



INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION ON SUSCEPTIBILITY TO STEREOTYPE ADVERTISING

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ABSTRACT

The present article aims to investigate the influence of gender and territorial distribution on the susceptibility to stereotypical advertising, looking for some causal relationships between the criteria measuring stereotypical images. The methodology involves the application of three criteria for stereotypical advertising present in the theoretical and empirical studies of Eisend (2019), as well as Akestam, Rosengren, Dahlen, Liljedal and Berg (2021) - trait descriptors, physical characteristics and role behavior. The results of univariate analyzes of variance (ANOVA) show a stronger influence among men compared to women according to the physical characteristics with images of men and women, as well as according to the trait descriptors of men. Female users give more positive advertising responses to role behavior of men, as well as to trait descriptors of women. When measuring the territorial distribution of consumers, divided into two groups: Europe/North America and Turkey/Cyprus show that susceptibility to role behavior in advertising is higher for consumers from Europe and North America, and susceptibility to trait descriptors is higher for consumers from Turkey/Cyprus. Future studies, which should offer a comprehensive theoretical framework, need to focus on some national and cultural characteristics of consumers in stereotype influence, which were not thoroughly studied due to a number of limitations.

Key words: advertising stereotypes, gender role, costumer susceptibility.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most discussed topics in advertising is the achievement of advertising influence through stereotypical and non-stereotypical images as they relate to the concept of gender roles. Evaluating the concept of gender as a mode of emergence, researchers explore various research questions regarding the perception of both genders in advertising by looking for the effects of trait descriptors, physical characteristics, role behaviors or occupational status (1-3). In modern researches suggest that is a need to develop a standard for there comparing images in advertising and across media, looking for correct indicators of gender representation and identifying different positive and negative effects of gender-

representative advertisements (3-5). These studies did not establish causal relationships between the gender and geographical distribution of consumers and the portrayal of men and women in advertisements. The present study seeks to fill this gap by also making recommendations for some future research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Research on gender stereotypes as well as gender roles in advertising raises a number of research questions. In earlier studies, it was proven that stereotyped portrayals lead to lower levels of self-satisfaction (6), as they raise comparison standards, but do not affect self-perceptions (7) to users of both genders. At a later stage, the researchers found that through social comparison, girls' self-perceptions and self-esteem may be affected (7), on the other hand, men in the threat condition were more likely to perceive hypermasculine advertising as enhancing masculinity (8). Stereotyped portrayals of men and women have a negative

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impact on men self-evaluations (9), because men's self-rated body satisfaction decreased after viewing images of muscular men (10). Therefore, the ways in which images of men and women are presented in advertisements, as well as consumers' susceptibility to stereotypical advertising, determines perception, meaning, and consumer responses and behaviour. In addition, stereotypical portrayals also affect the perception of products and product categories, because empirical evidence shows that stereotyped portrayals lead to lower levels of model and product evaluation (11). On the other hand, higher levels of anxiety in consumers do not cause a decrease in the effectiveness of advertisements (12), but stereotypical images lead to higher levels of perceived influence on other consumers (13).

The reasons for these results are complex: the changing function of stereotype influence, that is, centered on images of men and women (9), as well as in the presentation of stereotypical images determining brand and product influence (11), and in most contemporary advertisements, the emergence of humorous stereotypical images measuring advertising and brand attitudes (14).

Changing public views on gender, as well as the emergence of gender ideology in societies, according to a number of researchers, will also have an impact on the perception of stereotypical images in advertising (3, 5). Cultural affiliation and the timing of advertising play an important role in the confirmation of certain stereotypes in societies, and different stereotypes affect many academic fields such as: psychology (15), consumer behaviour (2) (16), marketing (17, 18) and advertising (19). The main objective is not only to distinguish between attributes associated with men and women (20), but also to derive several criteria to measure stereotypical images in advertising. The most commonly applied criteria are the following: trait descriptors (self-assertion, concern for others), physical characteristics (body height, hair length), role behaviours (taking care of children, being a leader) or occupational statuses (truck driver, housemaker) (1-3). Gender stereotypes are characterized in four dimensions: gender stereotypes concerning physical characteristics, role behaviours, occupational status and personality traits (1). Non-stereotyped gender portrayals in advertising thus differ from stereotyped portrayals by not portraying

