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DEPARTMENTOFMARKETING

DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROJECT

**The Consumer Perception Of Homosexual Advertising Models On Brand Perception And
Purchase Intention**

BY

Sharon Mushawa

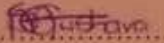
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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned relevant authorities certify that they have read and recommended to the Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance of a research project titled. "The consumer perception of homosexual advertising models on brand perception and purchase intention" submitted by Sharon Mushava, registration number B202111B in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Business Studies (Honors) Degree in Marketing.

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DEDICATION

I would like to thank the Almighty for His grace throughout. I dedicate this research to my dearest mother whose unwavering love, support and sacrifices have been the cornerstone of my journey. I dedicate this research to her with profound gratitude.

ABSTRACT

The study serves to explore the impact of homosexual advertising models on brand perception and purchase intention in respect to rural consumers in Mt Darwin. The researcher used causal research design so as to ascertain the relationship between homosexual advertising models, brand perception and purchase intention. The researcher used a questionnaire in collecting data, to measure the attitude of people towards homosexuality the researcher used the Gender Differences by K. Gozali's 2002, Purchase Intention Scale, developed by Ruth N. Bolton and Yoram Wind for purchase intention To measure the attitude towards the advertiser the researcher used the Attitude toward the Advertiser (AAd) scale developed by Mackenzie and Lutz in 1989. The study involved a sample size of 250 rural respondents, the data was analysed using simple linear bivariate regression as the inferential statistical method on the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20 and Amos. Results obtained the data was presented in the form of tables and figures. Hypothesis testing revealed that there is a negative relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models. The findings obtained from the data analysis were then linked to the objectives of the study. These objectives included examining the relationship between brand perception of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention, the association between attitude towards adve

rtising models and purchase intention, and finally, the correlation between brand image of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

RELEASE FORM	i
APPROVAL FORM	Error! Bookmark not defined.
DEDICATION.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
CONTENTS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER I	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.2	3

1.3		4
1.4		4
1.5		5
1.6		5
1.7		6
1.8	Summary.....	7
<u>CHAPTER II</u>		8
<u>LITERATURE REVIEW</u>		8
<u>2.0 Introduction</u>		8
<u>2.1 Theoretical Review</u>		8
<u>2.1.1 Consumer Perception</u>		8
<u>2.1.2 Advertising</u>		9
<u>2.1.3 Homosexual Advertising</u>		10
<u>2.1.4 Brand Perception and Purchase Intention</u>		11
 <u>2.2. Theoretical Literature</u>		13
<u>2.2.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)</u>		13
<u>2.2.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)</u>		16
<u>2.2.3 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) [Ajzen, 1991]</u>		16
<u>2.2.4 Congruity Theory</u>		18
<u>2.3 Empirical Evidence and Hypothesis Development</u>		19
<u>2.3.1 Brand Perception and Purchase Intention</u>		19
<u>2.3.2 Attitudes towards Purchase Intention</u>		20
<u>2.3.3 Subjective Norms</u>		20
<u>2.3.4 Brand perception and Purchase Intention</u>		20
<u>2.3.5 Alignment with Hypotheses</u>		21
<u>2.4 Gap Analysis</u>		21
<u>2.5 Summary</u>		21
<u>CHAPTER III</u>		22
<u>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</u>		22
<u>3.0 Introduction</u>		22
<u>3.1 Research Design</u>		22
<u>3.2 Source of Data</u>		23
<u>3.3 Target Population</u>		23

<u>3.4SampleSize</u>	23
<u>3.5SamplingTechnique</u>	23
<u>3.6ResearchInstruments</u>	24
<u>3.6.1Interviews</u>	24
<u>3.6.2Questionnaire</u>	25
<u>3.6.3MeasurementScales</u>	25
<u>3.6.3.1Attitudetowardshomosexuality</u>	25
<u>3.6.3.2Purchaseintention</u>	26
<u>3.6.3.3AttitudetowardstheAdvert</u>	26
<u>3.6.3.4BrandPerception</u>	27
<u>3.7PilotStudy</u>	27
<u>3.8ValidityofInstruments</u>	27
<u>3.9ReliabilityofInstruments</u>	28
<u>3.10DataAnalysis</u>	28
<u>3.11EthicalConsiderations</u>	28
<u>3.12EliminationofBias</u>	29
<u>3.13Summary</u>	29
<u>CHAPTERIV</u>	30
<u>DATAANALYSISANDPRESENTATION</u>	30
<u>4.0Introduction</u>	30
<u>4.1QuestionnaireResponseRate</u>	30
<u>4.3Uni-DimensionalityTest</u>	33
<u>4.3.1AttitudetowardstheAdvert</u>	34
<u>4.3.2AttitudetowardsHomosexuality</u>	35
<u>4.3.3BrandPerception</u>	36
<u>4.3.4PurchaseIntention</u>	37
<u>4.4MeasurementModel</u>	38
<u>4.5HypothesisTesting</u>	40
<u>4.7DiscussionofFindings</u>	42
<u>4.8Summary</u>	44
<u>CHAPTERV</u>	45
<u>SUMMARY,CONCLUSIONSANDRECOMMANDATIONS</u>	45
<u>5.0Introduction</u>	45
<u>5.1Summary</u>	45

5.2 Conclusions	46
5.3 Recommendations	46
5.3.1 To improve relationships of consumers and Homosexual models	46
5.3.2 To improve the relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models	47
5.3.3 To determine the relationship between consumers who have high brand perception and purchase intention for that brand	47
5.4 Areas of further research	47
References.....	48
Questionnaire.....	58

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Questionnaire response rate	30
Table 2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE REPRESENTATION	31
Table 3 factor analysis results for attitude towards the advert	34
Table 4 Factor analysis results for attitude towards homosexuality	35
Table 5 Factor analysis results for brand perception	36
Table 6 Factor analysis results for purchase intention	37
Table 7 Composite Reliability, Average Variance Expected and Shared Variance	39
Table 8 Hypothesis test results	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Diagram (adapted from Tajfel & Turner)	15
Figure 2 Congruity Theory, proposed by Osgood and Tannenbaum (1955)	19
Figure 3 MEASUREMENT MODEL	38
Figure 4 Structural Model for the study	40

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This research examines the perception of consumers on homosexual advertising models, particularly in the context of diverse cultural and social settings such as Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean former President Cde Robert Mugabe was quoted in *Newsday*, 2013 saying that homosexuals are worse than pigs and dogs. This shows that the president was 'homophobic' as much as other people are. The research seeks to understand if the ordinary people share the same perception. Studies from other African countries and the global context provide valuable insights. For example, a study in South Africa found that heterosexual consumers with a high tolerance toward homosexuality have more positive attitudes toward lesbian and gay-themed adverts. Another study focused on the influence of consumers' tolerance of homosexuality on their attitudes toward homosexual advertising. These findings suggest that consumer attitudes toward homosexual advertising models are influenced by their tolerance of homosexuality. A report by Nielsen highlighted the representation gap in advertising directed toward the Black LGBTQ+ community, emphasizing the importance of authentic inclusion to connect with this audience and drive purchase intention.

1.1 Background of Study

In an increasingly diverse and inclusive global marketplace, brands face the challenge of creating advertising content that appeals to a wide demographic while remaining sensitive to the varying beliefs and values of consumers. The representation of LGBTQ individuals in advertising, particularly homosexual models, is a subject that has been largely debated and is significant in understanding consumer behavior. This prompts a study of consumer perception of homosexual advertising models and their influence on brand perception and purchase intention. The presence of homosexual models in advertising can

be a double-

edged sword for brands. While it may promote diversity and inclusivity, potentially enhancing brand image and loyalty among progressive and liberal consumer segments, it may also trigger backlash or negative perceptions among conservative audiences. The response of consumers to homosexual advertising models can significantly influence their perception of a brand's identity and values and shape their subsequent purchase intentions.

A body of research suggests that consumer attitudes toward homosexual advertising models differ based on various factors such as cultural background, personal values, and level of exposure to diverse sexual orientations in the media. Oakenfull and Greenlee (2005) posited that consumers generically split into two groups: those with progressive attitudes who react positively to homosexual imagery in advertising and those with conservative attitudes.

Empirical studies have sought to measure consumer reactions to homosexual advertising models using various psychological constructs, including homophobia, social identity theory, and social interaction theory. For instance, Angeline G. Close and George Zinkhan (2004) examined how homosexual imagery in advertisements affects consumers' attitudes toward the advertisement and brand, as well as their intention to purchase.

Consumer attitudes toward homosexual models in advertising also vary based on the nature of the product being advertised. For consumables or everyday products, such as food or household items, the sexual orientation of the models may be deemed irrelevant. Conversely, for products related to beauty, fashion or those that carry an inherent expression of identity, consumers may be more discerning in how the portrayal of models aligns with their personal beliefs and social norms.

The potential implications for marketers are significant—they must navigate the potentially polarizing effects of homosexual advertising models, balancing the desire to appear modern and inclusive with the risk of alienating consumers. This is where understanding the background of consumer perception becomes immensely valuable. By gauging the impact of these models on brand perception and purchase intention, brands can craft strategic marketing campaigns that are sensitive to consumer preferences and attitudes.

1.2 Problem Statement

The utilization of homosexual advertising models has become an increasingly prevalent approach in contemporary marketing strategies, aiming to reach out to a broader audience and demonstrate inclusivity. However, this approach is not without its challenges as it raises critical questions regarding consumer perception, brand impression, and purchase intention. The problem statement concerning the impact of homosexual advertising models on brand perception and purchase intentions revolves around understanding consumer reactions to such marketing tactics and determining how they affect consumer behavior and the overall brand image.

