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**The impact of gender-stereotyped advertising of dairy products on the purchase intention
of young Azerbaijani consumer**

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Abstract

Acknowledging increasing debates over gender stereotypes in different aspects of marketing, there is a need for identifying such oversimplification in the advertising industry in developing countries. Therefore, this paper aims to provide insights about stereotypical gender roles in advertisements of dairy products in Azerbaijan. As clearly pointed out by Eisend et al. (2014), considering the societal impact of advertisements, recurrence of oversimplified and unrealistic gender roles becomes a crucial research topic. Hence, taking into account lack of comprehensive studies on this topic covering Azerbaijan, this research analyzes customer groups in the market. Gen Z is analyzed as their members are becoming actual consumers with purchasing power. Mixed methodology is applied to explore the topic, including a series of interviews and a survey. Interviews were analyzed by content analysis, and the results of the interviews were utilized as guidance to compile the survey. The data was examined by IBM SPSS Statistics software using linear regression analysis. As a result of the qualitative research, it became apparent that although stereotypes and recognizing them cause negative emotions towards brand, it is not always determinant of the purchase intention. Similar conclusion was received from the quantitative part that though the attitude towards the stereotypes in the ad do not influence trust towards brand, trust towards brand itself impacts purchase intention. The main limitation of this study is that it only focuses on one product category – dairy products that is quite traditional and have certain associations with traditional gender stereotypes already. However, exploring this specific issue in other product categories, for instance, gender-specific products or technological devices, can present further insights into non-traditional industries where certain research has not been done yet.

Keywords: *Gender stereotypes; advertisement; Azerbaijan; traditional stereotypes; purchase intention; Gen Z*

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history, society have been shaped by the prevailed over-generalized opinions on how individuals should or should not behave. This idea, undoubtedly, created a common ground for the development of a concept called stereotypes. LaViolette and Silvert (1951) define a stereotype as a form of attitude that gives guidance and helps to organize ideas in one's mind. Sometimes, the existing stereotypes in society not only make people think in a certain way, but also act accordingly. For instance, Beeghly (2015) points out to an interesting idea here that via stereotypes certain associations comes to a person's mind, then by processing these pre-existing thoughts a decision is made based on which a person takes or prefers not to take a certain action. Therefore, the concept of stereotypes becomes important not only in daily life, but also in professional environments as well.

One commonly observed stereotype all over the world is the ones that are related to specific gender roles or the ones that "assigning" certain behavior to the genders, and guiding people towards specific fields (Kurtz-Costes et al., 2014). For instance, Kolman and Verčić (2012) suggests that implying what is right and what is not for the individuals from different genders makes people follow a particular pattern of actions. The potential threat of gender stereotypes is also highlighted by Heymann et al. (2020), who believe that these over-generalizations are one of the main sources of barriers and discrimination not only at home, but in professional environments as well.

What is more, undoubtedly, there are certain fields where the existence of gender stereotypes can be more problematic, especially when it has the power to affect society. One of such fields is the advertising industry which sometimes mirrors society, and other times provides guidance for the same society. According to Kitsa and Mudra (2020), as a tool to persuade masses and help them to understand promises of a product, advertisers frequently use stereotypes. This indicates that those over-generalizations are becoming part of everyday life to drive purchase intention.

In order to specify the research, it becomes vital to focus on a region or a country that is still dealing with gender stereotypes. Seated on the coasts of Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan is one those countries where depiction of women with certain stereotypical roles in advertisement has become widely prevailed, and to a certain degree, accepted. The key detail here is the fact that it is

“accepted to a certain degree”. Increasing number of individuals in younger generations are aware of such traditional roles (Mulvey and Killen, 2015), an in online and offline communities, is now discussing and freely and openly stating their opinions on gender stereotypes. Allahyarova (2018) and Verdiyeva (2018) state that these stereotypical thoughts on gender are both taught at home by older generations and the environment surrounding an individual. Therefore, it becomes crucial to try to understand how previously learnt ideas affect recognition of stereotypes in one’s surroundings, advertisements he/she usually sees, and whether any change in the action taken towards the brand advertised changes.