gender-stereotyped physical characteristics, role behaviours, occupational status, or personality traits (e.g. by showing less thin women or less muscular men). In advertising, gender stereotypes are often portrayed as a combination of different aspects of the stereotype, for example in an ad where the physical characteristics of a model aligns with the gender stereotype in terms of body size, pose and facial expression (1, 4, 5). Conversely, non-stereotyped portrayals of gender in advertising should avoid portraying several aspects of a gender stereotype in order to challenge it (4, 5). According to Akestam, Rosengren, Dahlen, Liljedal, and Berg (2021) stereotypes suffer from a lack of a common theoretical framework (5), but studies of gender behaviour, occupational status, and personality traits have found a stereotypic framework (2) (16), while studies measuring physical characteristics apply concepts such as idealization (6), body size (21) and attractiveness (11). There is a number of scientific evidences regarding the reactions of men and women to same-gender users or some cross-gender effects (5), and the results can be positive: feelings of satisfaction with the use of the products or a sense of self-confidence have been found and external beauty due to the suggestions of advertising images (2, 16) or negative: in a situation where consumers feel their freedom is threatened, as well as lowering their self-esteem and personal self-esteem under the influence of advertising (10, 22). An explanation for women's negative reactions to stereotypical advertising depicting female images is that they believe that others are negatively affected by such images (13, 23, 24). Similar indications have been found in male users who endorse masculine norms of victory, heterosexual self-presentation, and power over women in a state of threat, that is, in a state of insecure masculinity (8). A similar phenomenon in psychology is called the third-person effect (TPE) (25, 26), a theory that states that individuals perceive media messages as having a greater impact on others than on themselves (27). According to Åkestam (2021), the explanation for this mechanism is motivational: "people tend to feel better about themselves when they believe that others are more susceptible to potentially harmful attempts at persuasion" (5). Similarly, women suggest that female-stereotypical images are as damaging to persuasion attempts (13) and assume that other consumers—male and

female, will be more influenced by exposure to stereotypical images. images of women than themselves (13, 24). The same conclusion is drawn for male consumers some authors (17), with the presentation of specific stereotypes in male-only advertisements putting pressure on one gender to behave in a way that is conformity to these stereotypical images (4). Researchers explain this psychological state with the theory of psychological reactance (28, 29), according to which "people have a pre-disposition to preserve and restore their personal freedom" (5). In a situation in which personal freedom is reduced or threatened, people experience a state of excitement - psychological reactance, that is, they look for a way to overcome or eliminate the threat against which they are resisting. Therefore, if male and female ad consumers perceive that stereotypical images have a negative effect on others (stronger for other consumers and weaker for them), they would not emulate stereotypical images. Research has shown that people are more likely to systematically overestimate the extent to which others are affected by mass media, while they are likely to underestimate the effect on themselves (30), that is, the awareness of other advertising consumers of the achieved persuasion is underestimated media content. Thus, these users believe that they enhance their perception of personal invulnerability and control (30). The expectations are as follows: consumers of different genders and geographical distribution would show different susceptibility to stereotypical advertising depicting physical characteristics, trait descriptors and role behaviour, and the combination of some individual characteristics can give significant results for advertising effectiveness.

According to these previous researches, the researcher puts forward the following hypotheses: Hypothesis 0: Gender and territorial distribution do not determine consumers' susceptibility to stereotypical advertising.

Hypothesis 1: Gender and territorial distribution determine consumers' susceptibility to stereotypical advertising.