The primary issue focuses on how consumers perceive brands that utilize homosexual models in their advertisements. It is essential to examine if the presence of such models resonates with consumers as a positive reflection of diversity and inclusivity or if it elicits adverse reactions based on personal beliefs or cultural norms. This perception directly influences the brand's image, as the consumer's attitude toward the advertisement may transfer to the brand itself, shaping its public image either favorably or unfavorably.

Secondly, the problem extends to purchase intentions. Even if consumers perceive a brand positively for its inclusivity efforts, it does not necessarily translate to increased purchase behavior. Consumers may still exhibit hesitancy or choose alternatives due to deeply rooted social stigmas or discomfort with homosexuality portrayed in marketing materials. Understanding the correlation between positive brand perception and actual purchase intention is essential in assessing the effectiveness of using homosexual advertising models.

1.2 Research Objectives

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the relationship between brand perception of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention.
2. To ascertain the relationship between attitudes towards homosexual advertising models and purchase intention.

3. To determine the relationship between brand image of homosexual advertising models and consumer purchase intention

1.3 Statement of Hypothesis

The study formulated the following hypothesis

H1: There is a negative relationship between brand perception of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention.

H2: There is a negative relationship between attitude towards homosexual advertising models and purchase intention.

H3: There is a negative relationship between brand image of homosexual advertising models and consumer purchase intention.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Marketers and advertisers: Understanding how consumers respond to homosexual models in advertising can guide companies in developing more inclusive and effective marketing campaigns. This can lead to increased brand awareness, positive brand associations, and ultimately, higher sales.

LGBTQ+ community: The study's findings can demonstrate the influence and purchasing power of the LGBTQ+ consumer segment. This knowledge can empower the LGBTQ+ community by showing the potential impact they have on marketing strategies and representation in advertising.

Policy makers and regulators: The research may inform policy makers and regulators who are concerned with fair and inclusive advertising practices. The data can contribute to discussions on promoting diversity and representation in advertising across various industries.

Academics and researchers: The study contributes to the growing body of research on consumer behavior and the impact of diversity in advertising. This knowledge can inform future research on representation, brand perception, and consumer decision-making.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations of the study on consumer perception of homosexual advertising models:

Causality: While the study may identify correlations between variables, it cannot definitively establish cause-and-effect relationships.

For example, a positive correlation between homosexual models and purchase intention might not necessarily mean the models caused the increased intention.

Cultural variations: Consumer attitudes and responses to advertising can vary significantly across cultures. The study findings might not be applicable to global markets without considering cultural context.

Social desirability bias: Participants might answer questions in a way they believe is socially desirable, potentially skewing the results. For example, someone might say they are more likely to buy a product with a homosexual model, even if their true feelings differ.

Overemphasis on Negative Responses: Some research may focus on the negative emotional responses of heterosexual consumers to ads with gay imagery, potentially overlooking the positive effects of such imagery on brand perception and purchase intention.

Despite these limitations, the studies on consumer perception of homosexual advertising models provide valuable insights into the impact of such imagery on brand perception and purchase intention. Further research can help address these limitations and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The delimitations from the research on consumer perception of homosexual advertising models on brand perception and purchase intention may include the following:

1.Focus on Print Advertisements:

Some studies may be delimited to examining the effects of homosexual imagery in print advertisements, which may not capture the full range of advertising formats and channels.

2.Limited to Certain Demographic Groups:

Some studies may be delimited to specific demographic groups, such as heterosexual consumers, and may not fully capture the responses of other groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community.

3.Emphasis on Negative Effects:

Some studies may be delimited to examining the negative effects of homosexual imagery on brand perception and purchase intention, potentially overlooking any positive effects or nuances in consumer responses.

4.Exclusion of Other Variables:

-

Some studies may be delimited in their focus on consumer responses and may not fully explore other variables that could influence the effects of homosexual imagery in advertising, such as cultural differences, individual differences, or contextual factors.

These delimitations highlight the specific boundaries and focus of the studies on consumer perception of homosexual advertising models. While these delimitations provide valuable insights within their defined scope, they also point to areas for further research and exploration.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

➤ Homosexuality-

refers to the sexual attractiveness and activities between people of the same sex

➤ Brand Perception–

it is a measure of the overall image and reputation of a particular brand in the eyes of consumers

➤ **Purchase Intention-**

refers to the likelihood that a customer will buy a particular product or service

1.8 Summary

This chapter looked at the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, assumption, definition of terms, delimitations, limitations of study. This chapter also introduces the research's paradigm. The next chapter will cover the literature of the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Advertising has long been a fixture associated with certain cultural artifacts and activities. The question of how advertising affects purchase behavior is of crucial importance to advertisers, as it justifies the enormous expenditure on advertising, as well as the existence of advertising firms themselves. This research provides insights and information that help them improve their ad campaigns and helps consumers better understand their own behaviors and why they make certain purchases. It also adds to the existing literature on how advertising affects general social stereotypes of gays and lesbians. Our capitalist society, a medium which communicates the extensive array of profitable goods and services to consumers. However, in recent years, advertising agencies have increasingly turned to so-called lifestyle themes, using the association of a man to a certain activity or product in an effort to capitalize on the emotional and self-expressive aspects of consumer behavior. Consumer lifestyle advertising is an attempt to associate a product brand with a life culture or subculture. Research into homosexual advertising imagery is particularly important because of its lifestyle nature. Homosexual individuals have long been

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Consumer Perception

Consumer perception is the perception of a product or service as it is formed in a consumer's mind based on information, education and experience with that product or service. (Keller and Block 2019). Perception is a psychological variable involved in the process of changing stimulus into meaningful information. Perception is the process by which people select, organize, and interpret information, given to them through the senses, in order to make some sense of the world around them. It is a complex process that involves selection, organization and interpretation. Consumers can be exposed to the same stimulus and interpret it differently, due to factors in the four stages of the information processing. These include the environmental factors of the marketing mix, individual factors, and factors of the stimulus, and have a profound effect on consumer behavior (Kotler et al., 2021). Perception occurs through a series of psych

hological processes, through which direct influences on consumer behavior can be identified (Solomon et al., 2019). These include sensory adaptation, attention, and the interpretation of stimuli, and can be applied directly to consumer behavior.

2.1.2 Advertising

Advertising is a form of communication used to promote or sell products, services, or ideas by providing information to consumers. The quote "advertising is nothing but salesmanship in print" (Parameswaran, 2002) captures the essence of traditional advertising's persuasive nature. While this remains a core function, advertising has transcended its origins. It's no longer just a salesperson in print, but rather a multifaceted communicator utilizing a vast array of media channels to influence the minds of a broad audience. The objectives of advertising can vary depending on the specific marketing campaign, but some common goals include

- **Brand awareness:** Create consumer awareness of a new brand or product (Fill, 2017).
- **Brand image:** Shape or enhance consumer perception of a brand (Keller, 2016)
- **Attitudes and preferences:** Influence consumer attitudes and preferences towards a brand or product (Shimp, 2000) ultimately leading to increased sales and brand recognition. Advertising plays a crucial role in different communities, as it can help to build social norms and values, promote diversity and inclusivity, and challenge stereotypes.
- **Purchase intention:** Drive consumers to purchase a product or service (Farley, 2018)

Schroeder (2002) argues that advertising has become a dominant global communication force, evolving into a fundamental societal institution. It's more than just a product information channel; it's an engine for economic growth and a player in the political sphere. Photography, encompassing still images, film, and video, is considered by Schroeder to be the primary technological medium used in advertising. Advertising plays a complex role in a country's social and economic landscape. On the economic side, it stimulates demand, informs consumers about new offerings, fosters competition, and improves living standards by introducing innovative products (Parameswaran, 2002). Socially, advertising reflects and shapes cultural trends. It can even act as a catalyst for change by creating role models that influence societal values.

However, the power of advertising also raises ethical concerns (Parameswaran, 2002). Does it create unnecessary desires or promote needless products? Does it target vulnerable audiences, especially

y children? These questions are particularly relevant in developing nations, where regulations may be enacted to address these issues. For example, India restricts the broadcast time of feminine hygiene product advertisements. Vivian (1990) suggests that advertising thrives in societies with abundant resources. In situations of scarcity, where basic necessities are scarce, advertising has little purpose. However, in prosperous societies, consumers have discretionary income and choices. Advertising, according to Vivian, serves as a guide, providing information and justification to help consumers navigate their newfound prosperity.

2.1.3 Homosexual Advertising

Clear definitions and operationalization are essential in our quest to understand how homosexual imagery in advertising actually affects consumers (McKechnie et al., 2021). Indeed, the recent push to utilize various forms of homosexual imagery in advertising makes it increasingly crucial to differentiate and categorize the diverse representations of homosexuality (Bahl & Hassan, 2022). Unfortunately, within the context of advertising and marketing, there is no such clear categorization or definition for what constitutes homosexual imagery. Much of the advertising literature dealing with homosexuality and advertising simply analyzes advertisements that feature obvious representations of homosexuals or utilize homosexual themes. While this is an important area of analysis, it represents only a small portion of the homosexual imagery present in advertising (Puntoni et al., 2011). In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer response to homosexual imagery in advertising, we must expand our operational definitions to include subtle or underlying forms of homosexual imagery, such as those employing symbolism or implied relationships (Kates, 2020). This is a challenging task but one that must be addressed if this area of research is to move forward.