Considering all the factors mentioned above, this paper will analyze the current situation regarding gender roles in advertisements. Hypotheses are also developed related to the purchase intention of a young Azerbaijani consumer towards stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertisements. Following parts of the paper consists of throughout analysis of the existing literature, formation of methodology and data collection, analysis and results of the data collected, and conclusion providing a short summary.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Gender stereotypes in advertisements

Gender stereotypes in the advertisements have been an attractive topic for academia in the past decades (Windels, 2016; Knoll et al., 2011; Shinoda et al., 2021). Studies indicate that just within a 10-year time frame (between 2005 and 2015), 37 various articles have been written discovering how overgeneralized gender roles are impactful on content of an advertisement (Huhmann & Limbu, 2016). In their work, Eisend et al. (2014) sensibly point out that the reason why gender stereotypical advertisements is a central topic for literature is due to their societal influence, ads can reinforce prevalence of unrealistic roles for women. Therefore, Chapter 1 is aimed to be the introduction to the main research topic. In order to identify key terms beforehand, the overall view on the gender roles in advertisements in the past and present media and various sex roles are analyzed. Additionally, how they are depicted in the ads, what are the reasons behind the excessive use of stereotypes in the advertising, and whether there is any so-called change in this industry are in the scope of this chapter.

2.1.1 Traditional gender roles and their evolution

Before investigating the topic, identification of traditional gender roles needs to be done to get better understanding.

To begin with, the literature clearly identifies the traditional versus non-traditional gender roles in various cultures looking from diverse perspectives. For instance, analyzing gender stereotypes in Ukraine, Kitsa and Mudra (2020) point out that all women are assumed to have the expected “feminine” characteristics. The authors further explain femininity by how it should typically represent sensitive, caregiver, family-focused, easy-going, and indulgent behavior alongside negatively perceived characteristics such as dependent, irrational, and volatile. Coming to the similar conclusion, Anweh (2020) highlights that males are traditionally accepted as the natural winner, leader, or those who can make sensible and reasonable decisions, and contrarily, females are incapable of such conduct and are considered as caregivers or homemakers. Besides these descriptive understandings of gender roles, several researchers go further and explain how those roles is regarded in a society. For instance, Pushkareva and Zolotukhina (2018) argue that in cultures where the traditional gender roles are followed strictly, females and their contributions to the society are believed to be crucial, but just an addition to what males do. Meaning, it is not considered as important as males’ roles in the society. To understand the reason behind such patterns, in his article, Yilmaz (2018) explores that prevalence of the traditional gender roles is more common in more patriarchal societies. When it comes to the reinforcement of these overgeneralizations, the literature suggests that diverse media tools can easily make those stereotypes to be part of everyday life and thus, traditional gender roles can be accepted by masses without further questioning (Shaw & Tan, 2014).

Nevertheless, there is growing discussion on how these stereotypical roles have already started to change and how society does not readily accept the traditional roles anymore. Confirming this trend, Boehnke (2011) states that several societal alterations, including rising appreciation and significance of education, increasing gender balance in labor market, and changing norms and values caused stereotypical gender roles to be challenged. In other words, increase in the proportion of women learning and becoming professionals in different fields led the stereotypes to be out of topic (Knoll et al., 2011). Lundgren et al. (2013) further propose that as people are presented with alternative gender roles, their inclination to accept or practice the

traditional ones can decrease. The authors tested this in their study where some of the participants were firstly presented with non-traditional roles (and the remaining participant were not presented) and then asked to take photos of what generally boys and girls are expected to do in their daily life. Those who were demonstrated non-traditional roles in the beginning mainly captured pictures where males and females were depicted with non-stereotypical roles (such as, a boy doing chores). However, whether this evolution is visible in the advertising industry or not should be explored further. Although, in their research, Hermann et al. (2022) discover that there is no meaningful impact of televised content on gender stereotypes, still, the changes both in gender roles and attitudes towards them are undeniably visible. Therefore, it becomes more relevant to analyze the correlation between advertising and gender roles in order to get better understanding and insights on the topic.

