

Challenging Gender Norms: how Teenagers View Advertising and Its Influence on Brand Perceptions

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Abstract

This study investigates how gender stereotypes in advertising influence teenagers' attitudes toward brands and their purchase intentions, with a specific focus on the role of gender identity. Drawing on a quantitative survey conducted among Tunisian adolescents, the research captures perceptions of stereotypical gender portrayals using Likert-scale items to assess brand evaluation and consumer behavior. The findings reveal that teenagers are aware of gendered content in advertising and that gender identity significantly moderates their responses, particularly in terms of sensitivity to brand messages and purchase likelihood. The study highlights important implications for marketers seeking to build effective campaigns for adolescent audiences. Inclusive and stereotype-free advertising may foster stronger brand engagement and reduce consumer resistance. Socially, challenging gender stereotypes in commercial content may contribute to more balanced gender socialization during adolescence—a critical stage for identity formation. While the study offers relevant insights, its focus on a single cultural and age-specific sample may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should explore broader age groups and comparative cultural contexts. This research is among the first to analyze the impact of stereotypical gender portrayals on teenage consumers in a North African context, extending existing literature beyond WEIRD populations. It offers original contributions by linking gender identity to advertising responses in underrepresented markets and provides valuable evidence for both academic and practical audiences.

Keywords: Gender, Gender Identity, Stereotype, Advertising, Teenagers