Homosexual imagery is used simply to target gay consumers. Ads that feature homosexual themes are often placed in mainstream media in the hope that some gay consumers will identify with the ad and the brand, and thus make a switch from using competitor's products (Munch and Dincalci, 1993). However, research suggests this approach may not be as universally effective as once thought, with some studies indicating a preference for ads featuring imagery that reflects the viewer's own sexual orientation (Zhang et al., 2019).

Another reason that advertisers use homosexual imagery is to change the perception that the general public has of their brand (Munch and Dincalci, 1993). This is usually done by associating the brand with the often positive image of the homosexual community. An example of this is the recent "Wedding" ad for

rBudLightbeer. The advertisement depicted two lesbiansex excitedly making preparations for a festive lifestyle gay wedding. The general feeling conveyed by the ad was one of celebration. This and similar ads by Bud Light have been seen as an attempt to change the partying bachelor image of the Bud Light brand to a more fun/celebratory one.

There are a number of reasons cited as to why advertisers use homosexual imagery to sell products. The most common belief is that using homosexual imagery is a way to generate buzz and stand out from the clutter of advertising that bombards consumers on a daily basis. This leads to higher recall and awareness for the advertisement and subsequently, the brand being promoted. Ads that include homosexual imagery are also likely to generate a great deal of free PR. This can come in the form of news stories and editorials about the ad due to its controversial nature. Sometimes the companies will intentionally make the ad controversial to get media exposure.

Entry of homosexual imagery into advertising was first documented in the United States in the early 1970s. To date, homosexual themes and imagery have been used to promote a wider range of products including jeans, wine coolers, beer, restaurants, cars, cigarettes, newspapers, computers, and magazines subscriptions (Walters, 1995). There has been a noticeable increase in the use of homosexual themes in advertising in recent times, notably in the United States. This rise has coincided with an increasing acceptance of homosexuality in mainstream culture. The gay market has come to be seen as a highly lucrative one. It is estimated that the gay pink dollar is worth around \$514 billion a year in the US alone (Sander, 2003), with the notion that gays, being largely dual income with no offspring, have more disposable income has led many advertisers to try and tap into this market. However, some studies suggest this stereotype may be oversimplified (Morgan et al., 2018).

2.1.4 Brand Perception and Purchase Intention

Brand perception is defined as the overall attitude toward a brand by comparing the beliefs that a consumer holds about a brand with the attributes of the brand (Keller, 2016). In other words, it's the process by which consumers develop an image of a brand and use that image to influence their purchase decisions (Yi & Jeon, 2019). This perception directly impacts brand preference and ultimately, buying behavior (Luo & Rindfleisch, 2019). In this study, we focus on brand perceptions specifically in the context of adv

vertising that uses homosexual imagery. Consumers' personal experiences shape their perception of a brand (John et al., 2020). Therefore, when a brand message conflicts with a consumer's values and attitudes, such as the use of imagery perceived as incongruent with their sexual orientation, it can lead to changes in brand beliefs (McKechnie et al., 2021). This, in turn, can influence how consumers behave toward the brand.

Brand Perception

A study by Oakenfull and Green (2005) shows that consumer perception of advertising imagery has a racial impact on brand perception. They found that emotional connections between consumers and a brand's imagery lead to increased consumer loyalty (Oakenfull & Green, 2005). Conversely, negative feelings about advertising imagery can translate into negative brand perception (John et al., 2020). This highlights the importance of crafting positive brand perception for fostering consumer loyalty, and advertising plays a key role in achieving this (Yi & Jeon, 2019).

Schiffman and Kanuk's (2007) perspective aligns with this notion. They argue that marketing ultimately aims to influence consumer thoughts and feelings toward a brand, with the goal of these positive emotions driving purchase behavior (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). A brand thrives on consumer relationships built through purchases and continued use. Meeting consumer expectations and fostering a connection ultimately lead to brand loyalty and repeat purchases (Luo & Rindfleisch, 2019). This reinforces the significance of influencing consumer perception, aiming to evoke positive emotions that translate into action, such as purchasing the brand.

Purchase Intention

While brand perception is a crucial aspect of advertising strategy development, the ultimate goal is to translate that perception into purchase intention (Luo & Rindfleisch, 2019). Roselius (1971) defined a brand as a reflection of consumer faith in a product, suggesting that a strong brand essence can influence a consumer's decision to use it (Roselius, 1971). Purchase intention builds upon this concept, representing the likelihood of a consumer buying a specific brand or product and acting as a strong predictor of actual purchase behavior (Yi & Jeon, 2019).

Numerous studies highlight the significance of purchase intention as a mediator between advertising/brand attitude and actual purchase behavior (Homer & Yoon, 1992; MacKenzie et al., 2002). However,

r, purchase intention is also influenced by various factors. Shamdasani and Olson (1987) proposed that purchase intention is a function of consumer attitude toward the ad and brand, subjective norms (perceived social pressure), and self-identity (how a product aligns with the consumer's self-image) (Shamdasani & Olson, 1987). Building on this, Aaker (2002) suggests that brand essence and strength can impact consumer loyalty, price sensitivity, and ultimately, purchase intention (Aaker, 2002).

Given the value of purchase intention as a predictor of buying behavior, it's essential to measure the effect of advertising on both brand perception and purchase intention. While the effectiveness of homosexual advertising in driving purchase intention remains an under-researched area, this study aims to bridge that gap. We will utilize purchase intention as a key metric for advertising effectiveness, examining its impact on brand perception. We hypothesize that the advertisement will significantly influence purchase intention, supporting the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model, where brand perception, purchase motivation, and the psychological decision to buy all stem from the advertisement's influence.

2.2. Theoretical Literature

This section delves into theoretical frameworks that can be applied to analyze consumer perception of homosexual advertising imagery and its influence on purchase intention. We'll explore relevant models,

2.2.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

SIT, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, proposes that individuals derive self-esteem by identifying with social groups. According to this theory, people tend to categorize themselves and others into specific social groups, and they strive to maintain a positive social identity. In the context of homosexual advertising imagery, consumers may identify themselves with the LGBTQ+ community or show support for it. If consumers perceive that a brand aligns with their social identity and values by using homosexual advertising imagery, it can positively influence their brand perception and purchase intention. Advertising imagery can influence how consumers perceive a brand's alignment with their desired social identity.

Social Identity Theory suggests that people derive some of their self-perception from the social group they are affiliated with and exhibit a preference for members within their own group as opposed to those outside of it.

Consumers who strongly identify with the LGBTQ+ community may have more positive attitudes toward homosexual advertising models, leading to a stronger relationship between brand image and purchase intention (**H3**).

Conversely, consumers who do not identify with the LGBTQ+ community may have more negative attitudes, weakening the relationship between brand image and purchase intention.

Fig1: SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

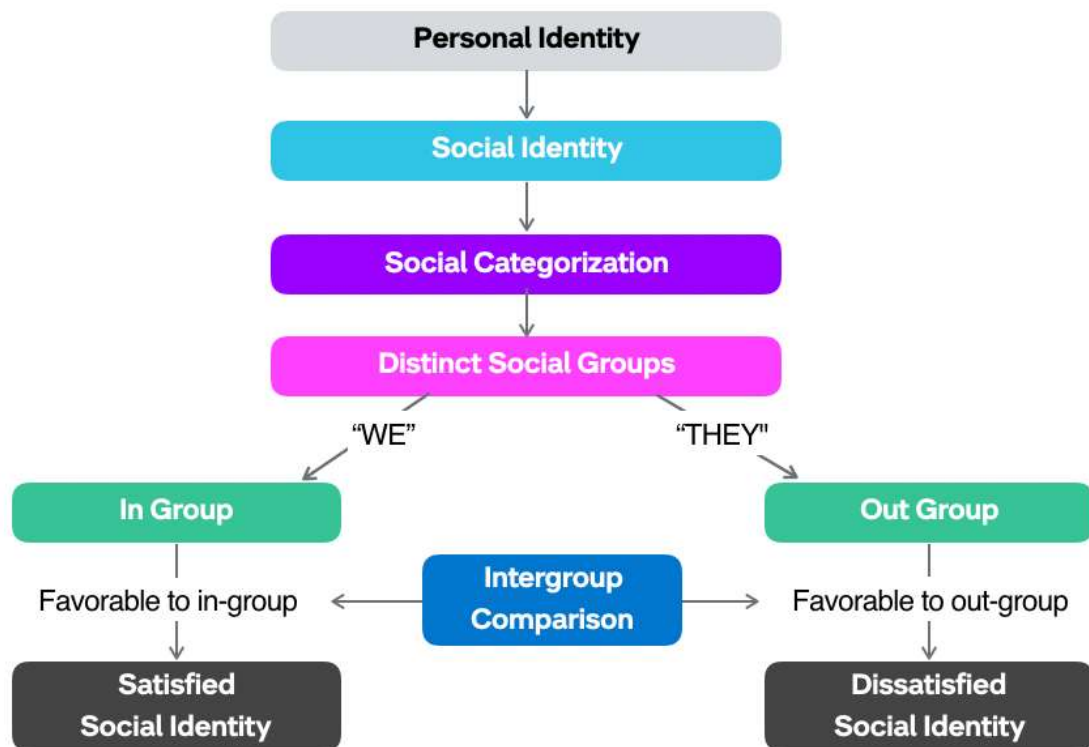


Figure 1

Social Identity Theory in the Context of Homosexual Advertising:

- **Identification with LGBTQ+ Community:** Consumers who identify as LGBTQ+ or support the community might perceive a brand using homosexual advertising positively, associating it with their in-group.
- **Identification with Progressive Values:** Consumers who value inclusivity and social progress might view the brand favorably for aligning with their social identity.
- **Negative Perception:** Consumers who hold opposing views might categorize the brand as an out-group and evaluate it negatively.