In order to provide greater clarity in the process of achieved advertising impact through stereotypical advertising, the present study re-questions the effectiveness of stereotypical images. There are several reasons for

conducting the research: 1) there are conflicting opinions regarding stereotypical gender influence; 2) the achievement of influence through stereotypes is also determined by other characteristics of costumers; 3) the results will serve advertisers, marketers and psychologists in preparing new stereotypical images.

METHODOLOGY

The present article aims to investigate the influence of gender and territorial distribution on susceptibility to stereotypical advertising, looking for some causal relationships between the criteria measuring stereotypical images. According to Eisend advertising research often uses the terms gender roles and gender stereotypes to describe the same phenomenon: the belief that certain attributes differentiate men and women (3). These attributes may be trait descriptors (e.g., self-assertion, concern for others), physical characteristics (e.g., body height, hair length), role behaviours (e.g., taking care of children, being a leader), or occupational statuses (e.g., truck driver, homemaker) (1).

In order to align our study with theoretical views on the topic, Eisend's (2019) theoretical framework is applied, and the empirical results of Akestam, Rosengren, Dahlen, Liljedal and Berg (2021) for measuring stereotypic and non-stereotypic advertisement. The study administered statements measuring three of the criteria for stereotypical images - trait descriptors, physical characteristics, role behaviour - but did not measure occupational status (1-3). The reasons for this selection are as follows: there is a relationship between the first three components, because a complex impact has been empirically proven to be achieved, and the advertisings proposed for user evaluation do not contain images of people with a professional status. In Eisend's (2010; 2019) studies, stereotypic influence is examined according to the criteria: trait descriptors, physical characteristics, role behavior (2, 3), and researchers such as Akestam, Rosengren, Dahlen, Liljedal and Berg (2017; 2021) are interested from physical characteristics, role behavior, but do not examine occupational status as criteria for stereotypical advertising (1, 4, 5). The reasons are multifaceted: the selected advertisements do not depict characters in the professional role, users do not give enough positive responses to advertisings containing the corresponding male and female images, and others.

In the research, a survey was applied in the Internet computer-based management of surveys with the following modules: 1) first module - physical characteristics with images of men in advertising - 5 statements; 2) second module - physical characteristics with images of women in advertising - 5 statements; 3) third module - physical characteristics with images of men and women in advertising - 5 statements; 4) fourth module - role behaviour of men and women in advertising - 4 statements; 5) fifth module - trait descriptors of men in advertising - 3 statements; 6) sixth module - trait descriptors of women in advertising - 4 statements; 7) seventh module - demographic characteristics of the respondents. Another main part of the study is the subjective-objective evaluation of consumers for various advertisements containing stereotypical images of men and women, as well as the evaluation of non-stereotypical advertisements promoting products from the same product category.

Since there is no scientific scale for measuring stereotypic influence, the author of the present scientific work applies his statements, which name three of the criteria for measuring stereotypes: 1) trait descriptors - Vogue's advertisement with Justin & Hailey shows concern for other; Vogue's advertisement with Justin & Hailey makes me feel gender equality; Vogue's advertisement with Justin & Hailey shows the woman in something significant; Vogue's advertising in British magazine shows the equality of women around the world; Vogue's advertising in British magazine shows the self-assertion of women. 2) physical characteristics - Vogue's advertising proposed in the USA with Gisele & LeBron shows sexiness of the body position of man: (physical characteristics of men and women); Vogue's advertising with Gisele & LeBron makes me perceive woman as more attractive creature: (physical characteristics of men and women); Vogue's advertising with Gisele & LeBron makes me perceive man as a stronger creature: (physical characteristics of men and women); Vogue's advertising in British magazine shows that women are significant creatures: (physical characteristics of women); Vogue's advertising in British magazine shows the diversity of female beauty: (physical characteristics of women); Versace's advertising with Brian Shimansky and Lara Stone affects me with the physical attractiveness of man and woman as ancient