2.1.2 Gender roles in advertising

Depiction of diverse gender stereotypes in the advertisements has been a debatable issue in the literature although several authors share the common idea that those portrayals are far from being realistic (Shinoda et al., 2021; Verhellen et al., 2016). Particularly, if there is a female main character, she is assumed to be a mother, stay-at-home parent, sexual figure, or beauty representation (Middleton et al., 2020). The issue becomes worth discussing, considering the impact of advertising not only on purchase intentions, but also on societal norms, values, and overall attitude. As overgeneralized depiction of both genders creates an assumption about societal norms, advertisements play a key role in the forming of general patterns regarding those roles (Kolman & Verčić, 2012).

When it comes to the reasons why advertising needs to utilize stereotyping, existing literature suggests several interesting viewpoints. Kitsa and Mudra (2020) highlights that considering how advertisements are already integrated part of everyday life, it is expected that they are using stereotypes as a sort of mental shortcut so that consumers can straightforwardly associate a product with certain behavior. Windels (2016) explains this phenomenon by giving example how advertisers use stereotypes to create a barrier for rational thinking so that customers spend time with their thoughts about a product. Therefore, it becomes a necessity for the industry to consider revolving the promotion around overgeneralizations regardless of how positive or negative they

are. Similarly, Verhellen (2016) these kinds of advertisements are designed in a way that the viewer gets intense emotions and be away from ration. Furthermore, advertising provides a view of ideal selves that people aspire to see. According to Windels (2016), advertising demonstrates a “better” version of an individual, and thus, to reach the same level a person believes that obtaining a specific product will help this. Middleton et al. (2020) also agree with these ideas and adds that these stereotypes creates a structured content for the advertising so that the focus of the viewer is only directed towards the product and not something “unusual”. The idea of ideal versus actual selves brings the notion of how opposite genders aspire to see one another. Precisely, it has been discussed that one more reason for the female stereotypical advertisements can be related to the percentage of the males in decision-making roles of the industry (Prieler, 2016). This indirectly implies that since men are the decision-makers, they are the ones determining which kind of behavior should be overgeneralized to each gender. Nonetheless, through her research, Windels (2016) finds a noteworthy point that if a man is the decision-maker of the content of a stereotypical ad, it does not mean that he prefers to have those stereotypes, but it can be unintentional because he does not have enough understanding on a particular topic.

Overall, there are multiple gender roles that are accepted and utilized frequently in the advertising industry. There can be one or more reasons behind this practice depending on the product category, the message that needs to be conveyed, or simply the decision-maker.

2.1.3 Transformation of gender roles in advertisement

Moving on to the evolution of such ads, there is growing debate on the issue with several authors not observing any significant improvements, some believing that alterations are on the way, and others claiming that the change has already happened (Verhellen et al., 2016; Middleton et al., 2020).

To begin with the exploration of unchanged gender roles in the advertising industry, existing literature comes to this conclusion by comparing actual changes in the societal overgeneralizations and how their reflections in the advertisements are (Gentry and Harrison, 2010; Ganahl et al., 2003). For instance, Tischla and Zotos (2016) argue that regardless of the societal alterations, which is also mentioned above, there is still inclination to put both man and woman to so-called categories, coming up with assumption about them, simply, stereotyping about

them. Other authors agree with this perspective that although societal expectations (and thus, gender roles) are changing in one way or another, advertisements are still reluctant to accept and integrate these differences with relevant pace (Kitsa & Mudra, 2020). Knoll et al. (2011), approach the discussion from another perspective by stating that by not reflecting the changes in the society advertisements not only benefit from overgeneralization of gender roles, but also create barriers to overcome those stereotypes. It has been also argued that even though there is a change, this alteration is not in the extent, but it is about the content. Thus, there are still frequent usage of the stereotypical roles in the ads, however, those overgeneralizations are adjusted to modern needs and still do not represent a realistic view of the genders (Thischla & Zotos, 2016).

