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GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ADVERTISING

Stereotypes are generally referred to as beliefs about the characteristics, traits, and behaviors of members of particular groups. Gender stereotypes are consequently based on the belief that certain characteristics, traits, and behaviors distinguish the different sexes [1]. The aim of this paper is the analysis of how stereotypes about men and women influence marketing strategies.

Historically, advertisements have often represented men as strong, assertive, and in control, while women have been portrayed as nurturing, emotional, and primarily focused on domestic roles. These stereotypes not only reflect societal norms but also reinforce them, creating a cycle that affects how individuals perceive gender roles both in advertisements and in everyday life. For instance, many cleaning product advertisements feature women as the primary users, thereby reinforcing the stereotype that household chores are primarily a woman's responsibility. Conversely, advertisements for cars and technology often feature men, reinforcing the idea that these products are inherently masculine. This gap limits both genders and ignores the roles people can play [2]. Also, ads often portray women as overly emotional and irrational, while men are presented as logical and rational decision-makers. This reinforces the idea that women are less capable of making sound judgments.

Gender stereotypes have long influenced the fashion industry, including sportswear. Traditionally, women's sportswear has been associated with softer colors, such as pink, while men's sportswear is often dark colors. These stereotypes not only limit individual expression and reinforce society's expectations of what is considered appropriate for each gender. Women are also often associated with soft sports such as yoga, dancing, pilates, stretching, while men are involved in hard sports, for example, weightlifting, boxing, wrestling, powerlifting.

A company like Nike did not separate people by gender. In their advertising they try to emphasize the equality of both genders, their opportunities and abilities. Company has always supported women, recognizing and celebrating their strength and commitment in achieving their sporting goals [3]. For example, the «Nike: That's Us» and the «Nike: What will they say about you» promotional video showed that women can be not only housewives, but also professionals in dancing, boxing, powerlifting and prize-winning.

The analysis of gender stereotypes shows that advertising has long shaped societal views of men and women, influencing not only the portrayal of individuals but also the expectations surrounding their roles and abilities. The reinforcement of these stereotypes limits individual expression, and freedom keeps the old norm alive.

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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

The purpose of this paper is to study the impact of social media on consumer purchasing decisions.

Social media have increasingly changed the way of consumer relations with the brand and the way in which purchase decisions are made. More and more people use social media to research products, make purchasing decisions, and share their opinions with others. For billions of people around the world, social networks like Facebook, Instagram and TikTok are simply part of their lives, and consumer behavior can never be the same.

There are many factors in which social media influence consumer behavior. The key aspects social media impact consumers' choices are increasing awareness and product discovery; social media and FOMO; impulse buying; influencer marketing and social media and social proof. We conducted a consumer-oriented survey among the students. The purpose of our research is to determine the impact of these factors on consumer behavior. According to our research the most used social networks are Telegram and Instagram (92% and 85% respectively).

Probably one of the biggest effects of social media on consumer behavior is increasing awareness and discovery of new products. Consumers often find themselves discovering new brands or products in their feeds — sometimes organically shared by other users and sometimes through targeted advertisements. We found out that to a greater extent TikTok and Instagram encourage our respondents to purchase a product (39.1% and 31.3% respectively). User-generated content hugely influences the customer behavior with the photo and video reviews and testimonials. This is confirmed by our research: 73.4% of respondents always read reviews from other users before making a purchase. The majority of customers trust user-generated content over branded content because they