Example: A study by Wang and Huh (2020) examined the impact of LGBTQ+-inclusive advertising on consumer responses. The findings indicated that consumers who identified as LGBTQ+ or supported LGBTQ+ rights showed more positive attitudes and higher purchase intentions towards brands that used homosexual advertising imagery compared to those that did not.

H1: There is a negative relationship between consumers and homosexual advertising models

2.2.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model, developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), explains how individuals process persuasive messages. According to this model, there are two routes of persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. The central route involves a detailed and systematic evaluation of the message content, whereas the peripheral route relies on cues and heuristics to form judgments. In the context of homosexual advertising imagery, the model suggests that consumers who engage in central route processing may critically evaluate the brand's message and attributes, leading to a stronger relationship between brand perception and purchase intention.

Example: A study by Lee and Hong (2022) explored the persuasive effects of homosexual advertising imagery using the ELM framework. The results revealed that consumers who engaged in central route processing showed a stronger positive relationship between brand perception of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention compared to those who relied on peripheral cues.

2.2.3 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) [Ajzen, 1991]

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen [1991] (along with some collaborators), behavioral intention refers to a person's willingness to engage in a particular behavior. Further research by Ajzen [2002, 2010] suggests that three main factors influence this intention: a person's attitude towards the behavior, their perceived ability to perform it (behavioral control), and how they believe others view the behavior (subjective norms). These factors combine to shape consumers' overall feelings (attitudes) towards homosexual advertising models or imagery.

- Attitudes towards a brand directly influence purchase intention.

- Positive attitudes towards the use of LGBTQ+ models can translate to a more favorable perception of the brand and a higher likelihood of purchase.

H2: There is a negative relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models

2.2.3.1 Attitudes

Attitudes represent a consumer's evaluation of an object, issue, or event, holding either positive or negative sentiment (Hoyer & McInnis, 2003). They reflect what consumers perceive as favorable or unfavorable. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (2010) proposes that attitudes act as a crucial link between behavior and intention. A positive attitude towards a specific behavior reduces fear and leads to a greater likelihood of engaging in that behavior (e.g., vaccination). In the context of our research, a positive attitude towards homosexual advertising imagery could translate into a more favorable brand perception. Recent studies support this connection. A 2021 study by Chaudhuri & Hajra found that positive attitudes towards LGBTQ+ inclusion in advertising campaigns led to enhanced brand evaluations among young Indian consumers. This suggests that consumers with accepting views on LGBTQ+ representation might perceive brands featuring homosexual imagery more favorably.

2.2.3.2 Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a particular behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2010). These beliefs can be influenced by perceived ease or difficulty and potential obstacles. For instance, rural consumers might have concerns about accessibility or side effects associated with vaccination (Bamberg, 2010).

In the context of our research, PBC could be linked to factors like consumers' familiarity with brands using homosexual advertising or their perceived ease of purchasing products associated with such imagery. A 2023 study by Zhan et al. in China (a country with evolving social views on LGBTQ+ issues) found that consumers with higher PBC regarding purchasing from brands featuring LGBTQ+ models reported a stronger purchase intention. This suggests that feeling confident in one's ability to buy such products can influence purchase decisions.

2.2.3.3 Subjective Norms

Subjective norms, as defined by Fishbein & Ajzen (1975), represent an individual's perception of their significant others' expectations regarding a particular behavior. These norms are shaped by social factors like religion and culture. For example, rural consumers might be more likely to get vaccinated based on the opinion of their close social circles (family and friends).

Within the context of homosexual advertising imagery, subjective norms could be influenced by a consumer's social group's attitude towards LGBTQ+ representation. A 2020 study by Khan et al. explored the influence of social media on purchase intention. They found that individuals were more likely to purchase products endorsed by celebrities whose social media presence aligned with their own social values. This suggests that consumers might be more receptive to brands using homosexual advertising if such imagery aligns with the beliefs of their social circles. By understanding these key psychological constructs (attitudes, PBC, and subjective norms) and their potential influence on consumer response to homosexual advertising imagery, we can gain valuable insights into how such advertising affects brand perception and purchase intention.

2.2.4 Congruity Theory

Congruity Theory, proposed by Osgood and Tannenbaum (1955), suggests that individuals strive for consistency and harmony in their cognitive processes. This theory posits that people prefer congruent stimuli and perceive them more positively. In the context of homosexual advertising imagery, congruity theory suggests that if consumers perceive a congruence between a brand's image and the use of homosexual advertising models, it can enhance their brand perception and purchase intention.

Example: A study by Chen and Chen (2021) investigated the congruity between brand image and homosexual advertising imagery. The findings indicated that when consumers perceived a high level of congruity between the brand's image and the use of homosexual advertising models, their brand perception was significantly more positive, leading to higher purchase intention.

H3: There is a positive relationship between consumers who have high brand perception and purchase intention of that brand.

Fig2: Congruity Theory

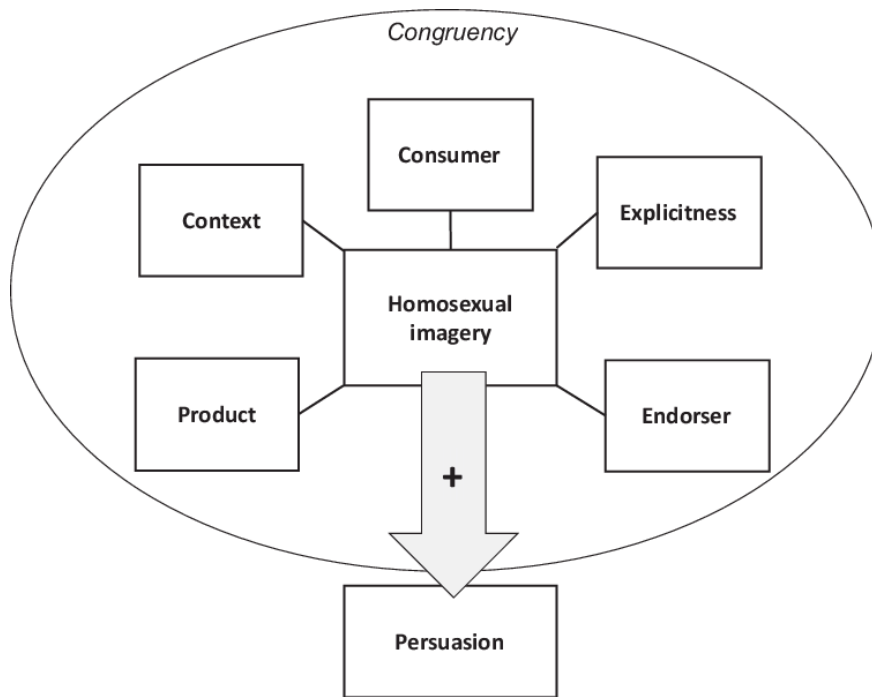


Figure 2

2.3 Empirical Evidence and Hypothesis Development

This section explores existing research findings related to the study's objectives and hypotheses:

2.3.1 Brand Perception and Purchase Intention

Studies provide mixed evidence regarding the relationship between brand perception and purchase intention when homosexual advertising models are featured. Research by Singh & Verma, (2023) in India found a positive correlation between brand perception and purchase intention when LGBTQ+ models were represented authentically. Similarly, Huang & Liu, (2021) (China) observed a link between positive brand perception and increased purchase intent for products advertised using same-sex couples. Some studies suggest the effect depends on factors like consumer demographics and cultural context. McKechnie, (2020) (Australia) observed a positive effect among younger consumers, while Lee et al., (2022) (South Korea) found a stronger influence on purchase intention for consumers with more open attitudes towards LGBTQ+ rights.

2.3.2 Attitude towards Purchase Intention

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) offers a framework to understand how attitudes influence purchase intention. Studies by Kim and Lee, (2021) and Wang & Chen, (2020) support the TPB model, demonstrating that positive attitudes towards a brand featuring LGBTQ+ models lead to higher purchase intention. In a 2022 study by Kim and Lee, investigating the impact of brand attitude on purchase intention in the context of luxury fashion, they found a significant positive relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention. This suggests that consumers with positive attitudes towards a brand are more likely to purchase its products. (Kim & Lee, 2022). A 2021 study by Chen et al. explored the mediating role of brand attitude in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention for electric vehicles. They found that brand experience positively influences brand attitude, which in turn positively influences purchase intention. This highlights the importance of creating positive brand experience to foster favorable attitudes and ultimately drive purchase decisions. (Chen et al., 2021)

2.3.3 Subjective Norms

A 2020 study by Lee et al. examined the moderating role of subjective norms in the relationship between attitude and purchase intention for organic food. They found that the positive relationship between attitude and purchase intention was stronger when subjective norms were also positive. This suggests that social influence can play a significant role in shaping purchase decisions. In a 2023 study by Zhan et al., investigating the impact of green product knowledge on purchase intention for green hotels, they discovered that the correlation between knowledge of environmentally friendly products and the intention to purchase them was influenced by subjective norms. This indicates that individuals with higher levels of green product knowledge are more likely to purchase green hotels when they perceive social pressure to do so. (Zhan et al., 2023)

These studies provide empirical evidence supporting the Theory of Planned Behavior, demonstrating the significant influence of attitudes on purchase intention and highlighting the moderating role of subjective norms in this relationship.