On the other hand, there is significant work in academia suggesting that advertisements not only reflect those changes, but also lead the alteration (Eisend et al., 2014; Cohen et al., 2023). For instance, Baxter et al. (2016) disagree with the previous statements by claiming that this tendency is decreasing and turning around in a different manner. The authors acknowledge that women are sometimes depicted with stereotypical roles, but the number of the ads going out of this typicality increases and they portray women in all other aspects of the society as well. Middleton et al. (2020), are also on the same page by agreeing that there is a not-so-visible, but a real decrease in the industry, and therefore, the topic should be studied further. Another interesting viewpoint is suggested by Eisend et al. (2014) that the changes are happening in a way that those stereotypes are put together in an opposite manner. Meaning, now the stereotypes are not assigned to one gender, and what was an “expected” male or female behavior can now be assigned to the opposite gender. The authors claim that although the advertisements still use stereotypes, since they are depicted in non-traditional manner, this can be considered as a change in the industry. Confirming this idea and by adding more, Chu et al. (2016) propose that advertisements are not only the reflections of the alterations in the society, but they are one of the main drivers of this transformation. In their study, the researchers highlight that it has been clear that sometimes it is the ads that put gender roles aside or use them in the opposite manner, and as society gets used to them, the stereotypes become irrelevant to abide.

The Table 1 below summarizes the views in the existing literature regarding possible changes of gender stereotypes in the advertising industry:

Table 1: Views on changes in gender stereotypes in advertisements.

No change in content	Decrease in quantity	Change in content
Changes in society are not reflected in the ads (Thischla & Zotos, 2016).	There are fewer gender stereotypical ads (Baxter et al., 2016).	The stereotypes are presented in reversed manner: Roles are not specific to gender (Eisend et al., 2014).
Advertisements create barriers to overcome gender stereotypes (Knoll et al., 2011).	Quality-wise, the change in the industry is not visible, but quantity-wise, it is important (Middleton et al., 2020).	Advertisements drive the changes of gender stereotypes (Chu et al., 2016).

Source: Own edition

2.2 Gender roles and advertising in Azerbaijan

Since the current research is focused on the advertising in Azerbaijan, the final chapter of the literature review is about exploring its culture, how it is formed and evolved, what is the role of culture on understanding of gender roles, and how the advertising industry is regulating. Considering the fact that in the data collection and discussion parts of the paper, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions will be challenged, how Azerbaijani culture ranks for his 5 dimensions will also be discussed in this chapter. Finally, it is important to note that the research is mainly concerned with female stereotypical gender roles; thus, the impact of the culture on gender roles will revolve around this point as well.

2.2.1 Importance various cultural influences on Azerbaijani culture

Being located on the coasts of the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan is considered to be one of the connection points of Europe and Eastern. Therefore, it is obvious that the culture is affected by both sides, with an inclination towards one side in certain regions. According to Najafizadeh (2012), Azerbaijani culture was highly influenced by Eastern and Islamic traditions in certain time frame. Basically, although the nation and its so-called elites lean towards secularism, Azerbaijanis consider Islam not only as a religious element, but also key cultural source of impact in its history (Swietochowski, 2002). However, in the early 1800s, as oil reserves were discovered, the country

and local businessmen invested in this industry, and that opened a gate to Western world, which indirectly had its impact on the culture as well. Nevertheless, this has not been the only impact; Azerbaijani culture has been influenced by and it impacted the neighboring countries as well. For instance, DeHaan (2021) clearly remarks that being occupied by Tsar Russian Empire, local culture was not totally suppressed, but still obtained its elements. The author also adds that this influence increased more with the presence of Soviet Union as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that Azerbaijan has been under the influence of different cultures through its own cultural development.

