



A field research on the effect of consumer sensitivity to equality in gender roles on their involvement in advertisements

Tüketicilerin toplumsal cinsiyet rollerindeki eşitliğe yönelik duyarlılığının reklamlarla ilgilenime etkisi üzerine bir saha araştırması

Melis GEY¹, Cihan BECAN²



¹Uskudar University, Social Science Institute, Istanbul, Türkiye

²Assoc. Prof., Uskudar University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Advertising Istanbul, Türkiye

ORCID: M.G. 0009-0004-7154-470;
C.B. 0000-0002-1289-1360

Corresponding author/Sorumlu yazar:

Cihan Becan, Uskudar University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Advertising, Istanbul, Türkiye

E-mail/E-posta: cihan.becan@uskudar.edu.tr

Received/Geliş tarihi: 17.10.2023

Revision Requested/Revizyon talebi:
19.10.2023

Last revision received/Son revizyon
teslimi: 12.06.2024

Accepted/Kabul tarihi: 14.06.2024

Citation/Atıf: Gey, M., Becan, C. (2024).

A field research on the effect of consumer sensitivity to equality in gender roles on their involvement in advertisements. *Connectist: Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences*, 66, 29-65.

<https://doi.org/10.26650/CONNECTIST2024-1377356>

Abstract

In today's world, brands try to strengthen their position in their industry and enhance their connexion with consumers by showcasing themselves on social issues to influence consumers and positively affect their brand image. Gender equality has recently become prominent among these social issues. Accordingly, this study examines consumers' sensitivity to advertisements that promote gender equality. The aim of this study is to measure the impact of consumers' sensitivity to equality in gender roles on their involvement in advertisements and to scrutinize their sensitivities and opinions regarding ads in this context. In the research, which employs a mixed-method approach, surveys were conducted online with 300 participants using convenience sampling, and in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 voluntary participants. To achieve the research objectives and test the hypotheses, one of the campaigns focussing on equality in household gender roles from the past year was selected after a pilot study and presented to the participants. According to the research findings, consumers' sensitivity to equality in gender roles has a significant and positive impact on cognitive and affective involvement in advertisements. Furthermore, participants believed that the message conveyed in the ad could be beneficial in terms of gender equality sensitivity, but they also critically examined equality in household gender roles presented in the advertisement.

Keywords: Advertising, gender roles, gender equality, cognitive involvement, affective involvement

Öz

Günümüzde markalar hem faaliyet gösterdikleri sektörde konumunu sağlamlaştırmak hem de tüketicilerle olan bağıını güçlendirmek için sosyal konularda kendini göstererek tüketicileri etkilemeye ve marka imajları üzerinde olumlu etkiler oluşturmaya çaba göstermektedir. Bahsedilen bu sosyal konular



içerisinde son zamanlarda toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği öne çıkmaktadır. Buradan hareketle çalışma, tüketicilerin toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini içeren reklamlara yönelik gösterdikleri ilgilenimi incelemeyi konu edinmektedir. Bu doğrultuda tüketicilerin ev içi toplumsal cinsiyet rollerindeki eşitliğine yönelik duyarlılığın, reklama gösterdikleri ilgilenim üzerindeki etkisini ölçümlemek ve bu içerikteki reklamlara karşı hassasiyetlerini ve görüşlerini irdelemek amaçlanmaktadır. Karma metodun uygulandığı araştırmada kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle, çevrimiçi ortamda, 300 kişiye anket yapılırken, 10 gönüllü katılımcıyla derinlemesine görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın amacını gerçekleştirebilmek ve ortaya koyulan hipotezleri test etmek amacıyla, son bir yılı kapsayan, ev içi toplumsal

cinsiyet rollerindeki eşitliği içeren kampanyalardan biri, pilot çalışma sonrası seçilerek katılımcılara gösterilmiştir. Araştırmanın sonucuna göre, reklama yönelik bilişsel ve duygusal ilgilenim üzerinde, tüketicilerin toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği duyarlılığının anlamlı ve pozitif yönde bir etkisi olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca katılımcıların reklamda iletilen mesajın toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğine duyarlılık bakımından iyileştirici olabileceğini düşünürken, bireylerin reklamda sunulan ev içi toplumsal cinsiyet rollerindeki eşitlik ile ilgili içeriği sorgulayıcı bir şekilde ele aldıkları gözlemlenmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Reklam, toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği, bilişsel ilgilenim, duygusal ilgilenim

Introduction

In behavioural and social sciences, academics from various disciplines have recently been interested in the social and cultural effects of advertising. Among the topics studied is how the use of portrayals of gender roles in advertisements reinforces social stereotypes and, significantly, how it shapes the attitudes of female and male consumers. It has been observed that brands often use gender roles in ads to establish their products and services in the minds of consumers, aiming to make them stick. Therefore, it can be easily understood why researchers have shown significant interest in portrayals of women and men in advertising since the 1960s.

When gender is brought to the forefront, the focus often shifts to representations of women and men in everyday life practises or the public sphere, highlighting the perception of inequality, which has been a subject of debate for many years. Gender role patterns generally used in advertising are derived from traditional roles associated with men and women within society over time. Advertising messages have traditionally been presented in a male-dominated discourse style, effectively internalising and supporting role patterns that position women as subordinate to men. In parallel, in advertisements, men are often portrayed as responsible for their families, emotionally intense, confident, capable of taking on leadership roles in public spaces and workplaces, and successful individuals. Women are often depicted in more private settings and engaged in household chores, consuming products that fulfil their families' needs, or fulfilling the assigned role of motherhood.

However, the findings suggest that women want to be portrayed as independent thinkers, career-oriented individuals, and potential societal leaders. Women have expressed dissatisfaction with how advertisements represent them, stating that advertisements rely on stereotypes and portraying gender roles in advertisements is inaccurate (Zimmerman & Dahlberg, 2008). This negative attitude towards ad content, created by pushing women into the background and depicting them in passive roles, also leads to negative attitudes and behaviours towards the brands. In this context, the recent criticism from academia and the industry of portraying women in advertising as catering to the male gaze and reinforcing patriarchy has led brands to prioritise gender equality in their marketing communication activities in recent years (Canbazoglu, 2020, p. 74). Consequently, brands that have faced criticism from society have started taking action to promote gender equality, particularly in their advertisements, by

delivering messages that support gender equality in their marketing communication activities.

As gender roles have begun to change and evolve, ads have shifted, with increasing efforts towards gender-sensitive and equitable advertising. Recognising the potentially transformative power of advertisements in achieving gender equality, there has been a growing emphasis on creating ads that challenge and break free from stereotypes related to gender. The impact of such advertisements, which eliminate stereotypes that go against gender equality, can be evaluated by examining the reactions and attitudes of viewers.

To date, the limited number of studies measuring the relationship between sensitivity to gender equality and involvement in advertisements underscores the importance of this study. This study examines how consumers respond to ads focusing on gender equality. Within this framework, the study aims to measure the influence of consumers' sensitivity towards equality in gender roles on their involvement in advertisements and to analyse their sensitivities and opinions regarding these types of content. To reveal the relationship between sensitivity to gender equality and consumers' involvement in ads, quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used in a mixed-method approach.

Overview of gender equality in advertising

The concept of 'gender' in feminist literature was introduced by the British sociologist Ann Oakley. In her book *Sex, Gender, and Society*, she argued that gender is not a determining factor in the oppression of women, thus popularising the concept (Oakley, 1972). The reason for distinguishing between "sex" and "gender" is that, from a biological standpoint, there is limited potential for political change, while culture allows for change (Mutlu, 2012, p. 301). Scott (2007) notes that the concept of "gender" is more seriously used to refer to the social organisation of relations between sexes and that the recent frequent use of the term is aimed at establishing the academic credibility of research conducted in this field (p. 10). The concept of gender has proven to play a very important role in illuminating one of the fundamental elements in social stratification: gender, which precedes and intersects with all other social differences, such as social class, status, and race, between men and women (Slattery, 2008, p. 345). People tend to act in ways that their cultures expect. Traditional gender expectations are often based on

how many individuals behave within their culture. In this regard, gender is more about what we do than a universal concept of who we are (Atkinson, 2015, p. 58). Cislighi and Heise (2020) define gender as the totality of social expectations created based on how women and men within a society reflect socially accepted behaviours.

The expansion and strengthening of the feminist movement over the last 20-30 years have opened the way for a more detailed analysis of discussions on gender and gender differences. In this regard, Arat (2020) states that the concept of gender can change over time or in different societies because of political, social, economic, and cultural transformations. For example, in the past, women were expected to only embrace the roles of mother and wife at home, but today, they are expected to participate in all areas of society, join the workforce, and take on representative roles in politics. Therefore, it is now widely recognised that gender cannot be approached from a fixed perspective. It is constantly reevaluated, especially by postmodern paradigms, and is a contentious definition. This reality encourages us to emphasise gender sensitivity further, ultimately leading us towards gender equality.

Ensuring gender equality is closely related to creating awareness of gender sensitivity. Gender sensitivity involves being aware of and respecting the needs, interests, and sensitivities of women and men. Examples of this sensitivity include refraining from using derogatory language, avoiding stereotypes, and providing opportunities to meet different needs (Ecevit, 2021, p. 14). Gender equality is “a broader concept and, according to one definition, it refers to women and men having equal rights, opportunities, obligations, and responsibilities in a social, economic, and cultural platform” (Jarviste, 2010, p. 1). Gender equality is a concept associated with the unequal positions of women and men in society, not biological differences (Ecevit, 2021, p. 25). According to another approach, gender equality minimises gender role differences and the discrimination that may arise (Grove, 2005; House et al., 2002).