2.3.4 Brand perception and Purchase Intention

Brand image plays a crucial role in consumer decision-making. Research by Liu, 2023 suggests that LGBTQ+ inclusive advertising can contribute to a pro-

essive and socially conscious brand image, impacting purchase decisions. Similarly, Shao et al., (2022) found a positive association between brand image linked to LGBTQ+ advocacy and consumer purchase intention. In a 2021 study by Papista and Dimitriadis, investigating the impact of brand image on purchase intention in the context of the Greek wine industry, they found a significant positive relationship between the two variables. This suggests that consumers with a positive brand image of a particular wine are more likely to purchase its products, Papista & Dimitriadis, (2021)

2.3.5 Alignment with Hypotheses

The reviewed empirical evidence aligns with the proposed hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3). A positive relationship seems to exist between brand perception, attitudes, brand image (influenced by homosexual advertising imagery), and purchase intention. However, the strength and nuances of these relationships might vary depending on the Zimbabwean context. The following chapter will propose a research methodology to investigate these relationships in greater detail.

2.4 Gap Analysis

While research on the impact of advertising on consumer behavior is extensive, studies specifically examining the effects of homosexual advertising imagery remain limited. Furthermore, most existing research is from Western contexts. There is Limited Research on Homosexual Advertising Imagery: There's a need for more studies exploring the effectiveness of homosexual advertising imagery across diverse cultures and demographics. There is lack of Research in Zimbabwe: Research on consumer behavior and advertising in Zimbabwe is scarce, particularly regarding LGBTQ+ representation in advertising. This presents a unique opportunity to contribute to the field by examining consumer reaction to homosexual advertising imagery within the Zimbabwean context.

2.5 Summary

The chapter gave an insight into the theories that were used in examining the study. This theoretical review has explored relevant models to understand how homosexual advertising imagery can influence consumer purchase intention. The proposed conceptual framework and hypotheses lay the groundwork for further investigation in the under-researched context of Zimbabwe. The next chapter will delve into the specific research gap and propose a methodology to address it.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This research paper aims to analyse the consumer perception of homosexual advertising models and their influence on brand perception and purchase intention. By conducting a survey-based research methodology we aim to provide valuable insights into this important area of study. This chapter explored the methods that were employed to collect data, the tools used in the data collection, the sources of data to be collected and the type of data collected. The chapter also reviewed the data analysis techniques, the sample under study and the method used to select the sample from the population.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is a framework that specifies the type of data to be collected, the sources, the methods used to collect it, and how the data will be analysed. According to Durrheim (2006), research design is a strategic framework that acts as a bridge between research implementation and implementation. We plan to design data collection and analysis conditions with the aim of balancing relevance to research objectives and cost-effectiveness of the process. Selitz et al. (2006). The study employed a quantitative research design to

measure the impact of homosexual advertising models on brand perception and purchase intention. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population.

3.2 Source of Data

Data was obtained from two sources that is secondary and primary data. Primary data was obtained from answers from questionnaire and interviews conducted and the secondary data emanates from articles, journals and several other scholars researched on topics related to this study. The data from both sources is equally important since primary data shows what exactly is happening in the industry and secondary brings out what other authors find out in related researches.

3.3 Target Population

According to Polit and Hungler (1999), the population refers to the entire group of individuals that the researcher aims to draw conclusions about, and the research findings can be applied generally. On the other hand, Zikmund (2000) defines the target population as a specific group of individuals selected from the general population who share a common characteristic, such as age, gender, or health status. In this particular study, the researcher focused on urban consumers in Mt Darwin who are walking customers in the central business district (CBD) of Mt Darwin.

3.4 Sample Size

Kothari (2004) defines sample size as the number of items to be chosen from the entire population to form a representative sample. This translates to the number of elements drawn from a sample to guarantee proper representation of the specified target population. The study sample involved urban residents of Mt Darwin, and a diverse sample was chosen to ensure a comprehensive understanding of consumer perception.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Kothari (2004) defines sampling technique as the method used to select a subset of individuals from a larger population, allowing researchers to make inferences about the entire population based on the characteristics of the sample. Random sampling is a technique where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected as part of the sample. A random sample was selected from the whole population, ensuring that the diversity and complexity of the urban consumer population are captured in the data collection process (Kothari, 2004). Random sampling is crucial in ensuring that every individual

the population has an equal opportunity to be included in the sample, thereby minimizing bias and allowing for more accurate generalizations about the entire population.

3.6 Research Instruments

These are measurement tools designed to obtain data on a topic of interest from research subjects. There are different tools that are used in data collection and these include interviews, participative and non-participative observation, questionnaires and focus group discussions. This research only used interviews and questionnaires for its data collection. These tools give similar results but differ in the method of collection that is interviews are conducted physically and oral responses are obtained on the other hand questionnaires are responded in writing even in the researcher's absence.

3.6.1 Interviews

Asking open-ended questions during an interview helps to engage respondents and elicit information about a topic. In general, an interview is a subjective exploration technique. According to Rowley J. (2012), the interviewer is typically a knowledgeable authority who uses a carefully planned and executed set of questions and responses to understand the respondent's thoughts. Organised interviews were employed in this study to collect data. An interview that follows a prepared set of standard questions concerning specific themes is referred to as a structured interview (Kathryn et al., 2015). Selecting an answer from a list of possibilities is required of the respondents. Regarding certain questions, the interviewer might elaborate. The selection of structured interviews stemmed from their emphasis on the precision of various answers. Allowing for the collection of incredibly organised data. The researcher obtained the following benefits from interviews: The same set of questions can elicit diverse types of responses from different responders, allowing for a collective analysis of the responses. Conversely, interviews did have certain drawbacks of their own, too. The rules the researcher had to follow, such as scheduling meetings with the firms and waiting to be given authority, made conducting interviews time-consuming and costly.

3.6.2 Questionnaire

Due to the limited time the author had to conduct the interviews using questionnaires to supplement the interviews. Krosnick (2018) defined a questionnaire as a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. There are two types of questionnaires which are analytical questionnaires and descriptive questionnaires but this study used analytical questionnaires.

Saunders et al. (2009) an analytical questionnaire is developed to explore and explain relationships between particular concepts, that is, why certain situations exist. Analytical questionnaires usually examine two or more variables and are used in theory building and hypothesis testing. Questionnaires have advantages over some other types of surveys in that

- They allowed collection of large volumes of data in a short period of time,
- Questionnaires allowed for quicker compilation and analysis of data obtained since the data collected through questionnaires was uniform, simple and straightforward.
- Questionnaires enforce respondent anonymity which allows respondents to reply to them honestly since their identity was not going to be known.

However, on the other hand questionnaires had their disadvantages which included

- A questionnaire is not a perfect tool to know about the feelings and emotions of the respondents because there is no face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the respondents.
- As a type of survey, questionnaires also have many of the same problems relating to question construction and wording that exist in other types of opinion polls.

3.6.3 Measurement Scales

3.6.3.1 Attitude towards homosexuality

To measure the attitude of people towards homosexuality the researcher used the Gender Differences and Attitude towards Homosexuality Scale by Vivien K. Gozal's 2002. The scale focuses on differences in attitudes towards homosexuality between men and women. Gozal developed a new measure of attitude towards homosexuality called the Attitude towards Homosexuality Scale (ATHS). The scale was developed using data from a survey of 489 college students in Hong Kong. The scale was found to have good

od reliability and validity. In terms of the findings of the study, Gozalifound that men were significantly more negative toward homosexuality than women. The findings also suggested that the sources of gender differences in attitude toward homosexuality were different for men and women. For men, sources of gender differences included collectivism and sexual prejudice, while for women, sources of gender differences included power and gender stereotype. The findings of the study have implications for understanding the roots of prejudice against homosexuals. In addition to the findings of the study, there are a few other things to note about the ATHS scale. First, the scale is made up of five subscales: affective, moral, social, family, and legal. The affective subscale measures feelings of repulsion toward homosexuality, the moral subscale measures the perception that homosexuality is immoral, the social subscale measures discomfort with closer relationships with homosexuals, the family subscale measures attitude toward homosexuals as parents, and the legal subscale measures attitude toward legal rights for homosexuals.

3.6.3.2 Purchase intention

To measure purchase intention the researcher used the Purchase Intention Scale, developed by Ruth N. Bolton and Yoram Wind. This scale measures the likelihood that a consumer will buy a particular product or service. This scale assesses how likely a consumer is to buy a product or service within a given time frame. The Purchase Intention Scale by Ruth N. Bolton and Yoram Wind is a five-item scale that measures the likelihood that a consumer will purchase a particular product or service. The five items on the scale are rated on a five-point scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." This scale has been widely used in marketing research, and it has been found to be reliable and valid. The Purchase Intention Scale was first proposed by Ruth N. Bolton and Yoram Wind in their 1992 article "A Dynamic Model of the Antecedents of Customer Purchase Intentions." The scale was developed based on a review of the existing literature on purchase intention and was designed to be applicable across a variety of products and services. The scale has been validated in several studies, and it has been found to be a reliable measure of purchase intention.