2.2.2 Cultural influence on female roles in Azerbaijan

As the main topic of this paper revolves around gender stereotypes, it is beneficial to discuss the role of culture in shaping gender stereotypes. As Islam played a crucial role in shaping the culture, in the early 1800s the culture was in the highest impacted period of it: not only women's clothing style (e.g., wearing hijab – the traditional head wearing in Islam that covers the hair completely.), but also their roles in the society – as the “caregiver” – were aligned with Islamic requirements and patriarchy prevailed (Najafizadeh, 2012). Nevertheless, Najafizadeh (2012) highlights that by the end of 1800s and early 1900s the rising secularism and Azerbaijani Enlightenment Movement (that is about leaning towards to philanthropical work by local businessmen to increase literacy rate not only among males, but also focusing on female education) led to the increased role of females in the society and changed how their role was understood. This “trend” was even such an important matter that it was not only a topic of discussion among ordinary citizens, but also among the authorities – the decision-makers. Precisely, with increased importance of females' role in the society (they were not now seen as only caregivers at home), Azerbaijan became the first Democratic Republic among all the Muslim countries and first in the East to consider voting right to be a constitutional right of the women. This implies that although Azerbaijan sticks with its traditional perspectives, it still has certain progress on understanding and appreciating females' roles more. In fact, Heyat (2006) explains how integration with the west consumerism have influenced how traditional gender norms are not relevant anymore despite the fact that impact of Islam and gender roles learned through the religion are still preserved and appreciated by the majority. The author notes that besides cultural elements on forming gender norms becomes stronger and it turns to be more challenging to break the stereotypes in regions

due to difficulty in accessing higher education and professional career (Heyat, 2006). This topic will be discussed in the further subtopics of the literature review and will be one of the key elements of the data collection.

2.2.3 Hofstede's cultural dimension and their reflection in Azerbaijan

Undoubtedly, discussing the effect of cultural elements on the gender roles in a society requires to analyze the topic from well-known cultural dimensions perspective of Hofstede. Hofstede (1993) identified five various dimensions to examine any culture. The researcher state that there are differences in the levels of inclination towards having smaller versus larger power distance, being individualistic or collectivistic, holding masculine versus feminine values, avoiding versus accepting uncertainty, and finally, focusing on short- or long-term goals. To be more definitive, power distance dimension measures how likely the members of a society are willing to accept hierarchy and inequality while individualism versus collectivism is more qualitative notion indicating the possibility of the society to be driven by individualistic goals versus collectivistic motivation. Similarly, masculinity versus femininity is also a qualitative measure describing whether a society holds masculine, such as assertiveness or competitiveness, or feminine values, like solidarity or compassion, and which one is more acceptable. The traditional gender roles, which are the main focus of the current research as well, are strongly associated with highly masculine societies (Kolman & Verčić, 2012). Further, uncertainty avoidance discusses whether a society is tolerant to unstructured situations or not. The last dimension, short versus long term orientation was added to the dimensions' list later on from the original research and it identifies whether a culture is focused on future and make decisions looking forward to it or short-term decisions are more appropriate (Hofstede, 1993).