Advertising is one factor that directly affects the shaping of gender perceptions in people’s minds. In today’s consumer society, where advertisements have become a fundamental determinant of daily life as part of the media, it can be anticipated that they have a much more central role in shaping perceptions of gender roles compared to the past. The symbolic power of advertisements emerges in reinforcing or changing a consumer’s opinion about any product and/or service, strengthening their attitude, or determining societal beliefs independent of the product. As Vivian (2009) points

out, advertising is a tool used to sustain specific social structures where different attitudes, behaviours, and social statuses of women and men are portrayed, such as gender.

The use of images that depict stereotypical gender roles and words in advertising communication has introduced gendered advertising in the literature. Goffman (2020) addresses gender advertising as a type of advertising that socially defines and constructs gender relationships, signs, and roles in people's minds (p. 102). Since advertising presents a visual value system, the relationship between advertising and gender becomes inevitable because of its reflection of culture and its creation of meaning in the circulation of culture. Research on gendered advertising indicates that women are often portrayed explicitly in domestic roles, such as happy housewives and mothers, while men are frequently depicted in outdoor and professional settings (Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Mak, 1999; Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Grau & Zotos, 2016; Matthes et al., 2016). Based on these studies, the consensus is that stereotypes are known to have a general effect of preventing distraction, capturing viewers' attention, encouraging a focus on the brand message, and simplifying cognitive processes and classification on behalf of consumers, thereby hindering advertisers from refuting them (Windels, 2016; Zotos & Tschla, 2014). According to feminist thought, advertising in popular media overtly contributes to gender inequality by promoting sexism and accepting distorted image ideals as acceptable and valid (Kilbourne, 1999).

Recently, a shift has been observed in the portrayal of gender in advertising communication, prompting a reevaluation of gender roles within the realm of advertising (Tschla, 2020, p. 36). Indeed, advertisements convey new meanings of gender by creating an image of active, self-confident, or sexually empowered women and presenting loving fathers and men. The primary reason behind this change is the inclination to adopt and effectively communicate corporate social responsibility or brand advocacy practises at the corporate level to appear more socially responsible and satisfy viewers, especially ethically conscious Generation Y consumers (Champlin et al., 2019). Gill (2008) and Varghese and Kumar (2022) point to many powerful reasons behind gender equality in advertising, such as the increasing brand activism for better representation of women, the increased economic independence of women, rising criticisms of commodity feminism, sensitivity to gender stereotypes, and heightened scrutiny of gender role representations by regulatory governmental bodies. In this regard, advertisements reflect societal cultural changes by breaking gender stereotypes

more than in the past and presenting increasingly prevalent gender equality roles (Fowler & Thomas, 2015; Grau & Zotos, 2016; Åkestam et al., 2017). Consumers expect brands and advertisers to take a stance in line with this as consumers act more consciously towards achieving gender equality (Pounders, 2018).

Valek and Picherit-Duthler (2021) conducted a study in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In China, traditions and culture still play a vital role, focussing on consumers' perceptions of gender role stereotypes in advertising. According to the results, more participants remembered an advertisement featuring a female character than a male one. In addition, female and male participants agreed that a female character should be used in a household product advertisement, but this joint agreement was disrupted for a bank advertisement. The research conducted by Nwokoro and Ekwunife (2020) demonstrates the inevitability of gender sensitivity in ads, highlighting that women are negatively characterised as "less competent" compared to their male colleagues described as "active and competent" for public positions. A study by Huhmann and Limbu (2016) found that the more consumers believe that advertisements depict gender stereotypes, the less favourable their general attitudes towards the ad. In addition, multiple group analyses concluded that gender stereotype attitudes adversely affect the attitude towards advertisements for women and young consumers.

Another study presents a meta-analysis based on 64 primary studies regarding gender roles in TV and radio advertisements. The research's conclusion reveals that advertisements' stereotyping has decreased over time, but this decrease is mainly attributed to developments in countries with high levels of masculinity. Furthermore, correlation analysis and structural equation modelling results indicate that gender stereotyping in advertisements is linked to gender developments and value shifts. These findings provide experimental support for the mirror argument, challenging the mould argument for the first time (Eisend, 2010). In another study examining gender equality in tourism advertisements focussing on the social marketing approach, 394 photographs were visually analysed and coded using Goffman's framework of gender and media relations. The study reported mixed results in terms of finer details and transparent and more explicit visual cues depicting relationships between men and women. Subsequently, important implications for social marketing were drawn, and a meaning-means framework for quality of life was proposed (Chhabra et al., 2011). In the 2021 Gender Equality Scorecard Study, which analysed TV commercials that received Effie Awards at the national level, the visibility of men significantly increased in the "Home Cleaning and Care" category

traditionally associated with women, while the visibility of women increased in the “Banking-Finance” category traditionally associated with men. The portrayal of women in working roles increased beyond the previous year, and their visibility in the workplace showed an increasing trend. Additionally, the study observed that the advertisements focussed on men who spend more time at home and perform household chores (Şener & Öztürk, 2022). These data reflect an increase in societal awareness of gender equality and diversity and a greater embrace of transformation in gender representations in advertisements that align with these values.

Aim and methodology

In recent times, as gender roles in society have begun to transform, it has been observed that advertisements have changed and that the steps taken regarding gender-sensitive and egalitarian advertisements have increased. Building on this, this study addresses the relationship between gender equality and advertisements. Consequently, this study examines the relationship between sensitivity and gender equality and consumers’ involvement in ads.

Aim

The research measures consumers’ sensitivity towards advertisements that incorporate equality in gender roles. The study’s primary objective is to measure the impact of consumers’ sensitivity to equality in household gender roles on their involvement in advertisements and examine their sensitivities and opinions towards ads in this context.

Shteiwi (2015), in his research using variables such as gender, age, and employment status, investigated attitudes towards gender roles in Jordan, emphasising the recent modernisation. The findings suggest a relationship between gender, age, employment status, and attitudes towards gender equality. Accordingly, female participants showed a more robust support for women’s social and economic participation than male participants. Moreover, non-working individuals and the age groups of 18-24 and 45-54 demonstrated a more egalitarian attitude than other age groups. In line with this study, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H1a: There is a significant difference between the gender groups of consumers and their societal sensitivity towards gender equality.

H1b: There is a significant difference between the gender groups of consumers and their domestic sensitivity towards gender equality.

H2a: There is a significant difference between the marital status of the participants and their societal sensitivity towards gender equality.

H2b: There is a significant difference between the participants' marital status and their domestic sensitivity towards gender equality.

H3a: There is a significant difference between the participants' age groups and their societal sensitivity towards gender equality.

H3b: There is a significant difference between the age groups of the participants and their domestic sensitivity towards gender equality.

H4a: There is a significant difference between the participants' income levels and their societal sensitivity towards gender equality.

H4b: There is a significant difference between the participants' income levels and their domestic sensitivity towards gender equality.

It is assumed that raising awareness about advertising messages that highlight sensitivity towards gender equality and emphasise the power of women will both increase the involvement of brands and advertisements among consumers and establish an emotional bond, especially with female consumers (Valek & Picherit-Duthler, 2021, p. 513). In a study conducted by Drake (2017), reaching 181 consumers through an online survey, it was revealed that advertisements focussing on gender equality, particularly those centred around women, led to a positive attitude towards both the advertisements and the brands creating them. These ads generated purchasing intention and facilitated an emotional connexion with the brand. Based on these studies, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H5a: Consumer sensitivity to gender equality is positively related to their cognitive involvement in advertisements.

H5b: Consumer sensitivity to gender equality is positively related to their affective involvement in advertisements.

H6a: The effect of consumers' sensitivity to gender equality on their cognitive involvement in advertisements is significant.

H6b: The effect of consumers' sensitivity to gender equality on their affective involvement with advertisements is significant.

Method

In this study, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in a mixed-method approach. The research was conducted in two phases: 1-questionnaire and 2- in-depth interview. In this study, both a survey and an in-depth interview were utilised to measure individuals' statistical involvement in advertisements emphasising gender equality in household social roles and to interpret their sensitivities and attitudes towards these advertisements based on their direct opinions. First, a questionnaire was developed to achieve the quantitative research objective. This questionnaire measured participants' sensitivity to gender equality and to determine their cognitive and affective involvement in ad messages addressing gender equality. On the basis of numerical measurement, the data collected through surveys can be viewed as a valid and reliable tool (Lewin, 2005, p. 219; Dawson, 2007, p. 15). In addition to the survey, a qualitative research method, namely an in-depth interview technique, was conducted as the second stage. This allowed for a deeper understanding of participants' awareness of gender equality and their emotions, thoughts, and motivations towards the ad incorporating gender equality.

Combining qualitative and quantitative data ensures a more comprehensive data analysis. The aim of this study is to enrich integrating and complementing the data from these two methods. On the other hand, in-depth interviews, beyond being a tool that gathers many opinions of individuals, provide structures framing the "subjectivities" by delving into the depths of discourse like a drill (Barbour & Schostack, 2005, p. 41; Dawson, 2007, p. 15). According to Johnson and Turner (2003), methods should be mixed to create complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses. This involves the recognition that all methods have limitations and strengths. In this study, priority was given to quantitative data, and the two methods were integrated during the interpretation phase. The mixed method was characterised by a sequential explanatory strategy, in which the collection and analysis of quantitative data were followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2003).