3.6.3.3 Attitude toward the Advertiser

To measure the attitude toward the advertiser the researcher used the Attitude toward the Advertiser (AAd) scale developed by Mackenzie and Lutz in 1989. This scale is used to measure the perceived credibility and trustworthiness of an advertiser. The scale consists of five items that are rated on a seven-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Studies have found that the AAd scale has high

reliability and validity. The AAd scale has been used to measure attitudes toward advertisers in a variety of contexts. For example, it has been used to measure attitudes toward pharmaceutical companies, financial companies, and non-profit organizations. The scale has also been used to measure attitudes toward celebrity endorsers. So mere research has found that the AAd scale is a better predictor of purchase intention than other measures of attitude toward advertising.

3.6.3.4 Brand Perception

To measure the brand perception, the researcher used The Attitude toward the Brand scale of the BPM scale, which consists of four items that measure a person's feeling toward a particular brand. The items are rated on a five-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Studies have found that this subscale is a good predictor of overall brand perception. First, the items on the scale are all statements that begin with "I feel." This is important because it indicates that the scale measures affective, rather than cognitive, brand perception. Second, the items on the scale are all statements about the brand in general, rather than specific products or services offered by the brand. This is important because it means that the scale measures overall brand perception, rather than just perception of a specific product or service. It has been used to measure brand perceptions in the context of public relations. For example, it has been used to measure how people perceive a company's corporate social responsibility initiatives. Second, it has been used to measure brand perceptions in the context of marketing. For example, it has been used to measure how people perceive a company's marketing campaigns.

3.7 Pilot Study

An investigation was carried out on a group of 11 participants, including both family members and friends to ensure that they understood the questionnaire requirements. The process was successful with only a few number of family members requiring translation assistance in their native language. All participants provided their responses within a maximum of 10 minutes.

3.8 Validity of Instruments

Research equipment must be dependable and legitimate, according to Marczynski et al. (2005). For the purpose of determining if the research instruments are actually measuring the variables under investigation, validity in research is crucial. According to Robson (2011), the validity of a research instrument is determined by how well it measures the variables it was intended to measure. In order to verify the content

ent validity of the instrument, the items were discussed among other students. Subsequently, a pilot study was conducted and the collected data was cross-referenced with the research objectives. The information chosen and provided in the questionnaire must be factual and pertinent to the variable being studied in order for the research instrument to be deemed valid.

3.9 Reliability of Instruments

A crucial component of every measurement or instrument used in quality research is reliability. The degree to which any random instrument accounts for random error is known as reliability, and it has to do with how much trust one may have in the data gathered through the usage of that instrument. Reliability, in the opinion of Taherdoost (2018), certifies the degree to which the research instrument can produce consistent and broadly applicable outcomes. According to Moser and Kalton (2005), repeatability is similarly related to reliability. A test's scale is considered dependable if it consistently yields the same result when measured again. A pilot study was conducted to help with the assessment of the tools' efficacy in order to guarantee the tools' dependability in measuring the objects they are intended to measure before the main study was done.

3.10 Data Analysis

The process of examining, sorting, altering, and manipulating data in order to glean valuable information from it is known as data analysis. Different analytical techniques, according to Shamoo and Resnik (2014), offer a means of deriving inductive conclusions from data and separating the phenomenon of interest from the statistical fluctuations that are present in the data. The accuracy and suitability of the analysis of research findings is a crucial step in guaranteeing the integrity of the data throughout data analysis. Shepherd (2012). Because Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) are the finest programmes for assessing both qualitative and quantitative data, they were used to analyse the acquired data.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The study considered responses from only those participants who were willing to provide information about the survey; the researcher did not push participants to contribute to the study. To encourage the respondents to take part, the researcher explained how important this research is to their business as well as

sotherSMEsinthecountry.Furthermore,theresearcherensuredtheanonymityoftheparticipantsbyn
otdisclosingtheparticipants'namesonthequestionnaireandalsorespectingtheirviews.

3.12 Elimination of Bias

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3.13 Summary

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CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This section of research delves into the presentation and analysis of the data collected. The data from the questionnaires was subjected to analysis using simple linear bivariate regression, and the findings were subsequently presented. The chapter begins by outlining the rate of questionnaire respondents and then proceeds to detail the demographic characteristics, including age, gender, income, and educational qualifications of the participants. The findings obtained from the data analysis were then linked to the objectives of the study. These objectives included examining the relationship between brand perception of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention, the association between attitude towards advertising models and purchase intention, and finally, the correlation between brand image of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention. The study involved a sample size of 250 respondents, and the data was analyzed using SPSS 20.

4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

In the urban area of Mt. Darwin, 250 questionnaires were distributed to consumers. Of these, 205 questionnaires were returned fully answered, while 45 were not returned. This resulted in a favourable response rate of 82%, indicating a strong level of engagement from the participants. The specifics of the questionnaire response rate are represented in a table for reference.

Response rate

	Frequency	Rate
Questionnaires distributed	250	100%
Questionnaires returned	205	82%

Table 1

Source: Primary data

Brinkman (2014) states that a quantitative study should have a response rate that is at least 70% and above for it to be satisfactory. The response rate is 82% making the study satisfactory to a

wconclusionsforit. Theresponseratewashighbecausetheindividualcustomerswerewilling tocompletethequestionnaires. Accordingtotheresearchers, thehighresponserateislargeenoughtovalidatethestudyandgiverelevantresultsforthecircumstanceunderexamination.

Table2

Demographicinformation	Number	Percentage(%)ofthesample
Age		
18-25yrs	2	1.0
26-30yrs	14	6.8
31-35yrs	7	3.4
36-40yrs	136	66.0
41-45yrs	12	5.8
46-50yrs	30	14.6
51+	5	2.4
Total	206	100
Gender		
Female	97	52.9
Male	109	47.1
Total	206	100
Educationallevel		
Primaryschool	28	13.6
Secondaryschool	47	22.8
Highschool	95	46.1
Diploma/Degree	33	16.0
Masters	3	1.5
Total	206	100

Ethnicity		
Christianity	137	66.5
Moslem	10	4.9
Hinduism	21	10.2
Nonabove	38	18.4
Total	206	100
Sexualorientation		
Heterosexual	199	96.6
Gay	3	1.5
Bisexual	-	-
Lesbian	4	1.9
Transgender	-	-
Total	206	100
Monthlyincome		
US\$50andbelow	128	62.1
US\$100-300	34	16.5
US\$301-500	20	9.7
US\$501andabove	24	11.7
Total	206	100

Source:SPSSv27Output

The table 4.2 shows the age group that dominant in Mt Darwin is the 36-40 age group constituting 66% of total population followed by 46-50 age group which has 14.6%, followed by 26-30 years which 6.8% followed by 41-45 which has 5.8% followed by 31-35 which has 3.4% and lastly 1% for the 18-25 age group. The female respondents were 97 and male respondents were 109.

The level of income was dominated by \$50 and below group which constitutes 62.1% of the total population followed by \$100-300 constituting 16.5%, followed by \$501 and above group constituting 11.7% with the least group being the \$301-500 and below group being 9.7% of the population.

On educational level, the majority of respondents had obtained high school education (46.1%), followed by secondary school (22.8%) followed by diploma/degree (16%), followed by primary school (13.6%) and lastly masters (1.5%). This indicates that all respondents were educated to have basic education.

4.3 Uni-Dimensionality Test

The uni-dimensionality of constructs were assessed using indices. These indices were based on the answering patterns, reliability, validity and some principal components. Factor analysis was carried out across all items of each construct to determine the reliability, KMO, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used in determining the items to be considered in the measurement models which was used for hypothesis testing. The test was carried out for the four constructs and items which had significant loadings were considered for the model. The items selected for each construct were analyzed as shown below.

4.3.1 Attitude towards the Advert

The uni-dimensional test was done on the 5 items scale to measure social consensus adopted by Yang, He and Lee (2007) and four items loaded significantly. The results are presented on the table on table 3 below.

Factor Analysis

Table 3

SCALE ITEMS	FACTOR LOADINGS
The advert is very appealing to me	0.636
This is a heart-warming advert	0.596
This advert makes me feel good	0.636
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.766
Reliability	0.739

SOURCE: SPSS

The study utilized principal factor analysis to investigate the dimensionality of persistence, as indicated in the aforementioned table 3. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was confirmed.

med by the significance of the Bartlett test of sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy of 0.766. This ensured the appropriateness of the data for the analytical technique employed

4.3.2 Attitude towards Homosexuality

Attitude towards homosexuality scale comprised of five items and after the Uni-dimensionality test was done, three items loaded on one factor and they were significant this was evidenced by their P-values and the items were reconsidered for input in the measurement model. The scale items are shown in table below.

Attitude towards Homosexuality

Table 4

SCALE ITEMS	FACTOR LOADINGS

It would disturb me if I learnt that my favourite influencer was homosexual	0.821
Sex between homosexuals is just wrong	0.791
Male homosexuals are just disgusting	0.770
Male homosexuals should be condemned	0.752
	0.827
Keiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling Adequacy	0.86
Reliability	

4.3.3 Brand Perception

The scale had three items and after the Uni-dimensionality test, all the three items were found significant and they were included in the assessment model as they were significant. The factor loadings are shown on table below

Tables

SCALE ITEMS

Will you associate with Matty B shirts after seeing this advert with homosexual models?

Does the use of homosexual advertising impact your perception of reality Bras?