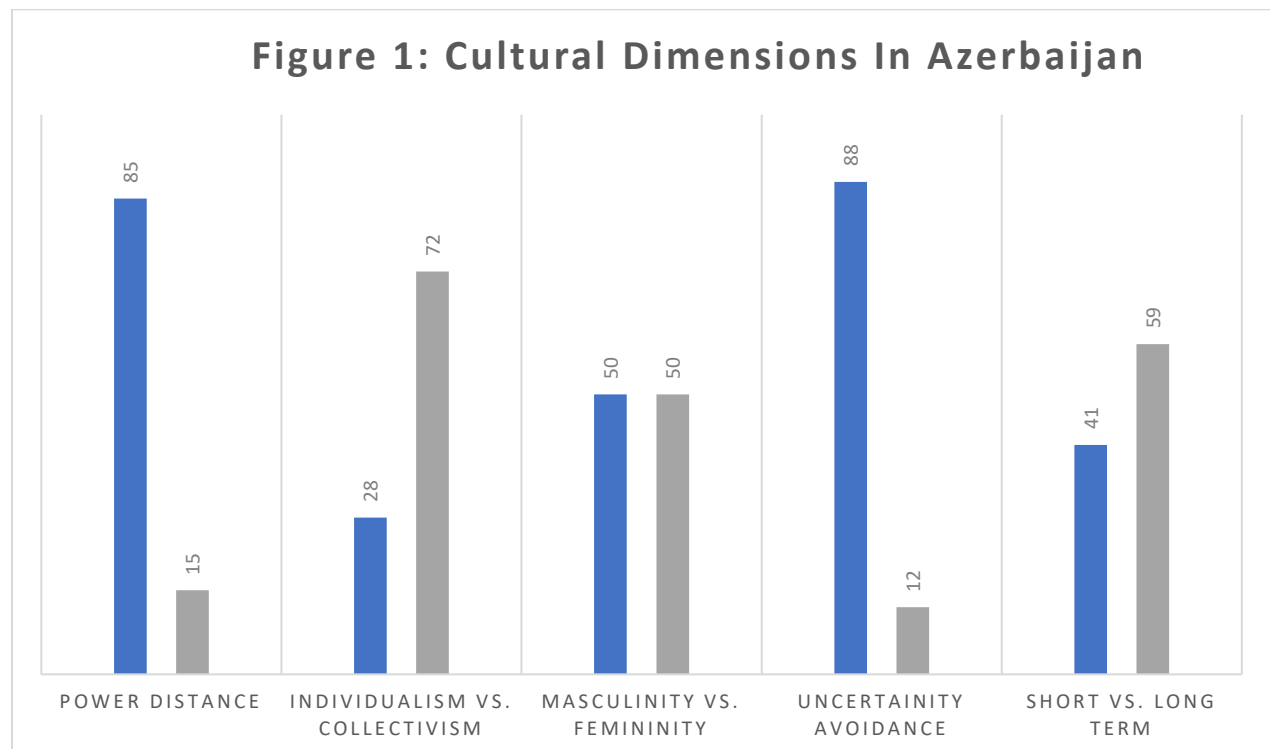
Even though one of the aims of the paper is to challenge Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions for Azerbaijan in the further sections of this research, it is important to understand the ranking of those dimension for the country in order to include relevant arguments later on. To begin with masculinity versus femininity, proposing how Azerbaijanis are compassionate, value their relationships with one another, and considers family as an important factor in decision-making, Aliyev (2020) concludes that Hofstede is right about considering Azerbaijan strong in femininity. Further, the author also agrees that Azerbaijan is considered a collectivistic culture consisting of

people with high uncertainty avoidance and power distant attitude. Finally, checking these conclusions with the website – The Culture Factor Group – that is designed to provide percentages for the countries in different Hofstede dimensions, it is visible not only these suggestions are matching, but also it is apparent that Azerbaijani people are long-term oriented and are avoiding indulgence (Hofstede Insights, 2023).

Figure 1 below summarizes the position of Azerbaijan in terms of these dimensions based on existing literature and Country Comparison Tool (2023) that is derived from Hofstede's analysis:

Figure 1: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: Case of Azerbaijan

(Source: Hofstede Insights, 2023)



2.2.4 Gender roles in Azerbaijan

When it is the turn to discuss stereotypes, despite the impact of the culture, Azerbaijan also faces more or less the similar gender roles as the rest of the world. In this country, most common stereotypes again revolve around how females are weak, dependent, or emotional not only in their

daily life, but in their professional careers (Rozgonyi, et al., 2021). Authors further explain how the same action can receive different reactions depending on which gender performs it in society. Rozgonyi et al. (2021) give an example from the workplace, where having a lunch with a boss is considered to be regarded as careful step for career of a male, but if the female employee does the same thing it is believe that there is a romantic relationship between the two. Allahyarova (2018) mentions that the reason why the stereotypes are so prevailed is the fact that parents generally teach their children the cultural norms or mentality and that strengthens the gender roles in the society. Verdiyeva (2018) agrees with this idea and augments the idea with that it is not only thought in family, but outside of the home. She mentions how usage of language in classroom textbooks can have influence by stating that those books generally, identify police, doctor, lawyer, and similar jobs as traditional male roles while considering cook, teacher and alike as female roles. However, how Azerbaijani society perceives these stereotypes is highly dependent on the individual's gender. Rozgonyi et al. (2021) figure out that Azerbaijani males are highly like to consider that the stereotypical gender roles are not there anymore, and the gender equality has already been achieved. The authors claim that the percentage of the males agreeing that the situation has been better is 13.8% more than the females evaluating the situation.