gods: (physical characteristics of men and women); Versace's advertising with Brian Shimansky and Lara Stone affects me with the body height of man and woman as ancient gods: (physical characteristics of men and women); Versace's advertisement with Brian Shimansky and Lara Stone makes me enjoy the sexual attraction between the characters: (physical characteristics of men and women); Versace's advertising with Brian Shimansky appeals with the man's strong physique: (physical characteristics of men); Versace's advertising with Brian Shimansky appeals with the man's sexual attraction: (physical characteristics of men). 3) role behaviour - Vogue's advertisement with Justin & Hailey makes me feel the closeness between the couple: (role behaviour); Vogue's advertising Bacio with homosexual presence of men makes me think that love has other dimensions (role behaviours); Vogue's advertising Bacio with homosexual presence of men makes me focus on love relationships in same-gender couples: (role behaviours); Versace's advertisement with Brian Shimansky and Lara Stone shows a real love affair: (role behaviours); Versace's advertisement with Brian Shimansky and Lara Stone makes me think of them as a true love couple: (role behaviours). 4) Items for non-stereotypical advertising - Versace's advertising makes me perceive and try the product, because there is no male or female portrayal; Versace's advertising attracts me with the brightness of colours; Versace's advertising attracts me with the short text; Versace's advertising makes me perceive and try the product for women, because there is no male or female portrayal; Versace's advertising makes me desire this product, because there is no male or female portrayal.

In addition, exploratory factor analysis was conducted using principal component analysis (PCA), with the data analyzed after applying Varimax rotation (31). The number of subscales in the methodology of Deaux and Lewis (1984) is four, but researchers such as Eisend (2019) and Akestam, Rosengren, Dahlen, Liljedal and Berg (2021) the criteria are three, since the professional status is not studied (3-5). The weight of the statements varies from 0.402 to 0.709, which means that these statements are acceptable to form a coefficient of each factor (31). Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the adapted and modified version of the questionnaire measuring stereotypes in advertising (3-5). The reliability of physical

characteristics scale is $\alpha=0.750$, the reliability of role behaviour scale is $\alpha=0.804$, the reliability of trait descriptors scale is $\alpha=0.767$. For the entire sample, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is $\alpha=0.773$. Since the values exceed the minimal recommended value of $\alpha=0.700$ (DeVellis, 2012), the internal consistency for the respective subscales is sufficiently high, i.e. the elements that compose them form a common scale. Reliability was tested for two groups of respondents: advertising consumers from Europe and North America (first group - Cronbach's alpha is $\alpha=0.694$) and consumers from Turkey and Cyprus (second group - Cronbach's alpha is $\alpha=0.703$). The distribution is made based on a number of demographic characteristics of the respondents. The respondents have answered a total of 34 questions on a five-point Likert-type scale, which includes grades from 1 - I do not agree, to 5 - I agree.

RESULT AND DISCUSSINS

The research was conducted from the beginning of 2020 to the beginning of 2022. The self-assessment data was collected from a total sample of 600. Respondents are randomly selected from the general population according to gender and territorial affiliation, and one of the important criteria for participation in the

survey is whether they have used products and services from the advertisements they are supposed to evaluate. The total sample includes the following frequency distribution by gender: 39% are men, 61% are women, and by territorial distribution: respondents from Europe and North America (first group) - 24% and respondents from Turkey and Cyprus (second group) - 76%. The reasons for this distribution are the expected differences in consumer attitudes towards stereotypical advertising, as well as gender inequality in the nationalities studied. Data were processed with the statistical analysis package SPSS 19.0. The following basic statistical analyzes were used: Descriptive analysis of frequencies and means; One-way analysis of variance ANOVA to examine the influence of gender and territorial distribution on susceptibility to stereotypical advertising.

Susceptibility to the physical characteristics of the characters in the advertisement is presented in **Figure 1**, taking into account the average values of the respondents, divided by gender. In addition to the average values by gender, the average values for the entire sample are also present, which allows us to conclude that, in general, the influence achieved through the criterion physical characteristics of stereotypes is average in value, (**Figure 1**).

