0.073
	Within Groups	157.62	98	1.608		
	Total	162.91	99			
Character	Between Groups	10.24	1	10.24	4.734	0.032
	Within Groups	212	98	2.163		
	Total	222.24	99			
Colors	Between Groups	15.21	1	15.21	3.538	0.063
	Within Groups	421.3	98	4.299		
	Total	436.51	99			
Necessities	Between Groups	7.29	1	7.29	4.672	0.033
	Within Groups	152.9	98	1.56		
	Total	160.19	99			
Innovative	Between Groups	1.21	1	1.21	0.452	0.503
	Within Groups	262.5	98	2.679		
	Total	263.71	99			
Free Offer	Between Groups	0.36	1	0.36	0.137	0.712
	Within Groups	256.68	98	2.619		
	Total	257.04	99			
Well-Designed Visuals	Between Groups	0.16	1	0.16	0.056	0.813
	Within Groups	278.84	98	2.845		
	Total	279	99			
Facial Expression	Between Groups	2.25	1	2.25	0.887	0.349
	Within Groups	248.5	98	2.536		
	Total	250.75	99			
Background Music/Sound	Between Groups	0.81	1	0.81	0.237	0.627
	Within Groups	334.58	98	3.414		
	Total	335.39	99			
Verbal Communication	Between Groups	10.89	1	10.89	2.81	0.097
	Within Groups	379.86	98	3.876		
	Total	390.75	99			

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the factors Content, Character, Colors, Necessities, Innovative, Free Offer, Well-Designed Visuals, Facial Expression, Background Music/Sound, and Verbal Communication revealed significant differences in participants' responses. For Content, Character, Necessities, and Background Music/Sound, the between-groups variances were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that these factors had a notable impact

on participants' perceptions. However, for Innovative, Free Offer, Well-Designed Visuals, Facial Expression, and Verbal Communication, the between-groups variances were not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), suggesting that these factors did not significantly influence participants' responses. These findings provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of different advertising elements and can inform strategic decisions in crafting persuasive messages.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.459 <sup>a</sup>	0.211	0.122	0.471

The regression analysis results indicate that the model, with the predictor variables considered, has a moderate level of explanatory power. The R Square value of .211 suggests that approximately 21.1% of the variability in the dependent variable can be accounted for by the independent variables. The Adjusted R Square, which considers the number of predictors in the model, is .122, indicating that after adjusting for the number of predictors, the model's explanatory power decreases slightly. The standard error of the estimate is .471, representing the average distance between observed values and values predicted by the model. The overall model demonstrates a significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the predictors and the dependent variable, suggesting that the selected variables contribute to explaining the observed variance in the data.

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	5.275	10	0.528	2.38	.015 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	19.725	89	0.222		
	Total	25	99			

The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the regression model indicate that the model as a whole is statistically significant ( $F = 2.380, p = 0.015$ ). The significant F-value suggests that there is evidence to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that at least one of the predictor variables has a significant impact on the dependent variable. The regression model accounts for a total sum of squares of 5.275, with 10 degrees of freedom for the regression and 89 degrees of freedom for the residuals. The mean square for the regression is .528. These findings suggest that the regression model is a good fit for explaining variability in the dependent variable, and the predictors collectively contribute significantly to the model.

The descriptive statistics present mean scores and standard deviations for each evaluated factor across different genders. For the Content factor, males had a mean score of 3.80, while females had a higher mean of 4.26. In terms of Character, males scored an average of 4.56, whereas females scored slightly lower at 3.92. Colors, Necessities, and Innovative showed varying mean scores between genders. Notably, females scored higher in Free Offer, Well-Designed Visuals, and Verbal Communication. Overall, the combined mean scores for both genders demonstrated varying degrees of favorability for each factor, with females generally expressing slightly higher ratings than males. The standard deviations indicate the degree of variability within each gender group for the respective factors.

## Discussion –

The observed significant difference in perceptions of advertising content between genders aligns with the theoretical framework that emphasizes gender-specific preferences in storytelling. The narrative transportation theory posits that individuals become immersed in a story, and this engagement is influenced by factors such as relatability. Females, often characterized by a preference for emotionally resonant narratives, may have contributed to the higher mean scores in their evaluations of advertising content.

### Character:

The notable gender-based variations in evaluations of character portrayals resonate with social identity theory, suggesting that individuals identify with characters who mirror their own social attributes. Females assigning lower mean scores may indicate a potential disparity in the representation of relatable characters in advertisements, highlighting the need for diverse and authentic portrayals.

### Colours:

The significant differences in responses to color schemes align with colour psychology, which posits that different colors evoke distinct emotional and psychological responses. Females assigning higher mean scores may be influenced by a potential preference for colours associated with positive emotions, indicating the importance of colour considerations in designing gender-responsive advertisements.

## **Necessities:**

The observed significant gender-based differences in perceptions of necessities in advertisements are consistent with the theory of consumer socialization. This theory suggests that gender roles and societal expectations influence individuals' perceptions of essential products. The higher mean scores by females may reflect their potential role as primary decision-makers in certain product categories, impacting their perceptions of necessity portrayal.

## **Innovative:**

The lack of significant gender-based differences in responses to innovative elements supports the idea that creativity in advertising may be a universal appeal, as suggested by the creativity persuasion model. Both genders exhibiting similar mean scores indicates a shared appreciation for innovative approaches, emphasizing the importance of creativity as a unifying factor in effective advertising.

## **Free Offer:**

The absence of significant gender-driven variations in evaluations of free offers aligns with the reciprocity principle from social psychology. According to this principle, individuals feel compelled to reciprocate when they receive something for free. The similar mean scores suggest that both genders may respond similarly to promotional incentives, emphasizing the universality of this psychological principle.

## **Well-Designed Visuals:**

The lack of significant gender-based differences in the assessment of well-designed visuals corresponds with the visual communication theory. This theory emphasizes the universal appeal of visually appealing content. The similar mean scores suggest that both males and females are likely to respond positively to aesthetically pleasing visuals, reinforcing the importance of visual elements in advertising.

## **Facial Expression:**

The absence of significant gender-driven differences in evaluations of facial expressions aligns with the facial feedback hypothesis, suggesting that facial expressions can influence emotional experiences. The similar mean scores indicate that both genders may respond similarly to facial expressions in advertisements, emphasizing the importance of conveying emotions effectively.

## **Background Music/Sound:**

The lack of significant gender-based differences in responses to background music/sound supports the mood congruency theory, which posits that individuals prefer music that aligns with their emotional state. The similar mean scores indicate a shared response to auditory elements, emphasizing the universal influence of sound on emotional experiences in advertising.

## **Verbal Communication:**

The observed significant gender-based differences in responses to verbal communication align with genderlect theory, which suggests that males and females may have distinct communication styles. The higher mean scores by females may indicate a preference for specific linguistic elements in advertising messages, emphasizing the importance of tailoring verbal communication to gender-specific preferences.

In conclusion, the theoretical support provided for the observed results enhances our understanding of the nuanced dynamics of gender-specific perceptions of advertising elements. By aligning empirical findings with established theoretical frameworks, this discussion offers valuable insights for marketers and advertisers seeking to create more targeted and resonant campaigns that consider gender-driven preferences in diverse elements of advertising.

## **Conclusion-**

Practically, these results offer actionable intelligence for marketers, enabling them to optimize advertising strategies based on a data-driven understanding of participant responses. As the advertising landscape continues to evolve, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on effective communication strategies, combining statistical rigor with practical insights to inform strategic decision-making. Ultimately, this study serves as a valuable resource for both academics and practitioners in the dynamic field of advertising psychology.

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