Research model

The research adopted a descriptive research design to determine the sensitivity of individuals participating in the study towards gender equality and to portray a detailed picture of the situation. Furthermore, it relied on an explanatory research design (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2018, pp. 101-102) to test whether consumers' involvement in advertisements

involving equality in gender roles varies based on their sensitivities and to reveal the causal relationships between variables. It is possible to evaluate it under the experimental model because it is a candidate to explain how an ad selected purposefully in accordance with the subject of the study affects the cognitive and affective involvement of consumers towards ads containing equality in household gender roles. Karasar (2009) defines an experimental model as “a research model in which the researcher directly controls the generation of the desired observed data to determine cause-and-effect relationships” (p. 87). The fundamental model of this study was tested through hypotheses on how consumers’ sensitivity to equality in household gender roles would result in cognitive and affective involvement in advertisements.

Quantitative sampling

The study population consists of married or single consumers residing in Türkiye who have opinions on advertisements, gender equality, and inequality. Thus, a sub-sample representing this entire group was selected for the study. The participants included in the study were selected using convenience and snowball sampling methods. Due to limitations in terms of time and cost, the desire to choose units that are easily accessible and practical to implement led to the use of convenience sampling. For convenience sampling, the researcher can select sufficient elements from the existing ones (Tutar & Erdem, 2020, p. 261). Since the aim was to ensure the dissemination of the survey through social media platforms and online channels, it was important for individuals in the population to establish connexions with each other. Therefore, snowball sampling was also used. The questionnaire for this study was distributed to 300 consumers through Google Forms on the online platform. The 300 individuals included in the study constitute the sample for this research.

Qualitative sampling

A small sample group was determined by reaching five single and five married participants out of the individuals invited to in-depth interviews. Ten participants were interviewed. Qualitative research has varying opinions on the required sample size. Some experts believe that an ideal sample size cannot be calculated for qualitative studies, and only one or two cases, such as individuals or groups, are sufficient (Bayyurt & Seggie, 2015). Conversely, other researchers argue that qualitative studies can be assessed using different techniques, and their effectiveness should be evaluated on the basis of their ability to

achieve the objectives and goals related to the topic and the appropriateness of the units in the sample (Silverman, 2011). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), no specific answer exists. However, the number of participants depends on the qualitative research approach. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), Narrative includes 1-2, phenomenology includes 3-10, and grounded theory includes 20-30. The participants' demographic characteristics and the diverse interpretations they brought to the questions in this context allowed for a broad sample representation. Participants were reached through snowball sampling, and the interviews were conducted in a meeting room in accordance with the researcher's and the participants' mutual decisions. The interviews with the participants lasted between 35 and 45 min. Participants are coded from P1 to P10. The ages of the participants ranged from 25 to 51, with an average age of 32. Six female and four male participants were predominantly employed in the private sector.

Data collection tool

In this study, which utilises both quantitative and qualitative research methods, data collection was carried out in two stages. The survey form generally consists of three sections. In the first section of the survey form, participants' cognitive and affective involvement in the selected advertising example that includes gender equality, relevant to the subject of the study, was queried. For cognitive involvement regarding the ad (CIA), the cognitive involvement scale developed by Logan et al. (2012), Pavlou and Fygenson (2007), and Lee and Hong (2016) was used. Cognitive involvement in an ad refers to the degree to which an individual carefully examines and evaluates the content of an ad. The affective involvement (AIA) scale developed by Davis (1983) and Lee and Hong (2016) was used to assess affective involvement. AIA in the ad refers to understanding how the audience interacts with the advertisement on an emotional level. In the second section of the study, Sudkamper et al.'s (2020) gender equality scale was employed to measure individuals' sensitivity to gender equality. The sensitivity to gender equality (SGE) scale measures consumers' thoughts on gender equality in societal roles (workplace, public sphere, etc.) (SSGE) as well as their perceptions of roles within the household, (DSGE: Domestic sensitivity to gender equality). In the third section, the last part of the questionnaire, questions about the participant's demographic information, such as age, gender, marital status, and income, were included.

A semi-structured questionnaire was prepared to conduct an in-depth interview, facilitating a thorough exploration of the participants' perspectives. The in-depth interview questionnaire comprises two categories: general questions about gender and gender

equality awareness before showing the ad video and specific questions about the ad after displaying the ad video. The questions in the first section of the questionnaire were developed on the basis of the information revealed in the literature review. The participants' thoughts on gender equality, perspectives, and sensitivities were investigated in this section. In the second section, questions were directed towards eliciting participants' thoughts on what they had seen in the advertisement and their evaluations regarding the advertisement in connexion with gender equality. The phenomenological method was employed for data collection and analysis through in-depth interviews. Phenomenology is an approach initiated by Edmund Husserl and later developed by Heidegger, aiming to investigate human experiences and how events are perceived and experienced (Smith et al., 2009). This analysis seeks to elucidate experiences and meanings, thereby understanding how individuals interpret their surroundings and events (Wade & Tavis, 1990). Phenomenological data analysis reveals experiences and meanings. The obtained data is conceptualised during the analysis process, and efforts are made to identify themes that describe the phenomenon. The findings obtained within the framework of the emerging themes are explained and interpreted (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Accordingly, the received data was conceptualised in the analysis process to reveal themes that could describe the phenomenon.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the selection of the advertisement to be tested from a product category, which necessitates the ad to appeal to a different demographic group because it is chosen from a consumer audience with varying characteristics. It was also ensured that the selected product category would appeal to both men and women. Another limitation of the study is the use of a limited number of participants chosen through a convenience sampling method and conducted through Google Forms in an online environment within a specific time frame. Therefore, it is impossible to generalise the findings to Türkiye and all product categories.

In this study, advertising content that addresses equality in household gender roles and, mainly, in which male and female roles are seen as equal within the household has been examined. The scans show that durable/white consumer goods and cleaning products are among the categories where these contents are most prevalent. Accordingly, five ads with 1 million views and overviews on the *YouTube* platform were identified for analysis in the recent year. Before the research, opinions were obtained from an academic and a volunteer for the selected ads. Following this process, Bosch's *Perfect*

Harmony campaign for dishwashers was included in the study. Therefore, it can be considered a limitation of the research that responses were sought based only on the advertisement belonging to the Bosch brand within the scope of this study.

Gender inequality is a multidimensional issue that affects all aspects of social relations. It is influenced by factors such as culture, lifestyle, and geographic location. To better understand how people approach this issue, researchers have evaluated changes in household gender roles, which is a small part of gender equality. The selected advertisement focuses on 'sharing household chores' instead of the stereotype of women being solely responsible for household tasks. Because of the mixed-method approach, it was deemed appropriate to show only one advertisement to prevent participants from ending the research process early and to provide consistency of the data from both research methods.

Procedure

Before analysing the survey data, the responses were appropriately coded for accuracy and meaningfulness, and pre-analysis checks were performed. In this context, independence checks for the response options and whether the responses exhibited a regular or random distribution were examined. In addition, reliability and validity analyses of the data were conducted. The data obtained from the quantitative research were evaluated in line with the study objectives.

Scale scores were calculated, and kurtosis and skewness coefficients were examined to determine the appropriateness of the scores for a normal distribution. It is considered important for a normal distribution that the kurtosis and skewness values obtained from the scales fall within the range of +3 to -3 (Hopkins & Weeks, 1990; De Carlo, 1997). The z-test values obtained from the scales are also observed to be (± 1.96). Upon examining the values, it can be concluded that the scores follow a normal distribution. The study's kurtosis and skewness coefficient table and z-test values are shown in Table 1. Because of the normal distribution of the scores, parametric test techniques were utilised in the study. T-tests and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to analyse the differences in scale scores based on demographic characteristics. The t-test was used to analyse demographic variables with two groups, while ANOVA was used to analyse demographic variables with k ($k > 2$) groups. While we can determine if there is a difference between the two groups by using the t-test and ANOVA, we need to

know the effect size to interpret the magnitude of this difference. The effect size is a statistical value that indicates the magnitude of the difference between groups that we expect to have a difference. The overall assessment for effect size in η^2 values is as follows: values of .01 or lower indicate low effect size, .06 indicates moderate effect size, and .14 and above indicate high effect size (Cohen, 1988).

Table 1. Kurtosis and Skewness coefficient table of the study

	N	Skewness	Kurtosis	z-test values
AIA	300	0,616	-0,632	1,31490
CIA	300	-0,559	-0,552	1,23261
SSGE	300	-1,302	1,347	-1,98851
DSGE	300	-0,434	-0,342	-1,30933
SGE	300	-1,214	1,839	-1,18148

AIA: Affective Involvement in Ad; CIA: Cognitive Involvement in Ad; SSGE: Societal Sensitivity to Gender Equality; DSGE: Domestic Sensitivity to Gender Equality; SGE: Sensitivity to Gender Equality

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the construct validity of the scales used. In this regard, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test were applied to determine whether the scale was suitable for factor analysis. The KMO coefficient is calculated to assess the adequacy of the sample size, while the normality assumption is examined using the Bartlett sphericity test. Within this scope, the KMO test should result in .50 or higher for the measurement outcome, and Bartlett's sphericity test should be statistically significant. In the factor analysis process, factor loading values were examined for assigning or removing scale items to/from the factors. Cronbach's alpha coefficient provides the reliability level of the scale (Meyers et al., 2010, p. 332). The KMO value was calculated as 0.941 in the factor analysis for the scale. Accordingly, the sample size is suitable for factor analysis (KMO>0.50). Within the scope of the Bartlett test, the X^2 value was calculated as 4038.156 and was found to be statistically significant ($p<0.05$). Therefore, the assumption of a normal distribution has been provided.

