An investigation of the relative effectiveness of different same-sex family portrayals in advertising: Evidence from the LGBTQ+ community

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Abstract

Despite increasing LGBTQ+ visibility in advertising, limited research has examined how different same-sex portrayals influence emotional and attitudinal mechanisms that ultimately drive purchase intention. This study focuses on same-sex family portrayals and investigates the effects of ad type (lesbian vs. gay male) on happiness, attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention among LGBTQ+ consumers in Greece and Cyprus. Using an experimental design (N = 200), results indicate that the gay male family portrayal led to higher levels of happiness, attitude toward the ad, and purchase intention. The findings demonstrate that happiness plays a central mediating role, sequentially influencing Aad, Ab, and purchase intention. The study contributes to research on inclusive advertising by shedding light on the relative effectiveness of different LGBTQ+ portrayals, highlighting the importance of emotional engagement in shaping advertising effectiveness, and offering practical insights for brands seeking to authentically engage with LGBTQ+ audiences.

Keywords: LGBTQ+ representation, same-sex portrayals, family portrayals, gender