Empowerment or Empty Words? How Authenticity and Feminist Identity Shape Reactions to Femvertising on Instagram

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of femvertising on consumer attitudes, perceived brand authenticity, and purchase intention on Instagram, focusing on a lingerie brand's feminist-themed campaign. A prestudy analysed actual comments on Instagram, followed by an experiment using a between-subjects design with two conditions (femvertising vs. regular ad). The prestudy revealed a predominantly positive consumer response to the campaign, with 68% supportive comments, 11% neutral, and 21% critical, where concerns centered on authenticity, inclusivity, limited sizing, and material quality, while positive feedback often expressed strong emotional approval for the campaign's empowerment message. Results of the experimental study reveal that femvertising enhances perceived brand authenticity, which fully mediates positive effects on brand attitude and purchase intention. However, femvertising elicited lower immediate attitudes toward the advertisement compared to the neutral ad. Additionally, feminist self-identification moderates responses to the femvertising post, with lower-identified consumers displaying more negative attitudes, while higher-identified consumers remain less affected.

Keywords: femvertising, authenticity, brand attitude, feminist self-identification, sentiment analysis