In the survey section, which includes involvement in advertisements, an analysis was conducted to determine the distribution of factors based on the data obtained from the participants. The distribution of questions and factor loadings is shown in Table 2. According to the factor analysis results, items 6 and 11 were removed, and it was concluded that the scale consists of 14 items forming two dimensions. The first sub-dimension of the scale, 'affective involvement,' consists of nine questions with

factor loadings ranging from 0.873 to 0.767. This factor accounts for a total variance explanation rate of 46.517%. Additionally, upon examining the reliability results, it was concluded that the sub-dimension is highly reliable due to $0.70 \leq \alpha=0.960 < 1.00$. The second sub-dimension of the scale, 'cognitive involvement,' consists of five questions with factor loadings ranging from 0.858 to 0.736. This factor accounts for a total variance explanation rate of 29.210%. Furthermore, the reliability results indicate that the sub-dimension is highly reliable with $0.70 \leq \alpha=0.908 < 1.00$.

Through the factor analysis conducted on the basis of the data obtained from the participants for the second section of the survey aiming to measure sensitivity to gender equality, as seen in Table 3, two-factor dimensions were identified. Accordingly, it was concluded that the scale consists of 11 items forming two dimensions. The first sub-dimension of the scale, societal sensitivity to gender equality, consists of seven questions with factor loadings ranging from 0.868 to 0.657. This factor accounts for a total variance explanation rate of 45.896%. Additionally, upon examining the reliability results, it was concluded that the sub-dimension is highly reliable, with $0.70 \leq \alpha=0.930 < 1.00$. The second sub-dimension of the scale, which encompasses domestic sensitivity to gender equality, consists of four questions with factor loadings ranging from 0.867 to 0.621. This factor accounts for a total variance explanation rate of 22.999%. Furthermore, reliability results indicate that the sub-dimension is considerably reliable with $0.70 \leq \alpha=0.781 < 1.00$.

Table 2. Factor structure of involvement in the ad

	AIA	CIA	Variance	Cronbach's
			Explained	Alpha (Reliability)
16. The advertisement is unique	,873		46,517	0,960
9. I felt intense emotions after watching the advertisement.	,871			
13. The advertisement was extraordinary.	,870			
12. I was emotionally impacted by the message of the ad.	,828			
15. The advertisement was intriguing.	,814			
8. I felt like I was inside the advertisement.	,813			
7. It was an ad that stayed in my mind and made me contemplate even after seeing it.	,788			
14. The advertisement was different.	,768			
10. I found the ad interesting.	,767			

3. The ad contained information about gender equality.		,858	29,210	0,908
2. The advertisement was informative.		,850		
5. I could grasp the main message of the ad.		,836		
1. The advertisement was instructive		,747		
4. What was conveyed in the advertisement caught my attention.		,736		

Table 3. Factor structure of sensitivity to gender equality

	SSGE	DSGE	Variance	Cronbach's
			Explained	Alpha
2. If I had the opportunity, I would participate in activities that advocate for gender equality.	,868		45,896	0,930
7. I would support my acquaintances/friends on the issue of gender equality.	,866			
6. Supporting people affected by gender inequality is important.	,864			
1. Advocating for gender equality is my priority.	,841			
3. I am interested in news articles and reports on gender equality in the media.	,840			
5. When I encounter a situation related to gender inequality, I express my opinion.	,839			
4. I participate in discussions about gender equality.	,657		22,999	0,781
8. I am willing to make compromises with my partner.		,867		
9. I believe that all decisions should be made jointly with one's partner.		,849		
11. I believe that a person's financial contribution to their household should be equal to their partner's.		,645		
10. I believe that a person and his/her partner should share daily household chores.		,621		

Findings

The Findings of the survey

Diversity in the demographic characteristics of participants is important for research to yield accurate and reliable results. In the survey, 56.7% of the participants were female and 40.7% were male. When the participants were examined in terms of age, it was observed that 19% were 18-25, 38.3% were 26-35, 20.7% were 36-45 age, and 22% were 46 years old and above. Regarding marital status, it was notable that the participants were almost equally distributed between married (46.3%) and single (53.7%) individuals. In consideration of the potential impact on sensitivity to gender equality due to participants' income levels, data on participants' income levels were collected. According to this data, 12% of the participants had an income

below 10,000 TL, 17% between 10,000 and 14,999 TL, 25.3% between 15,000 and 19,999 TL, and 45.7% had an income of 20,000 TL and above. Looking at their employment status, it was found that 82.7% were actively employed, and 55.3% were working full-time in the private sector. The significant majority of participants were from the actively employed group, which is considered an important factor that could influence sensitivity to gender equality.

The results of the ANOVA test to examine the differences in societal and domestic sensitivity to gender equality based on gender groups are presented in Table 4. According to the analysis results, societal and domestic sensitivities to gender equality differ based on gender groups (H1a and H1b supported; $p < 0.05$). Based on the mean scores, women have the highest score on the societal sensitivity scale, whereas those who prefer not to specify their gender have the lowest score. Additionally, based on the mean scores, men scored the highest on the domestic sensitivity scale, whereas women scored the lowest. The variance in the SSGE and DGSE variables explains the gender group variable with a high effect size. Additionally, it is observed that the variance in the SGE variable explains the gender variable with a moderate effect size.

Table 4. Comparison test on differences in sensitivity to gender equality by gender

Gender		n	X	ss	ANOVA		Effect size (η^2)
					F	p	
SSGE	Female	170	4,13	0,97	8,425	0,000*	0,055
	Male	122	3,69	0,90			
	I would not like to specify	8	3,55	1,61			
DGSE	Female	170	3,30	1,07	3,260	0,040*	0,019
	Male	122	3,62	0,96			
	I would not like to specify	8	3,50	1,65			
SGE	Female	170	3,83	0,88	1,654	0,193	0,012
	Male	122	3,66	0,77			
	I would not like to specify	8	3,53	1,60			

The results of the ANOVA test to examine the differences in societal and domestic sensitivity to gender equality based on age groups are presented in Table 5. According to the analysis results, it is determined that societal and domestic sensitivities to gender equality do not differ based on age groups (H3a and H3b rejected; $p < 0.05$). The variance in the DSGE variable explains the average effect power of the age group variable. In

addition, it can be concluded that the variance in the SSGE and SGE variables explains the low effect power with the age variable.

Table 5. Comparison test on differences in sensitivity to gender equality by age group

Age		n	X	ss	ANOVA		Effect size (η^2)
					F	p	
SSGE	18-25	57	3,92	0,89	0,266	0,850	0,005
	26-35	115	3,91	1,03			
	36-45	62	3,89	1,06			
	46 and above	66	4,03	0,92			
DSGE	18-25	57	3,47	1,05	0,215	0,886	0,007
	26-35	115	3,47	1,08			
	36-45	62	3,42	1,09			
	46 and above	66	3,35	1,01			
SGE	18-25	57	3,76	0,83	0,053	0,984	0,005
	26-35	115	3,75	0,91			
	36-45	62	3,72	0,88			
	46 and above	66	3,78	0,83			

The results of the t-test to examine the differences in societal and domestic sensitivity to gender equality based on marital status are presented in Table 6. According to the analysis results, societal and domestic sensitivities to gender equality do not differ based on marital status (H2a and H2b rejected; $p < 0.05$). This study explains that the variance in the SSGE, DGSE, and SGE variables is associated with low effect power with the marital status variable.

Table 6. Comparison test on differences in sensitivity to gender equality by marital status

Marital status		n	X	ss	t	p	Effect size (η^2)
SSGE	Married	139	4,00	0,99	1,010	0,313	0,003
	Single	161	3,88	0,98			
DSGE	Married	139	3,42	1,07	-0,230	0,818	0,000
	Single	161	3,45	1,05			
SGE	Married	139	3,79	0,85	0,628	0,531	0,001
	Single	161	3,72	0,88			

The results of the ANOVA test to examine the differences in societal and domestic sensitivity to gender equality based on consumers' income levels are presented in Table 7. According to the analysis results, domestic sensitivity to gender equality differs based

on income levels (H4a rejected, H4b supported; $p < 0.05$). Based on the mean scores, individuals with an income of 9,999 TL and below have the highest score on the domestic sensitivity scale, whereas those with an income of 15,000-19,999 TL have the lowest score. In the study, it is observed that the variance in the DSGE variable explains the income status variable with strong effect power, whereas the variance in the SSGE variable explains it with moderate effect power. In addition, the variance in the SGE variables explains the income status variable with low effect power.