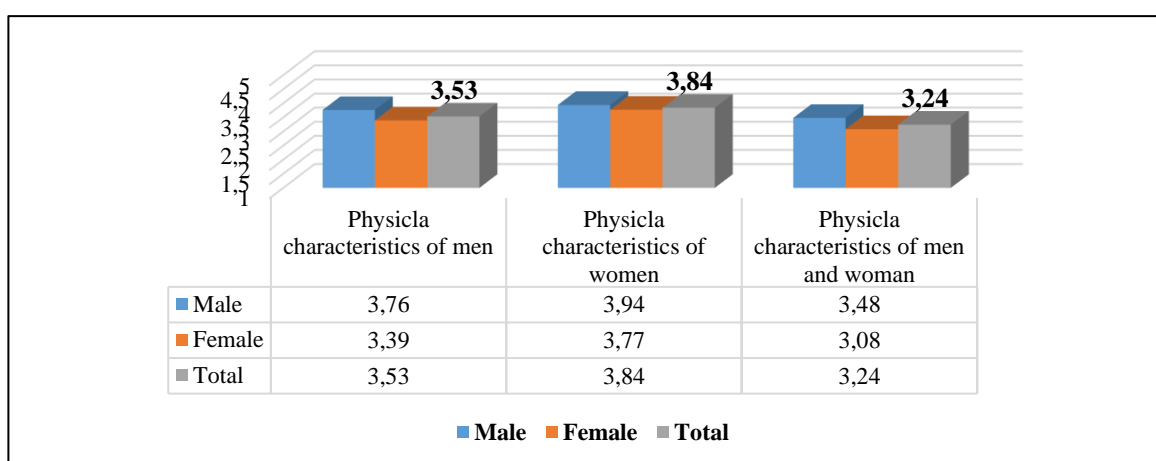


Figure 1. Susceptibility to physical characteristics in advertisement depending on gender

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied to determine the influence of the physical characteristics of the characters in the advertisement on the groups of respondents formed by gender, (**Table 1**). Since some researchers such as Eisend (2019) accept the sex-binary concept of gender (3) (Eisend, 2019), that is, no other variations in gender

distribution are allowed, this concept is applied in the present study. The hypothesis that the arithmetic mean values for each of the subscales are the same for users of different genders was tested. The results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the statistical significance of differences between groups are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Influence of gender on susceptibility to physical characteristics in advertising (ANOVA)

Susceptibility to physical characteristics in advertisement	Dependent variable	Means	F	p-values
Gender of respondents	1.physical characteristics with images of men	$x_{1 (male)} = 3.76$ $x_{2 (female)} = 3.39$	F=17.9	$p < 0.001$
	2.physical characteristics with images of women	$x_{1 (male)} = 3.94$ $x_{2 (female)} = 3.77$	F=6.02	$p < 0.01$
	3.physical characteristics with images of men and women	$x_{1 (male)} = 3.48$ $x_{2 (female)} = 3.08$	F=21.13	$p < 0.001$

A statistically significant difference has been established between the studied groups, distributed by gender, with higher mean values observed for men compared to women (**Table 1**). The strongest susceptibility is observed in the criterion of physical characteristics among men, where $F = 21.13$; $p < 0.001$ compared to women towards images of men and women – $x_{1 (male)} = 3.48$; $x_{2 (female)} = 3.08$. On the other hand, the lowest susceptibility of consumers to advertising is found towards images of women, where $F = 6.02$; $p < 0.01$, with men again being more susceptible to these images in advertisements compared to women – $x_{1 (male)} = 3.94$; $x_{2 (female)} = 3.77$. Susceptibility towards images of men is average in value, where $F = 17.9$; $p < 0.001$; $x_{1 (male)} = 3.76$; $x_{2 (female)} = 3.39$, (**Table 1**). Empirical results show that advertisements targeting both genders have achieved the greatest effectiveness compared to advertisements that depict only one of the genders. Our results confirm the observation that due to the pressure on gender neutrality in recent years, there has been a tendency for advertisements to be neutral, i.e. designed for individuals with different characteristics (33), and the idea of achieving greater advertising effectiveness is contradictory. The reasons for rejecting single-gender advertisements are as follows: the portrayal of

athletic men or thin women (9, 12) affects the self-perception of young girls (7), as well as certain mature male representatives who experience a decrease in confidence (10).