Does the advertisement featuring homosexual models influence your perception of Luis Valeria handbag's value?

Keiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling Adequacy

Reliability

4.3.4 Purchase Intention

The construct comprised of four items and after the Uni-dimensionality test was done, three of the items loaded on one factor and they were very significant. This was evidenced by their P-values and the items were reconsidered for input in the assessment model. The scale items are shown in the table below

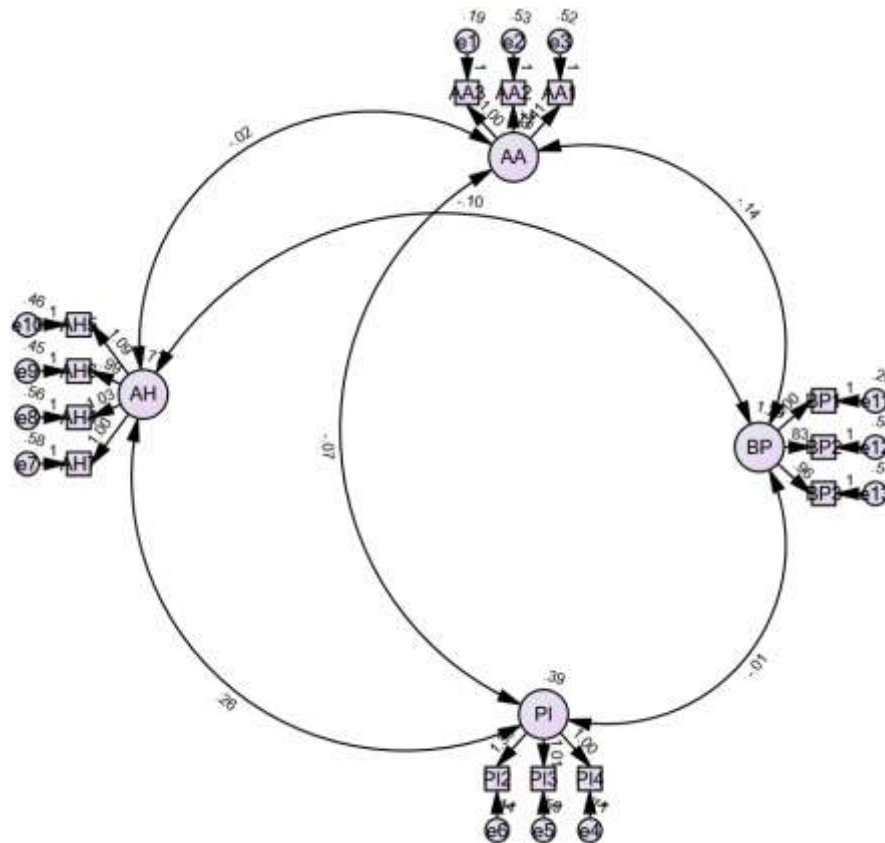
Table 6

SCALE ITEMS	FACTOR LOADINGS
Does the use of homosexual advertising affect your likelihood of recommending handbags from Luis Valeria to others?	0.884
Does the advertisement featuring homosexual models influence your purchase intention of Matty Bt-shirts?	.0877
Does the use of homosexual advertising models by Blakfashions affect your likelihood to purchase the trousers	0.863
The Kaiser–Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	0.756
Reliability	0.86

4.4 Measurement Model

The measurement model assessment was done to assess the validity and reliability of the conceptual model is measuring what it intends to measure. The measurement model of the study is shown below.

Figure 3



SourceAmosoutput

The measurement model assessment above shows that all the items loaded significantly to the respective factors thereby indicating the presence of convergence validity. Convergence validity and discriminant validity are assessed using average variance Extracted (AVE). The average variance extracted values for all research constructs were above 0.5 which means that there is convergent validity. Discriminant validity was achieved in this study and this is shown below with the absence of correlation between factors. Reliability of the loadings was measured by the composite reliability, the results indicated that they were reliable and this is shown by a composite reliability which is above 0.7. The table below shows the AVE coefficients, composite reliability and shared variances results.

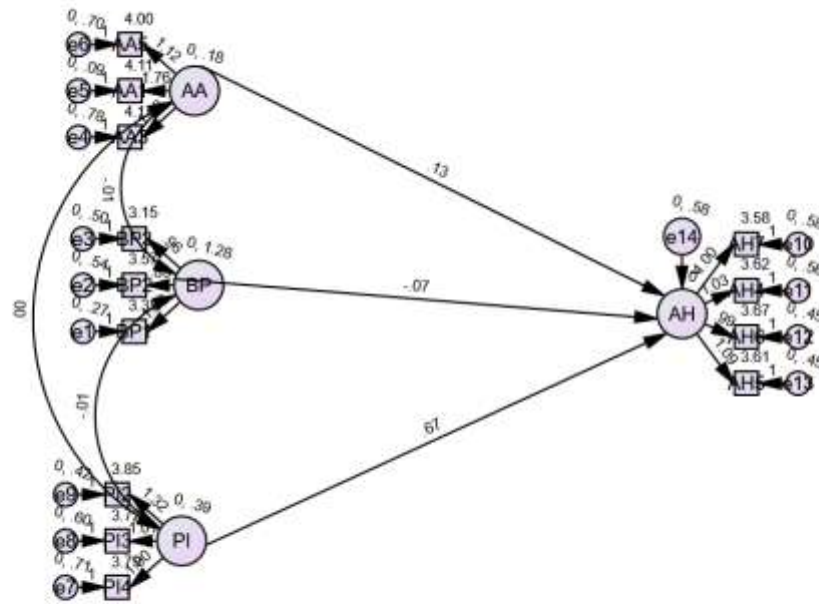
Table 7

Construct	Composite	AVE	Shared values			
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	reliability		AA	AH	BP	P I
Attitudetowardstheadvert	0.8963	0.5963	1			
Attitudetowardshomosexuals	0.8644	0.6147	0.004	1		
Brandperception	0.8834	0.7171	0.0196	0.01	1	
Purchase intention	0.9068	0.7645	0.49	0.0676	0.01	1

4.5HypothesisTesting

Figure4



SourceAMOS

AMOS software was used to conduct the Structural Equation Modelling SEM to test the hypothesis of the study. The results showed only two of the hypothesis were accepted and one was rejected. see table 7. The structural model for the study is shown in figure below.

Tables

	Hypothesis
H1	There is a negative relationship between consumers and homosexual advertising models

H2	There is a negative relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models.
H3	There is a positive relationship between consumers who have high brand perception and purchase intention for that brand.

Source: Amos

The first hypothesis for this research stated that there is a negative relationship between consumers and homosexual advertising models, this hypothesis was not supported. As a result consumers with a positive attitude towards homosexual advertising models are likely to purchase brands they represent. The regression coefficient was 0.13 which is significant at the level of 0.830 with P-value above 0.001 which means that hypothesis was rejected

The second hypothesis of the study states that there is a negative relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models. This hypothesis was supported this means that people are more sensitive when it comes to brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models. The regression coefficient was 0.07 which is significant at the level of -1.233 with P-value less than 0.001 which means that hypothesis was accepted

The third hypothesis of the study states that there is a positive relationship between consumers who have high brand perception and purchase intention for that brand. This hypothesis was supported. This means that even though brands are represented by homosexual advertising models, it does not change their purchase intention. The regression coefficient was -0.67 which is significant at the level of 4.739 with P-value less than 0.001 which means that hypothesis was accepted.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

The findings from the analysis of the relationship between consumers' perception of homosexual advertising models, brand perception, and purchase intention, as indicated by the hypothesis

ses accepted and rejected in Amos, can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of consumer behavior and the impact of inclusive advertising strategies.

Hypothesis 1: There is a negative relationship between consumers and homosexual advertising models (rejected)

The rejection of this hypothesis suggests that there is not a negative relationship between consumers and homosexual advertising models. Shao et al., (2022) found a positive association between brand image linked to LGBTQ+ advocacy and consumer purchase intention. In 2021, a study by Papista and Dimitriadis, investigating the impact of brand, they found a significant positive relationship between the two variables. This finding aligns with the growing body of research indicating that inclusive advertising, including the representation of LGBTQ+ individuals, can have a positive impact on brand perception and consumer attitudes. It underscores the importance of embracing diversity in advertising to resonate with a broader audience and foster a more inclusive brand image.

Hypothesis 2: There is a negative relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models (accepted)

The acceptance of this hypothesis implies that there is a negative relationship between consumers and brands represented by homosexual advertising models. This finding may warrant further exploration to understand the underlying factors contributing to this negative relationship. Studies by Kim and Lee, (2021) and Wang & Chen, (2020) support the TPB model, demonstrating that negative attitudes towards a brand featuring LGBTQ+ models lead to lower purchase intention. It could be influenced by various consumer perceptions, cultural contexts, or ethical considerations that shape attitudes toward brands using homosexual advertising models.

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between consumers who have high brand perception and purchase intention of that brand (accepted)

Research by Singh & Verma, (2023) in India found a positive correlation between brand perception and purchase intention when LGBTQ+ models were represented authentically. Similarly, Huang & Liu, (2021) (China) observed a link between positive brand perception and increased purchase intent for products advertised using same-sex couples. The acceptance of this hypothesis indicates a positive relationship between consumers' high brand perception and their purchase intention. This finding underscores the significance of cultivating a strong brand image and consumer perception to drive purchase intention.

s. It highlights the potential impact of brand perception on consumer behavior and the importance of building a favourable brand image to encourage purchase decisions.