Table 7. Comparison test on differences in sensitivity to gender equality by monthly household income

Monthly Household Income		n	X	ss	ANOVA		Effect size (η^2)
					F	p	
SSGE	9.999 TL and below	36	3,90	0,98	0,707	0,548	0,007
	10.000-14.999 TL	51	3,76	0,97			
	15.000-19.999 TL	76	3,96	1,07			
	20.000 and above	137	4,00	0,94			
DSGE	9.999 TL and below	36	3,90	0,92	3,717	0,012*	0,036
	10.000-14.999 TL	51	3,59	0,94			
	15.000-19.999 TL	76	3,27	1,21			
	20.000 TL and above	137	3,34	1,01			
SGE	9.999 TL and below	36	3,90	0,86	0,479	0,697	0,005
	10.000-14.999 TL	51	3,70	0,83			
	15.000-19.999 TL	76	3,71	0,98			
	20.000 TL and above	137	3,76	0,82			

The relationships between sensitivity and gender equality and involvement in ads (cognitive and affective) were determined through correlation analysis. According to the obtained data, there is a relationship between sensitivity to gender equality and both cognitive and affective involvement in ads at a significance level of both 95% and 99%. When examining Table 8, a weak positive relationship was found between the participants' sensitivity to gender equality and the affective involvement they showed towards ads (H5a supported; $r=0.324$; $p=0.000 < 0.050$), and a moderate positive relationship was observed between sensitivity to gender equality and cognitive involvement (H5b supported; $r=0.449$; $p=0.000 < 0.050$). On the basis of these findings, it can be suggested that sensitivity to gender equality enhances consumers' cognitive involvement in ads that encompass gender equality to some extent.

Table 8. Correlation analysis between sensitivity and gender equality and involvement in advertising

		AIA	CIA	SSGE	DSGE	SGE
AIA	r	1				
	p					
CIA	r	,626**	1			
	p	,000				
SSGE	r	,236**	,406**	1		
	p	,000	,000			
DSGE	r	,345**	,350**	,436**	1	
	p	,000	,000	,000		
SGE	r	,324**	,449**	,917**	,759**	1
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	

In addition, regression analysis was conducted to explain the impact of sensitivity to gender equality on consumers' cognitive and affective involvement in ads, aiming to further test the research hypotheses. Regression analysis is a mathematical function that describes the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables (Wagner, 2010, p. 73). This study applied simple linear regression analysis, a predictive equation, to investigate how sensitivity to gender equality explains cognitive and affective involvement in advertisements. The significance of the regression model, which tests the effect on cognitive and affective involvement in ads, was evaluated using the F (ANOVA) test. Upon examining the ANOVA indicators, it is observed that the F-test value for cognitive involvement is 75.144 and that for affective involvement is 34.910. The corresponding values in the sig. (significance) column for both variables are less than 0.05 ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), indicating statistical significance in the relationship between the variables. As the resulting values are significant, it can be inferred that the results of the analysis conducted in the study can be utilised.

From these findings, it can be said that consumers' sensitivity to gender equality significantly influences their affective and cognitive involvement in the ad. When looking at the standardised beta coefficients, a one-unit change in gender equality sensitivity leads to a 0.324-unit positive change in affective involvement (H6b supported; $t=5.909$; $p<0.05$). Similarly, a one-unit change in gender equality sensitivity triggers a 0.449-unit positive change in cognitive involvement (H6a supported; $t=8.669$; $p<0.05$). Evaluated as a whole on the basis of the obtained data, it is observed that the regression model explains 10.5% of the variance in affective involvement towards ad as a significant dependent variable and 20.1% of the variance in cognitive involvement towards ad as

a significant dependent variable. The regression analysis results of sensitivity to gender equality influencing affective and cognitive involvement in ads are shown in Table 9. Furthermore, the F-test value to test the significance of the regression model, which tests the effect of societal and domestic sensitivity dimensions, sub-dimensions of sensitivity to gender equality, on cognitive and affective involvement in advertising, was 37.491 for cognitive involvement and 21.853 for affective involvement. For both sensitivity dimensions, the value in the sig. (significance) column corresponding to these values for cognitive involvement is less than 0.05 (Table 10), indicating significance. However, it was observed that for affective involvement in advertising, the significance value for the societal sensitivity dimension was more significant than 0.05 (Table 11). Therefore, it was determined that the effect of societal and domestic sensitivity dimensions of gender equality on cognitive involvement in advertising is significant. In contrast, the impact of the societal sensitivity dimension on affective involvement in advertising is not significant.

Table 9. Results of the regression analysis of sensitivity to gender equality impacting affective and cognitive involvement in ad

Independent	Dependent	Beta	t	p	R ²	F
SGE	AIA	0,324	5,909	0,000*	0,105	34,910
	CIA	0,449	8,669	0,000*	0,201	75,144

*p<0,05: Linear regression test

Table 10. Results of regression analysis of sub-dimensions of sensitivity to gender equality impacting cognitive involvement in ad

Dependent	Independent	Beta	t	P	R ²	F
CIA	SSGE	0,313	5,430	0,000*	0,202	37,491
	DSGE	0,213	3,701	0,000*		

*p<0,05: Linear regression test

Table 11. Results of regression analysis of sub-dimensions of sensitivity to gender equality impacting affective involvement in ad

Dependent	Independent	Beta	t	P	R ²	F
AIA	SSGE	0,105	1,746	0,082	0,128	21,853
	DSGE	0,300	4,976	0,000*		

*p<0,05: Linear regression test

Findings of in-depth interviews about Bosch's *Perfect Harmony* ad campaign

This section presents the results obtained from the analyses conducted using the methods and techniques mentioned, along with interpretations and discussions related to these findings. Due to the presentation of questions in two main sections during the in-depth interviews, the themes are graphically represented in two main lines. The findings for the first section (Figure 1) consist of three main themes and five sub-themes, whereas for the second section (Figure 2), three main themes and four sub-themes emerged. Figure 1 shows the themes and sub-themes related to awareness of gender equality, whereas Figure 2 displays the themes and sub-themes regarding evaluation after watching the ad.

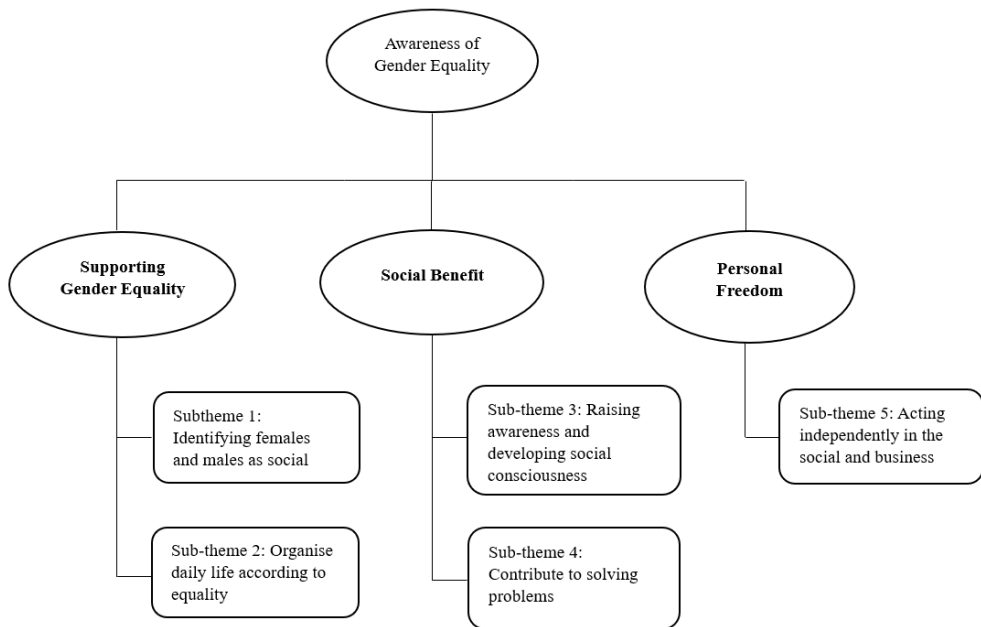


Figure 1. Themes and sub-themes on awareness of gender equality

Supporting gender equality

The participants expressed that gender equality should be supported in every way. Specifically, none of the participants distinguished equality based on a specific issue or situation. The importance of gender equality in creating a more liveable environment has been emphasised; therefore, it is highlighted that it should be supported socially.

The participants generally supported gender equality, viewing women and men as social entities beyond biological differences. They particularly operate from this perspective when expressing their thoughts.

In my opinion, gender equality is meaningful when true equality exists. Unfortunately, I believe that there is positive discrimination in separate categories for women and men in our country (...) (P5)

Gender equality, which should not be distinguished biologically and should exist in every field, is unfortunately significantly lacking. (P6)

I believe it should be equal. I think that throughout a person's life, in all environments they enter, including the family environment, actions should be taken without considering gender. (P3)

Yes, I believe they should be equal in many aspects. In a positive sense, it is important to mention that equality may not always be entirely fair because of structural differences. (P9)

When participants expressed their ideas supporting gender equality, it was noticeable that they organised their daily lives accordingly as a form of support.

I will not work in any environment where equality is not exhibited towards women and men. Male labour only shows differences based on physical strength, but there is no difference in brainpower between men and women. (P10)

I am attempting to organise my social living conditions by ensuring equality. (P7)

Social benefit

During the interview, the participants' expressions regarding gender equality generally revolved around keywords such as social actions, contributions to society, and social awareness. Based on this, it can be said that the participants have a common understanding regarding making specific improvements to achieve gender equality and proposing solutions that will contribute to society. Some participants have emphasised creating more awareness and fostering consciousness.

Women and men should be equal in any situation beyond the responsibilities imposed by their genders. This equality is achieved by raising awareness in society and ensuring justice. (P3)

Gender equality is the evaluation of women and men under equal conditions in societal situations, enabling them to have equal rights. In my opinion, this equality should first (...) strive for equal conditions in workplaces and education. (P4)

The toxic masculine thought system that has captured society must be addressed. Creating a new societal order can begin with dismantling patriarchy as much as possible and raising conscious individuals who prioritise gender equality as parents. (P4)

The participants also emphasised the necessity of taking steps to address the problems arising from gender differences in the societal domain and to reduce inequality. They contribute to finding solutions to these problems in their own ways.