The suggested evaluations of advertisements in our study depict men and women in full stature, which can be a stimulating "attribute" (3) through which associations with the product category are made, as indicated by some authors (3). Unlike advertisements for perfumes, such as those present in the current study, lingerie advertisements focus on the bodies of the characters, making them suitable for studying gender stereotypes (34). In our study, the attractive bodies are present without confusing elements of sexuality, as this is a different product category emphasizing the muscular bodies of the characters. The main goal of advertisers is to determine under what conditions images of people lead to negative consequences for men and women and how to avoid them (35).

In order to determine the susceptibility of the respondents to the other criteria – trait descriptors and role behavior (1-3), a one-way analysis of variance ANOVA by gender was conducted. The results are visualized in **Figure 2 and Table 2**.

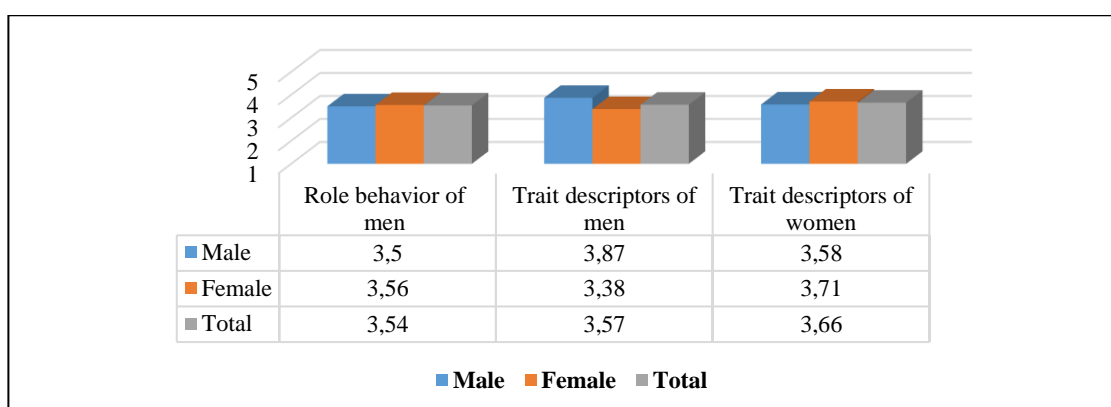
**Figure 2.** Susceptibility to role behavior and trait descriptors in advertising depending on gender

Table 2. Influence of gender on susceptibility to role behavior and trait descriptors (ANOVA)

Susceptibility to role behaviour and trait descriptors in advertisement	Dependent variable	Means	F	p-values
Gender of respondents	1. role behaviour of men	$x_{1 (male)} = 3.50$ $x_{2 (female)} = 3.56$	F=2.55	$p < 0.001$
	2. trait descriptors of men	$x_{1 (male)} = 3.87$ $x_{2 (female)} = 3.38$	F=29.27	$p < 0.001$
	3. trait descriptors of women	$x_{1 (male)} = 3.58$ $x_{2 (female)} = 3.71$	F=2.79	$p < 0.01$

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the statistical significance of differences between groups, divided by gender, show that the strongest influence was achieved by stereotypes that image trait descriptors of men, where $F = 29.27$; $p < 0.001$; $x_{1(male)} = 3.87$; $x_{2 (female)} = 3.38$ versus the other criteria, as male consumers are more significantly influenced compared to female consumers.