2.2.5 Advertising in Azerbaijan

Advertising industry in Azerbaijan has been evolving even before the first private TV channels have been created and however, it was limited due to being part of communist Soviet Union. Nevertheless, after the sector was privatized, certain regulations and procedures were applied. To be precise, according to Rozgonyi et al. (2021), the advertising industry became a private sector in 1995 and only 2 years later, in 1997, the first legislation about advertisements was made by the authorities. As the report by Council of Europe (2017) mentions that certain products, such as tobacco or alcohol, are restricted on advertising (meaning, they can still advertise but within certain limits), the sponsorships should comply with criteria put by authorities before being considered as advertising, or false or provocative terms cannot be mentioned, etc. As long as these regulations are obliged by the advertisement is considered to be managed by the private sector. However, content-wise the only regulation is about not to have any phrase or implication that is aimed against government, state and its policies, national symbols. There is no specific legislation

that is designed to regulate any statements regarding genders or gender roles. (Council of Europe, 2017). Therefore, it is believed that stereotypes can prevail in the industry because besides society's attitude or immediate reaction there is no specific response to manage the stereotypical content by the authorities.

2.2.6 Gender stereotypes in Azerbaijani ads

Since culture and its impact, different gender roles, and advertising in Azerbaijan have been discussed, it is also relevant to find out the specific stereotypes in those ads. Since Azerbaijan gained its full independence in the recent past (in 1992), the industry was using advertisements of the global brands, and thus, forming an understanding and expectations of how an ad should be (Rozgonyi, et al., 2021). This, as Rozgonyi et al. (2021) put out, created a basis for how the stereotypical roles in the ads are depicted; meaning, though Azerbaijani people are deeply connected to their culture, the Western stereotypes became an integral part of the ads. The issue lies on the grounds that there is no specific policy making sure that the stereotypical or sexist comments towards women are not made in any ad (Rozgonyi et al., 2021). Meaning, current legislations about advertisement and free speech do not draw a line for the authorities to identify and give certain penalties to the creators of the ads that degrade or depict stereotypical gender role.

Discovering the most common placements of the gender stereotypical ads, printed advertisement or social media become irrelevant. Rozgonyi et al. (2021), dedicate a chapter in their book how these ads are frequent and almost inevitable part of every TV channel of the country. This indicates that regardless of the view rate, these stereotypes are common for the advertisements that are aired or shown only in TV mainly (Rozgonyi et al., 2021). Furthermore, about specific stereotypes in the advertisements, as Rozgonyi et al. (2021) confirm, dependent and decorative role is the main stereotype regarding females while being assertive, active, and knowledgeable is the major characteristics of a male that can be observed. The scholars indicate that when a female is depicted in such a role, she is not only put into certain stereotypes, but also how passive she should behave in the society is also highlighted via the ad. Although advertising industry creates or adds up to certain stereotypes, some believe that they are also key to break those overgeneralized beliefs. For instance, Musayeva (2018) suggests that alongside the educational platforms, it is the advertisements that will help to explain to younger generations how

the stereotypes are not real and should not be a basis for decision-making. The author further adds that advertisements that are meant to have content that explains why a specific gender role is oversimplification can help to identify non-stereotypical gender behavior for people at early ages.

2.3 Consumers' attitude and purchase intentions

As discussed earlier, since advertising is one of main persuasion factors and affects purchasing decision, it becomes important to explore their impact on the actual buying behavior (Kapoor & Munjal, 2019). Therefore, Chapter 2 is aimed to discuss the consumer's purchasing behavior by investigating consumers' attitude towards gender stereotypical ads, reasons behind specific buying behavior patterns, what factors constitute a purchase intention, and how advertising ends up influencing a purchase decision.