This can be achieved by increasing societal awareness and the education rate in the country. (P9)

It is necessary to impart rules regarding human rights and freedoms to younger age groups. Regular training sessions should be provided to raise public awareness through one-on-one psychological assistance. (P7)

We need to remove this gender discrimination (...). Girls should be educated and integrated into the workforce. As society becomes more aware and the mindset changes, everything will blossom like a flower. (P10)

Personal freedom

When the participants were asked about their views on “what gender equality means and the contextual experiences of gender equality,” it was observed that some of the participants expressed their views within the framework of freedom. Thoughts related to freedom emerged, especially in the context of their experiences in social and work environments.

I believe gender equality exists in my home and workplace as compared to the broader society. Raised by my family as two sisters, we were raised liberally and independently. I have the same rights as my male colleagues (P4)

The oppression against women must be eliminated, and the ground must be prepared for women to be free. It is the freedom of individuals to express themselves in all areas. This equality should be achieved (...) (P2)

Gender equality means that women and men should have the same freedom and living space. For instance, just as a male can walk the streets comfortably late at night without feeling uneasy, the same conditions should apply to women. (P7)

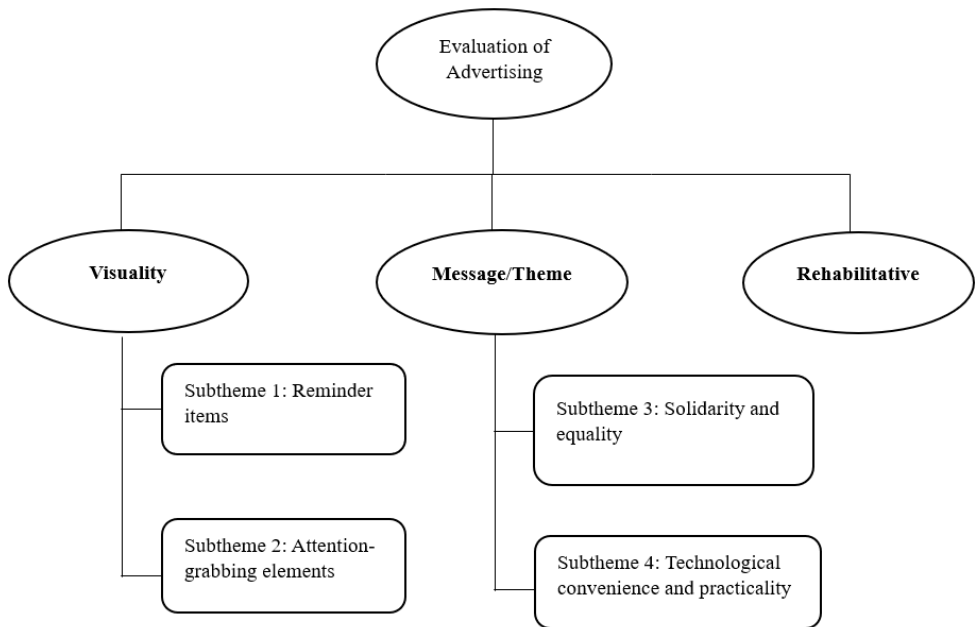


Figure 2. Themes and sub-themes for the evaluation of advertising

Visuality

In the second part of the study, participants were first asked to mark what they remembered from the images shown to them regarding the advertising message they watched. Based on the responses received, it was determined that images depicting a kitchen scene, in which both male and female actors simultaneously collect dishes and glasses from the dishwasher, were prominent in the memories of a significant portion of the participants.

I remember both the male and female actors taking out the dishes from the dishwasher simultaneously. That stuck in my mind. (P1)

I remember both of them putting the glasses in the closet. It seemed like a nice gesture to me. (P8)

It's nice to see a scene where a woman and a man are together. (P6)

Participants were asked which of the selected visuals from the advertisement caught their attention more. The responses indicate that the focus was on the dishwasher and the mobile phone. Figures 5 and 6 present the visuals that stood out the most from those shown during the in-depth interviews.

Connecting to the machine via a smartphone is very convenient and reassuring. (P4)

The panel looks very simple and stylish. (P5)

Message/theme

After watching the advertisement, participants were asked for their insights on the main themes they derived from the advertisement. Considering the answers received from the participants during the interview, the most emphasised points are 'being technological,' which prioritises convenience and practicality, and 'equality,' which emphasises cooperation between spouses.

The man is not withdrawing by saying it is the woman's job to help her spouse. The product is advanced and practical, pushing the boundaries of technological conditions. (P4)

I think the advertisement conveys that the dishwasher can be controlled via a mobile phone. (P7)

The environment depicted in the advertisement is one in which a couple of collaboratively shares household chores. (P1)

Overall, the advertisement conveys that men and women can perform a routine task common in every household, which is not gender specific. (P3)

In addition to the main theme, participants were then asked to state the message that the advertisement wanted to convey most appropriately. The participants agreed that, beyond being an innovative and technological product, the product brought equality in 'housework' as one of the most significant indicators of social inequality. In other words, participants displayed an emotional approach rather than a rational one in their responses to the advertisement.

The message offered in this advertisement is to destroy the perception that "housework" is a woman's duty, which is one of the most important elements of social inequality. (P1)

From the scenes I remember in the advertisement I watched, I did not see one gender playing a more dominant role or performing most of the tasks. Although the work was portrayed as easy and enjoyable, it was equally done. (P5)

Rehabilitative

Participants were asked about their evaluations of achieving gender equality after watching the advertisement. Although there was a discussion about whether gender equality reflects real life, participants whose evaluations were sought particularly emphasised that there have been some improvements compared to the past and that such images in the advertisement can be rehabilitative in conveying a message.

I definitely believe that there has been progress compared to the advertisements that were aired in the past. (...) I hope this advertisement shift will contribute, even if slightly, to achieving gender equality eventually. (P5)

Awareness of solidarity and sharing is very beneficial in terms of embedding it in the subconscious. (P7)

While this advertisement emphasises gender equality, I do not believe it will lead to a healthy outcome in achieving gender equality. However, such advertisements feel good in the current context where sexism is prevalent. (P6)

Discussion and conclusion

Recently, certain brands have emphasised in their advertising content that both genders are equally valued, have equal opportunities to contribute to society's economic, social, and cultural development, have the freedom to enhance their skills and make choices, and that their priorities and interests are considered. (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Lazar, 2014; Åkestam et al., 2017; Abitbol & Sternadori, 2019). From this viewpoint, this study examines the impact of sensitivity to gender equality on consumers' cognitive and affective involvement in advertisements. The study mainly aims to investigate the involvement of consumers in advertisements that specifically focus on equality in household gender roles. In line with this, survey data collected from 300 participants was statistically analysed. Within the scope of the research, the relationship between the sub-dimensions of gender equality sensitivity, namely societal ($0.70 \leq \alpha = 0.930 < 1.00$) and domestic sensitivity ($0.70 \leq \alpha = 0.781 < 1.00$) and cognitive ($0.70 \leq \alpha = 0.908 < 1.00$) and affective ($0.70 \leq \alpha = 0.960 < 1.00$) involvement in advertisements, was examined, aiming to elucidate the impact of sensitivity to gender equality on consumer involvement in ads.

According to the findings obtained from the research, sensitivity to gender equality is positively and significantly related to cognitive and affective involvement in the Bosch advertisement campaign. The research results reveal that the societal sensitivity dimension towards gender equality has a higher level of correlation with cognitive involvement ($r = .406$; $p = .000 < 0,05$) in advertisements compared to affective ($r = .236$; $p = .000 < 0,05$). On the other hand, the domestic sensitivity dimension has an equal level of correlation with both affective ($r = .345$; $p = .000 < 0,05$) and cognitive involvement ($r = .350$; $p = .000 < 0,05$) in the ad. A weak level of correlation was found between the sensitivity to gender equality and affective involvement ($r = .324$; $p = .000 < 0,05$) in ads, a moderate level of correlation was found between cognitive involvement ($r = .449$; $p = .000 < 0,05$), and both were statistically significant. Cognitive involvement has a higher relationship level than affective involvement, which implies that individuals critically engage with the content related to equality in household gender roles presented in the advertisement, regardless of whether the advertisement's message is rationally or emotionally focussed. On the other hand, the relationship between domestic sensitivity and affective involvement in the ad is slightly higher than the social sensitivity dimension, which can be interpreted as consumers identifying the family environment in the ad with their own family/home environment or finding a part of it.

One of the significant aspects explored within the scope of this research is the impact of sensitivity to gender equality on cognitive and affective involvement in Bosch advertisements. It has been observed that consumers' sensitivity to equality in gender roles has a meaningful and positive effect on their cognitive and affective involvement in Bosch advertisements. Indeed, this study indicates that individuals inclined to question the content of an ad focussing on gender equality while identifying with it in their everyday lives tend to view both rational and emotional ads positively. Furthermore, while the impact of gender equality on cognitive involvement in the ad is significant for both societal and domestic sensitivity dimensions, the effect of the societal sensitivity dimension on affective involvement in the Bosch ad is not significant. This suggests that individuals who express sensitivity to gender equality, especially in a societal context, do not approach the ad content with an emotional focus.