For the criterion of 'trait descriptors of women,' advertisement consumers exhibit significantly weaker susceptibility, where $F = 2.79$; $p < 0.01$, but women provide more positive advertising responses compared to men - $x_{2 (female)} = 3.71$; $x_{1 (male)} = 3.58$. The weakest yet statistically significant susceptibility is observed for the criterion of 'role behavior of men,' where $F = 2.55$; $p < 0.001$. Once again, female consumers react positively to the exerted influence compared to men - $x_{2 (female)} = 3.56$; $x_{1 (male)} = 3.50$, (**Table 2**).

Trait descriptors describe self-assertion and concern for others (3), meaning that male consumer are more inclined to accept images of men in advertisements that depict this criterion. On the other hand, female consumers accept

images of men in advertisements that fulfill roles such as couples or authoritative figures offering products and services (13). Findings describing the advertising effectiveness of gender roles are mixed. Positive advertising effects emerge when consumers perceive the images of gender as corresponding to their existing social and cognitive schemas and when they align with consumer expectations for gender roles (3, 16).

In addition to gender identity, studies on stereotypes in advertising focus on a gender-binary concept of gender (3) and fail to encompass the diversity of national and territorial characteristics. In some countries around the world (Australia, Canada, Germany, India), certain authors point out, that there are differences based on social and territorial distribution (37-39).

In order to determine the influence of the criterion - role behaviour on the respondent groups, formed by territorial distribution, one-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied, (**Table 3**).

Table 3. Influence of territorial distribution on susceptibility to role behaviour (ANOVA)

Susceptibility to role behaviour in advertisement	Dependent variable	Means	F	p-values
Territorial distribution	1. role behaviour of men	$x_{1 (Europe and North America)} = 3.67$ $x_{2 (Turkey and Cyprus)} = 2.88$	F= 4.18	$p < 0.05$
	2. role behaviour of women	$x_{1 (Europe and North America)} = 3.38$ $x_{2 (Turkey and Cyprus)} = 3.05$	F=18.49	$p < 0.01$
	3. role behaviour of men and women	$x_{1 (Europe and North America)} = 3.13$ $x_{2 (Turkey and Cyprus)} = 3.81$	F=1.45	$p < 0.001$

The results show that susceptibility to role behaviour in advertising is statistically significantly higher for consumers from Europe and North America (Mean_(Europe and North America) = 3.67 and 3.38), than for consumers from Turkey and Cyprus (Mean_(Turkey and Cyprus) = 2.88 and 3.05), when only men or only women are depicted, where $F=4.18$; $p < 0.05$ for role behaviour of men and $F=18.49$; $p < 0.01$ for role behaviour of women, (**Table 3**). Susceptibility to role behaviour of men and women in advertising is weak but statistically significant, with consumers from Turkey and Cyprus giving more positive advertising responses (Mean_(Turkey and Cyprus) = 3.81) than consumers from Europe and North America (Mean_(Europe and North America) = 3.13), where $F=1.45$; $p < 0.001$, (**Table 3**). The explanation for the found susceptibility of two groups of consumers to images of men and women in advertising is determined by societal differences, because the norms

regarding the role of men and women are very different in each of the nationalities studied. In our study, users from Europe and North America were more receptive to family relationships than users from Turkey and Cyprus when only men or only women were depicted. According to Wood (1994), women are underrepresented in television advertising, and men and women are more often portrayed in stereotypical ways and in traditional family roles (51). Another study on the offered images of men and women in advertising found that while differences between the portrayal of men and women have been reduced in some categories, in others the stereotypical portrayal has changed in both genders in the time (42).

The territorial distribution of users also affects susceptibility to the trait descriptors criterion, which is established by applying one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), (**Table 4**).