In light of these findings, it's evident that the relationship between consumers, homosexual advertising models, brand perception, and purchase intention is influenced by various factors such as inclusivity, cultural context, and brand image. Further research in this area could delve into the nuanced mechanisms underlying consumer responses to inclusive advertising, as well as the implications for brand management and marketing strategies. Understanding the complex interplay between consumer perceptions, inclusive advertising, and brand outcomes is essential for brands seeking to authentically engage diverse audiences and foster positive consumer relationships. These findings provide valuable insights for marketers and advertisers aiming to navigate the landscape of inclusive advertising and its impact on consumer behaviour.

4.8 Summary

. This section focused on presenting and analyzing the study's findings. It outlined the demographic profile, highlighting an equal representation of both males and females within the population. The chapter also emphasized the presence of a positive relationship between variables, leading to a detailed discussion of the obtained results. The following chapter will centre on summarizing the results, offering recommendations, and identifying potential areas for further research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on the summary of the research results, conclusions and recommendations. Areas of further study are also noted in the chapter.

5.1 Summary

Finding out how gay advertising models affected consumers' perceptions of brands and intention to buy was the primary objective of the research. Finding the relationship between attitude towards homosexual advertising models and purchase intention, as well as the relationship between the brand image of homosexual advertising models and consumer purchase intention, were then noted objectives. Additionally, the relationship between brand perc

option of homosexual advertising models and purchase intention was to be assessed. The main theoretical framework that underpinned the research in the literature review was the Social Identity Theory. The hypothesis development process took into account the findings of previous researchers. The study's sample size was 250, and it employed a causal research design. Surveys were employed by the research to gather information, and each one was predicated on a Likert scale with 5 points. Subsequently, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 20) was utilised to gather and examine data. Furthermore, according to the study's third hypothesis, there is a positive correlation between customers' purchase intentions and their strong brand perception. This theory was validated. This indicates that consumers' intentions to buy are unaffected by the representation of LGBT advertising models by firms.

5.2 Conclusions

In accordance to the results given above, the researcher concluded that there is a negative relationship between consumers and homosexual advertising models. The reason given is that homosexuality is unaccepted in rural areas of Mt Darwin. Rural consumers that form part of the societies sought to be educated on the existence of homosexuals and that they should be accepted as they are and not be discriminated because they are also human beings. Apart from that educating their leaders will positively influence positive attitudes towards homosexual advertising models since these leaders will influence their congregants to accept gays and lesbians as they are.

5.3 Recommendations

In order for Mt Darwin consumers to accept LGBTQ+ and develop positive attitudes towards them, there is a need for them to take into account the existence of gays and lesbians within their communities. This helps in giving those choices in choosing what is regarded as good and shun what is bad.

5.3.1 To improve relationships of consumers and Homosexual models

In Mt Darwin, the existence of gays and lesbians is a reflection of the diversity of human sexuality and the presence of LGBTQ+ individuals in all communities, regardless of location. It's important to recognize and respect the rights and identities of all individuals, including those who identify as gay or lesbian, regardless of their geographical location. Inclusion and support for LGBTQ+ individuals in rural areas are crucial for promoting equality, reducing discrimination, and ensuring that all members of the community feel safe and respected.

5.3.2 To improve the relationship between consumers and brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models

Brands can improve the relationship with consumers by promoting inclusivity and authentic representation of diverse identities, including those of homosexual individuals, in their advertising campaigns. Research indicates that when companies use diverse models in advertising, there may be consumer resistance, but it also highlights the importance of addressing this resistance through continued efforts to promote inclusivity. Authentic representation of homosexual imagery in advertising can contribute to a more inclusive brand image and foster a sense of connection with consumers who identify with or support LGBTQ+ communities.

5.3.3 To determine the relationship between consumers who have high brand perception and purchase intention for that brand

To enhance the relationship between consumers' high brand perception and their purchase intention, several strategies can be employed based on the insights from the provided search results. Companies should utilize celebrity endorsements and ensure congruence between the celebrity and the brand to positively impact consumer perception and purchase intention. Moreover, they should emphasize the perceived value of the product to influence customer affective commitment and purchase intention. Lastly, highlighting the benefits and unique selling points of the product can contribute to a positive brand perception and increased purchase intention.

5.4 Areas of further research

The study focused on the impact of homosexual advertising models in influencing brand perception and purchase intention. It can be noted that for future research other components of cultural content can be used to see how well they influence perception and purchase intention of brands that are represented by homosexual advertising models. Furthermore, since the study was only carried out in some parts of Mt Darwin, further studies may be carried out at a provincial level which may have differing cultures. This helps to increase the sample size of 250 participants that was used as a result of constraints.

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BINDURAUNIVERSITYOFSCIENCEEDUCATION(BUSE)



FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RESEARCH TOPIC: Consumer Perception of Homosexual Advertising Model on Brand Perception and Purchase Intention.

Dear Respondent

My name is Sharon Mushawa, a student at Bindura University conducting a research on the Consumer Perception of Homosexual Advertising Model on Brand Perception and Purchase Intention. You are invited to participate in an academic research study by the Department of Marketing at the Bindura University of Science Education. This research is in partial fulfillment of my bachelor's degree in Marketing

Please note the following:

- This study involves an anonymous survey. Your name will not appear and the answers you give will be treated as confidential. You will not be identified in person based on the answers you give.
- Your participation in this study is very important.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only

QUESTIONS

Demographic information

Section A

This section is aimed at knowing your age, income, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation as well as educational level.

Please Tick the appropriate box

1. Age

1	18-25	
2	26-30	
3	31-35	
4	36-40	
5	41-45	
6	46-50	
7	51+	

2. Gender

1	Female	
2	Male	

3. Level of education

1	Primary School (upto grade 7)	
2	Secondary School certificate (upto Ordinary level)	
3	High School (upto Advanced level)	
4	Tertiary Education (Diploma/Degree)	
5	Masters Degree/PhD	

4. What is your Ethnicity?

SO1	Christianity	
SO2	Moslem	
SO3	Hinduism	
SO4	None above	

5. What is your self-identified Sexual Orientation?

SO1	Heterosexual	
SO2	Gay	
SO3	Lesbian	
SO4	Bisexual	
SO5	Transgender	

6. What is your annual income?

IN1	US\$50 and below	
IN2	US\$100-300	
IN3	US\$301-500	
IN4	US\$501 and above	

SECTION B

As you have watched the homosexuality AdontikTok, this section assesses your attitude towards the advertisement where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree: *There is now wrong or right answer.*

Please Tick the appropriate box

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ADVERTISEMENT

Please answer all questions below regarding the advert you just viewed

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA1	The advertisement is very appealing to me	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA2	I would probably skip this advert if I saw it next time	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA3	This is a heart-warming advert	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA4	The advert makes me want to buy the brand it features	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA5	The advert makes me feel good	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA6	The advert has little interest for me	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AA7	I dislike the Advert	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

SECTION C: ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement below about lesbians and gay men. Please tick the appropriate box

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AH1	I would feel disappointed if I learnt that my child was homosexual	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AH2	If a member of my sex made an advance towards me, I would be offended	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AH3	Homosexuality itself is not a problem unless the community makes it a problem	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AH4	Male homosexuals are disgusting	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
AH5	It would disturb me if I learnt that my favourite influencer was homosexual	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		6. Strongly disagree	7. Disagree	8. Neutral	9. Agree	10. Strongly Agree
AH6	Sex between male homosexuals is just wrong	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		11. Strongly disagree	12. Disagree	13. Neutral	14. Agree	15. Strongly Agree
AH7	Male homosexuals should be condemned	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

SECTION D

BRAND PERCEPTION

Brand perception refers to how consumers view and feel about a particular brand. The following statements are about how you perceive a brand, whether you have positive or negative association with it. This section assesses how you view and feel about the brands advertised by homosexuals based on the TikTok Ad you just seen.

Please Tick the appropriate box

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
BP1	Will you associate with the MATYYB shirts after seeing the advertisement with homosexual models?	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
BP2	The use of homosexual advertising impacts your perception of REALITY (bras)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1.StronglyDis agree	2.Disagree	3.Neutral	4.Agree	5.Stronglyagr ee
BP3	Theadvertisementfeaturinghomosexualmodelsinfluen cemyperceptionofLuisValeriahandbags'value	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

SECTIONE:PURCHASEINTENTION

Purchaseintentionreferstothelikelihoodthatsomeonewillpurchaseaparticularproductors
ervice.Thissectionassessyourlikelihoodtopurchasethebrandsadvertisedonthetiktokvide
oyou'vejustwatched.***PleaseTicktheappropriatebox***

		1.StronglyDis agree	2.Disagree	3.Neutral	4.Agree	5.Stronglyagr ee
PI2	Doestheuseofhomosexualadvertisingaffectyourlikelih oodofrecommendinghandbagsfromLuisValeriatoothe rs?	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1.StronglyDis agree	2.Disagree	3.Neutral	4.Agree	5.Stronglyagr ee
PI3	Theadvertisementfeaturinghomosexualmodelsinflue ncemypurchaseintentionofMATTYBshirts	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

		1.StronglyDis agree	2.Disagree	3.Neutral	4.Agree	5.Stronglyagr ee
PI4	TheuseofhomosexualadvertisingbyBLAKFASHION S affectmylikelihoodtopurchasethetrousers	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

THEEND!!!!

THANKYOUFORYOURVALUABLETIME