An investigation into whether sensitivity to gender equality shows significant differences based on demographic variables is among the examined findings. Because of the analyses conducted, it was determined that the dimensions of sensitivity to gender equality differed significantly by gender and monthly household income from demographic variables. Based on this result, it is found that women are more robust in the societal sensitivity dimension compared to men, while men stand out slightly in the domestic sensitivity dimension. The findings align with Shteivi's (2015) research on gender roles within the gender equality framework, which showed significant differentiation based on gender variables. The conclusion that women demonstrate greater sensitivity regarding social and professional participation aligns with this research. Consequently, it can be said that women's sensitivity in the social context is highlighted a bit more because of their increased encounters with challenges in social and professional life compared to men. On the other hand, it is evident that as consumers' monthly household incomes decrease, domestic sensitivity increases. The main reason for this is the reduction of economic power, which leads to a more delicate balance of equality between spouses.

In-depth interviews, constituting the second phase of the research and conducted with 10 participants, play a crucial role in providing insights into the details and sociological aspects of the quantitative findings. The interview process was implemented in two stages, first aimed at assessing awareness of gender equality and then evaluating the Bosch advertisement campaign, called *Perfect Harmony*, featuring equality in household gender roles. The participants were observed to have a certain level of

understanding regarding gender equality, and a significant portion showed sensitivity towards the associated challenges.

Based on the coding conducted according to the notes obtained from the first phase of the interview, the responses can be categorised into three main points. Generally, the participants expressed their support for gender equality by perceiving women and men as social beings and aiming to organise their daily lives under equal conditions. In addition, the participants emphasised the importance of creating awareness and enhancing societal consciousness towards eliminating the challenges hindering gender equality in our country. They stressed the need for equal educational opportunities, increased women's employment rates, involved parents in gender equality education, instilled rules related to human rights and freedoms from a young age, and re-established justice to contribute to solving the problems. The findings obtained from the in-depth interviews with the participants highlighted freedom. They expressed their desire for freedom in the social and professional spheres and mentioned experiencing challenges in their environment. Furthermore, during the interview, female participants noted that the positive discrimination applied to men posed difficulties for them. The findings of this study align with Bozbay et al.'s (2019) in-depth interview, where they examined consumer perception of female-focused advertisements with a sample group of 15 individuals. Their research revealed that female-focused advertisements are important for increasing awareness. It was also observed that some companies perceive creating empowering advertisements for women as a temporary trend and expect tangible benefits from these advertisements. A qualitative study by Abitbol and Sternadori (2019) with a similar demographic profile observed that the perception of female-focused advertisements was positive. According to the data presented in Dauvergne's (2018) study, brands that focus on social issues can contribute to addressing the problems faced by society.

In summary, the survey research indicates a meaningful and positive influence of sensitivity to equality in gender roles on cognitive and affective involvement in the Bosch advertising campaign. However, in-depth interviews are required to comprehend the impact on cognitive and affective involvement. The emphasis by participants on solidarity, gender equality, and rehabilitation through the visuals in the ad highlighting the product's technological features and domestic assistance underscores the critical role of in-depth interviews in showcasing how affective involvement, which may not have been prominently reflected in the survey, comes to the forefront. Indeed, upon a deeper examination of the underlying factor behind the significant impact of

consumers' sensitivity to gender equality on their cognitive and affective involvement in the Bosch ad, it can be observed that the cognitive interest of participants who watched the advertisement stems from their critical evaluation of the content related to gender equality in household social roles presented in the ad. Additionally, identifying the participants with the family scene in the ad and relating it to their own family/home environment, subsequently emphasising cooperation and equality, indicates an abstract approach and demonstrates affective involvement in this context. Hence, it can be said that the results obtained from the survey align with the findings obtained from the in-depth interviews.

Some practical recommendations can be made on the basis of the results of the study. Brands should strive to present a balanced mix of rational and emotionally appealing content in their ads. Finding the right equilibrium between rational focus and emotional appeal will likely positively influence consumers' attitudes towards ads. Brands should demonstrate awareness and sensitivity in their advertising content, especially when dealing with sensitive issues. Being conscientious and conducting activities with this awareness is expected to play an influential role in fostering a positive attitude towards both the advertisement and the brand. This research is believed to contribute to future studies and hopefully guide brands in shaping their advertising messages. Increasing the number of survey participants can enhance the collected data's reliability and representativeness. The research is also designed around a single advertisement. This study explores how sensitivity to equality in gender roles within households, as part of gender equality, influences consumers' involvement in ads. However, advertisements are designed on the basis of the product and the intended message for the target audience. To examine sensitivity to gender equality on a broader scale, future research could select advertisements from a greater variety of product categories in a focus group study with more participants. Moreover, a comparative analysis of different ads highlighting gender equality and inequality can provide a critical perspective to understand attitudes towards these ads better. Additionally, for more comprehensive insights and findings that may not be fully achievable through traditional research methods, the research can be conducted with different stimuli and samples using neuromarketing techniques such as Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) and Electroencephalography (EEG). Studies conducted using techniques such as fMRI and EEG can measure in more detail and directly how participants respond when exposed to advertisements. This can provide significant benefits in understanding changes in emotional and cognitive responses and quantitative and qualitative research

results. This is crucial for understanding the effects of advertising strategies on different segments, providing valuable insights to optimise advertising strategies.

Endnotes

1. The link to the ad video used in the study was accessed on May 15, 2023, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0-CMwjXkaQ>
2. For this research, Ethics Committee Approval was obtained from the Uskudar University Non-Interventional Research Ethics Committee with protocol number 61351342 during May 31, 2023 meeting. This study was designed to comply with ethical principles and regulation.

Ethics Committee Approval: Ethics Committee Approval was obtained from the Uskudar University Non-Interventional Research Ethics Committee with protocol number 61351342 during May 31, 2023 meeting. This study was designed to comply with ethical principles and regulation.

Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from the participants.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Author Contributions: Conception/Design of study: C.B., M.G.; Data Acquisition: C.B., M.G.; Data Analysis/ Interpretation: C.B., M.G.; Drafting Manuscript: C.B., M.G.; Critical Revision of Manuscript: C.B., M.G.; Final Approval and Accountability: C.B., M.G.

Conflict of Interest: The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Grant Support: The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

Etik Kurul Onayı: Bu araştırma için Üsküdar Üniversitesi Girişimsel Olmayan Araştırmalar Etik Kurul Başkanlığı'ndan, 31.05.2023 tarihli toplantısında, 61351342 protokol numarası ile Etik Kurul izni alınmıştır. Çalışma, etik ilke ve kurallara uygun olarak dizayn edilmiştir.

Bilgilendirilmiş Onam: Katılımcılardan bilgilendirilmiş onam alınmıştır.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.

Yazar Katkısı: Çalışma Konsepti/Tasarımı: C.B., M.G.; Veri Toplama: C.B., M.G.; Veri Analizi /Yorumlama: C.B., M.G.; Yazı Taslağı: C.B., M.G.; İçeriğin Eleştirel İncelemesi: C.B., M.G.; Son Onay ve Sorumluluk: C.B., M.G.

Çıkar Çatışması: Yazarlar çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir.

Finansal Destek: Yazarlar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.

References

- Abitbol, A. & Sternadori, M. (2019). Championing women's empowerment as a catalyst for purchase intentions: Testing the mediating roles of OPRs and brand loyalty in the context of femvertising. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(1), 22–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2018.1552963>
- Åkestam, N., Rosengren, S. & Dahlen, M. (2017). Advertising "like a girl": Toward a better understanding of "femvertising" and its effects. *Psychology and Marketing*, 34(8), 795–806. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21023>
- Arat, Y. (2020). Toplumsal cinsiyet ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği nedir, ne değildir? Retrieved September 14, 2023 from <https://sarkac.org/2020/02/toplumsal-cinsiyet-nedir-ne-degildir/>
- Atkinson, S. (2015). *Sosyoloji kitabı*. (T. Göbekçin, Trans.). Alfa Yayınları.

- Banet-Weiser, S. (2012). Free self-esteem tools? Brand culture, gender, and the Dove Real beauty campaign. R. Mukherjee & S. Banet-Weiser (Ed.) In *Commodity activism: Cultural resistance in neoliberal times*. (pp. 39–56). New York University Press.
- Barbour, R. S. & Schostack, J. (2005). Interviewing and focus groups. B. Somekh & C. Lewin (Ed.), In *Research methods in the social sciences*. (pp. 41–49). Sage Publications.
- Bayyurt, Y. & Seggie, F. N. (2015). *Nitel araştırma: yöntem, teknik, analiz ve yaklaşımları*. Anı Yayınları.
- Bozbay, Z., Gürşen, A. E., Akpınar, H. M. & Yaman, Ö. K. (2019). Tüketicilerin kadın temalı reklamcılık (femvertising) uygulamalarına ilişkin değerlendirmeleri: Kalitatif Bir Araştırma. *Galatasaray Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 31, 169–190. <https://doi.org/10.16878/gsuilet.509226>
- Canbazoglu, A. D. (2020). Eşitlik savunusu mu, çocuk istismarı mı? Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği temalı bir reklamın analizi. *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Elektronik Dergisi*, 8(1), 69–103. <https://doi.org/10.19145/e-gjfd.650583>
- Champlin, S., Sterbenk, Y., Windels, K. & Poteet, M. (2019). How brand-cause fit shapes real world advertising messages: A qualitative exploration of 'femvertising'. *International Journal of Advertising*, 38(8), 1240–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1615294>
- Chhabra, D., Andereck, K., Yamanoi, K. & Plunkett, D. (2011). Gender equity and social marketing: An analysis of tourism advertisements. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 28(2), 111–128. Doi: 10.1080/10548408.2011.545739.
- Cislaghi, B. & Heise, L. (2020). Gender norms and social norms: Differences, similarities and why they matter in prevention science. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 42(2), 1–16, doi:10.1111/1467-9566.13008
- Cohen, J. (1988). *The t test for means. Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (2nd edition). Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, D. J (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. Sage Publications.
- Dauvergne, P. (2018). Is the power of brand-focused activism rising? The case of tropical deforestation. *Journal of Environment & Development*, 26(2), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1070496517701249>
- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319–340. Doi:10.2307/249008
- Dawson, C. (2007). *A practical guide to research methods: A user-friendly manual for mastering research techniques and projects*. How to Books.
- De Carlo, L. T. (1997). On the meaning and use of kurtosis. *Psychological Methods*, 2, 292–307. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.2.3.292>
- Drake, V. E. (2017). The impact of female empowerment in advertising (femvertising). *Journal of Research in Marketing*, 7(3), 593–599. Retrieved August 20, 2023 from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/229163714.pdf>