Table 4. Influence of territorial distribution on susceptibility to trait descriptors (ANOVA)

Susceptibility to trait descriptors in advertisement	Dependent variable	Means	F	p-values
Territorial distribution	1. trait descriptors of men	X_1 (Europe and North America) = 2.91 X_2 (Turkey and Cyprus) = 3.16	$F= 2.26$	$p < 0.01$
	2. trait descriptors of women	X_1 (Europe and North America) = 3.67 X_2 (Turkey and Cyprus) = 3.74	$F=5.63$	$p < 0.01$
	3. trait descriptors of men and women	X_1 (Europe and North America) = 3.58 X_2 (Turkey and Cyprus) = 3.94	$F=16.52$	$p < 0.05$

The results show that the territorial distribution affects the susceptibility to the trait descriptors criterion, as sensitivity to the depicted male and female images is in the expected direction for the studied nationalities. The results show that susceptibility to trait descriptors in advertising is statistically significantly higher for consumers from Turkey and Cyprus (Mean_(Turkey and Cyprus) = 3.16, 3.74 and 3.94) than for consumers from Europe and North America (Mean_(Europe and North America) = 2.91, 3.67 and 3.58) for the three measured subscales, where $F=2.26$; $p < 0.01$ for trait descriptors of men, $F=5.63$; $p < 0.01$ for trait descriptors of women, and $F=16.52$; $p < 0.05$ for trait descriptors of men and women, (**Table 4**). The explanation of the obtained results is found in the differences between the observed national types of users, because the representatives from Turkey and Cyprus have Balkan features, as well as less equality between the genders. On the other

hand, greater gender equality in some European countries, as well as in North America, is the reason why consumers from the first studied group perceive to a lesser extent trait descriptor such as portrayal of self-assertion and concern for others in the advertising context (48). Some researchers point out that as family roles change, the relationships between family members also change, which also affects the perceived descriptors of traits such as self-assertion and concern for others (51). Despite the decreasing rate of stereotyping over the years (2, 19, 41, 42), different effects of stereotyping have been found in different countries.

CONCLUSIONS

Achieving advertising impact through the use of stereotypes in advertising, as well as the different characteristics of consumers with specific attributes, remains highly debated. The

topic involved calls for more meta-analyses through which additional attributes of gender, national specificity, as well as some cultural features applied in advertisements in different countries can be investigated. Our research establishes some causal relationships between the gender of consumers and their territorial distribution in relation to stereotypical images in advertising. According to the physical characteristics criterion, male users show greater susceptibility when ads depict only men or only women compared to female users. Regarding the criteria: role-playing behaviour of men and descriptors of features of women, female consumers demonstrated a greater susceptibility to the offered images in advertising compared to males. Due to the established negative impact on consumers of both sexes, the 2008 Resolution (47) was also adopted, which required Member States to take action to avoid the stereotypical portrayal of women and men on television by attempting to regulate the affirmation of certain human values. On the other hand, focusing on a sexual-binary concept of gender (3) also limits scientific research in which additional demographic characteristics of users should also be considered. The distribution of consumers in two groups: Europe/North America and Turkey/Cyprus, as well as the obtained results show that susceptibility to role behaviour in advertising is higher for consumers from Europe and North America, than for consumers from Turkey and Cyprus. Therefore, nationalities where gender inequality has been found in many studies (37-40) - these are consumers from Turkey and Cyprus, do not give sufficiently positive advertising responses to spousal roles in contrast to consumers from Europe and North America with established greater gender equality and more stable gender roles. On the other hand, consumers from Turkey and Cyprus perceived images to a greater extent according to trait descriptors, such as portraying self-affirmation and concern for others in an advertising context (48). This shows that stereotypes need to be continuously investigated, taking into account a range of consumer demographics against the advertising images offered for evaluation, because focusing only on a sexual-binary concept of gender (3) would also limit research. According to some authors, research should go beyond common views on the sexual-binary concept of gender and look for new criteria for measuring

stereotypic advertising in different countries (49, 50), which would give greater clarity to consumers' attitudes and beliefs towards stereotyping images in advertising. In order to achieve these goals, future research should prepare a new theoretical framework, tailored to the specific scientific, cultural and national characteristics of the researched consumers, using new images in advertisements that can be adapted as stereotypical images. A comprehensive theoretical framework of different images (3) can explain how stereotypical images in advertising influence consumers, can identify similarities and differences between these different types of images, and analyse their impact on consumers and society as a whole (49-51).

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