- Ecevit, Y. (2021). *Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin temel kavramları: Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin izlenmesi projesi faz II*. Ceid. retrieved September 18, 2023 from <https://www.ceidizler.ceid.org.tr>
- Eisend, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38, 418–440. Doi: 10.1007/s11747-009-0181-x
- Fowler, K. & Thomas, V. (2015). A content analysis of male roles in television advertising: Do traditional roles still hold? *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(5), 356–371. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2013.775178>
- Furnham, A. & Mak, T. (1999). Sex-role stereotyping in television commercials: A review and comparison of fourteen studies done on five continents over 25 years. *Sex Roles*, 41(5–6), 413–437.
- Furnham, A. & Paltzer, S. (2010). The portrayal of men and women in television advertisements: An updated review of 30 studies published since 2000. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 51(3), 216–236. Doi:10.1111/j.1467-9450.2009.00772.x
- Gill, R. (2008). Empowerment/sexism: Figuring female sexual agency in contemporary advertising. *Feminism & Psychology*, 18(1), 35–60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353507084950>
- Goffman, E. (2020). *Reklamlarda toplumsal cinsiyet*. (D. Kılıçer & F. Öz, Trans.). Heretik Yayınları.
- Grau, S. L. & Zotos, Y. C. (2016). Gender stereotypes in advertising: A review of current research. *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(5), 761–770. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2016.1203556>
- Grove, C. N. (2005). Introduction to the GLOBE research project on leadership worldwide. Retrieved 5 September 2023, from www.grovetwell.com/pub-GLOBE-intro.html.
- Gürbüz, S. & Şahin, F. (2018). *Sosyal bilimlerde araştırma yöntemleri: Felsefe-yöntem-analiz*. (5th Ed) Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Hopkins, K. D. & Weeks, D. L. (1990). Tests for normality and measures of skewness and kurtosis: Their place in research reporting. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 50, 717–729. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164490504001>
- House, R., Javidan, M., Hanges, P. & Dorfman, P. (2002). Understanding cultures and implicit leadership theories across the globe: An introduction to project GLOBE. *Journal of World Business*, 37(1), 3–10. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-9516\(01\)00069-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-9516(01)00069-4)
- Huhmann, B. & Limbu, Y. B. (2016). Influence of gender stereotypes on advertising offensiveness and attitude toward advertising in general. *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(5), 846–863. Doi: 10.1080/02650487.2016.1157912.
- Jarviste, L. (2010). Gender equality and inequality: Attitudes and situation in Estonia in 2009. Policy analysis: *Series of the Ministry of Social Affairs, No: 3*, Retrieved August 31, 2023 from <https://old.adapt.it/adapt-indices-a-z/l-jarviste-gender-equality-inequality-attitudes-situation-estonia-2009/>
- Johnson, R. B. & Turner, L. A. (2003). Data collection strategies in mixed methods research. A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie (Ed.) In *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 297–319). Sage.
- Karasar, N. (2009). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemi*. (19th Ed). Nobel Yayınları.
- Kilbourne, J. (1999). *Deadly persuasion: Why women and girls must fight the addictive power of advertising*. The Free Press.

- Lazar, M. M. (2014). Recuperating feminism, reclaiming femininity: Hybrid postfeminist identity in consumer advertisements. *Gender and Language*, 8(2), 205–224. DOI:10.1558/genl.v8i2.205
- Lee, J. & Hong, I. B. (2016). Predicting positive user responses to social media advertising: The roles of emotional appeal, informativeness, and creativity. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36(3), 360–373. Doi: 10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2016.01.001
- Lewin, C. (2005). Elementary quantitative methods. B. Somekh & C. Lewin (Ed.), In *Research methods in the social sciences* (pp. 215–226). Sage Publications.
- Logan, K., Bright, L. F. & Grngadharbatla, H. (2012). Facebook versus television: Advertising value perceptions among females. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 6(3), 164–179. Doi:10.1108/17505931211274651
- Matthes, J., Prieler, M. & Adam, K. (2016). Gender-role portrayals in television advertising across the globe. *Sex Roles*, 75(7-8), 314–327. Doi:10.1007/s11199-016-0617-y
- Meyers, J. L., Well, A. D. & Lorch, R. F. (2010). *Research design and statistical analysis*. Routledge. [Adobe Digital Editions]. Retrieved from eBook Library.
- Mutlu, E. (2012). *İletişim sözlüğü*. (6th ed.). Sofos Yayınları.
- Nwokoro, C. I. & Ekwunife, R. O. (2020). Gender-sensitive advertising as an effective tool for repositioning women into public offices in Nigeria. *American Journal of Communication*, 2(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.47672/ajc.498>
- Oakley, A. (1972). *Sex, gender, and society: Towards a new society*. Temple Smith.
- Pavlou, P. A. & Fygenon, M. (2006). Understanding and predicting electronic commerce adoption: An extension of the theory of planned behavior. *MIS Quarterly*, 30(1), 115–134. <https://doi.org/10.2307/25148720>
- Pounders, K. (2018). Are portrayals of female beauty in advertising finally changing? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 58(2), 133–137. Doi: 10.2501/JAR-2018-021.
- Scott, J. W. (2007). *Toplumsal cinsiyet: Faydalı bir tarihsel analiz kategorisi*. (A. T. Kılıç, Trans.). Agora Yayınevi.
- Shteiwi, M. (2015). Attitudes towards gender roles in Jordan. *British Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(2), 15–27. Retrieved August 10, 2023 from [https://www.ajournal.co.uk/HSArticles12\(2\).htm](https://www.ajournal.co.uk/HSArticles12(2).htm)
- Silverman, D. (2011). Introducing to qualitative research. D. Silverman (Ed.) In *qualitative research* (pp. 3-17). Sage Publications.
- Slattery, M. (2008). *Sosyolojide temel fikirler*. Sentez Yayınları.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P. & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory method and research*. Sage Publications.
- Sudkamper, A., Ryan, M. K., Kirby, T. A. & Morgenroth, T. (2020). A comprehensive measure of attitudes and behavior: Development of the support for gender equality among men scale. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 50, 256–277. Doi: 10.1002/ejsp.2629
- Şener, G. & Öztürk, E. (2022, May 13). Effie awards Türkiye toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği karnesi araştırması 2022 sonuç raporu. Retrieved August 28, 2023 from <https://www.rvd.org.tr/haberler/tv-reklamlarinin-2022-yili-toplumsal-cinsiyet-esitligi-karnesi-aciklandi>

- Tsichla, E. (2020). The changing roles of gender in advertising: Past, present, and future. *Contemporary Southeastern Europe*, 7(2), 28–44. <https://doi.org/10.25364/02.7:2020.2.3>
- Tutar, H. & Erdem, A. T. (2020). *Örnekleriyle bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri ve SPSS uygulamaları*. Seçkin Yayınları.
- Valek, N. S. & Picherit-Duthler, G. (2021). Pushing for gender equality in advertising: Gender role stereotypes in the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 33(5), 512–525. Doi: 10.1080/08961530.2020.1820417
- Varghese, N. & Kumar, N. (2022). Feminism in advertising: Irony or revolution? A critical review of femvertising. *Feminist Media Studies*, 22(2), 441–459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2020.1825>
- Vivian, J. (2009). *The media of mass communication*. (9th Ed.). Pearson International.
- Wade, C. & Tavis, C. (1990). *Psychology*. (2nd Ed.). Harper and Row Publishing Com.
- Wagner, W. E. (2010). *Using SPSS for social statistics and research methods*. (2nd Ed.). Fine Forge Press.
- Windels, K. (2016). Stereotypical or just typical: How do US practitioners view the role and function of gender stereotypes in advertisements? *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(5), 864–887. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2016.1160855>
- Yıldırım, A. & Şimşek, H. (2016). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. Seçkin Yayınları.
- Zimmerman, A. & Dahlberg, J. (2008). The sexual objectification of women in advertising: A contemporary cultural perspective. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 48(1), 71–79. Doi: 10.2501/S0021849908080094
- Zotos, Y. C. & Tsichla, E. (2014). Female stereotypes in print advertising: A retrospective analysis. *Procedia-social and Behavioral Sciences* 148, 446–454. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.064>