2.3.1 Attitude towards stereotypical ads

Even though attitude normally takes some time to form, considering that the gender stereotypical advertising has been around for quite a long time, it is worth processing consumers' attitude and understanding towards them. The existing literature suggests that consumers' attitudes towards the stereotypes mentioned in the ads depend on multiple factors. For instance, in their study, Kolman and Verčić (2012) point out that while some oversimplifications are acceptable by males, the same statements are considered as negative by females. The authors conducted research and gave example with age stereotype where usually the female main character is in her twenties, but the male character is in his early forties. As a result of the survey, it turns out that women generally do not accept that they are their best when they are that young, however, men indicated that they agree with this age stereotype that forties are best for them. This indicates that although there is a stereotype for the same physical factor, it does not receive the same reaction from every gender. Adding up to this idea, Choi et al. (2016) also claim that usually, the attitude is highly dependent on who is seeing the ad. Meaning, if the ad depicts a stereotypical female role and consumer is a male, it is unlikely that he will form a negative attitude, but if a female sees the same ad chances are that she will have undesirable attitude towards it. Kyrousi et al. (2016) suggest that the reason behind this negative reaction of female consumers towards stereotypes might be dependent on not the viewers' concern regarding societal expectations, but the perception of the

main character as a rival or companion. The authors further explain that in the first case, seeing the character “better” than the consumer herself, immediately creates negative attitude toward the character and the ad. However, Meulenaer et al. (2018) do not agree with this idea by stating that people with more traditionally known feminine characteristics tend to react the same way to any gender role stereotype regardless of the main character of the ad being a male or female. Along with the factors that these attitudes are based on, another interesting viewpoint is why occasionally people do not hold any attitude towards such ads. Windels (2016) notes that in some cases these stereotypes become so integrated to everyday life that people even fail to notice it, and thus, they do not come to a conclusion or form an attitude towards it; they are just exposed to and consume the ad without further analyzing. On the other hand, the viewer’s age is also a significant determinant of how favorable the ad will be rated. For instance, Kolman and Verčić, (2012) studied different age groups’ reaction towards the same gender stereotypical ad. They found that older generations were happy to see those oversimplifications and stated that stereotypes could be play the role guide while younger participants of the study hold negative attitude towards those ads and considered them to be offensive and even insulting. Therefore, the impact of the consumer’s gender and age on the attitude formation is not crystal clear and needs further discussion. Nevertheless, Vo et al. (2023) mention that besides these demographic characteristics, a person’s lifestyle and belief system also play a role in the attitude towards gender-stereotyped ads. The authors mention that if an individual believes in gender equality to a high degree, he/she will consider the ads to be impactful in the expectations of the society and will form a negative attitude towards such advertising. However, if the individual is only considered about his/her own little environment with gender issues, negative attitude will not be formed towards ads.

Moving on to what kind of attitudes are formed towards those ads and after viewing those ads, existing literature offers various opinions. To start with, Kyrousi et al. (2016) suggest that whenever the female character is part of the ad with decorative role (meaning, usage of physical appearance stereotype, such as a skinny model is successful), generally, it receives a negative attitude from the audience, especially from women. This indicates that the female audience does not accept such advertising as brand oriented, but rather personal, and thus, subconsciously, they consider those models as the unreachable ideal selves. Similarly, Choi et al. (2016) agree with this notion and highlight that unless women in the ads are depicted in decorative roles, (regardless of the viewer’s sex) even those with strong feminist attitudes rate the ads favorably. In the same

manner, when an ad depicts a male in non-stereotypical manner, then attitude towards such ad becomes favorable. In a study by Zhang et al. (2020), respondents who saw the ad, where a male main character of an ad has more approachable character (described as warmth in the research), formed positive attitudes because of the ad avoiding the stereotype of men being not approachable or having colder characteristics. Analogous findings come from Kapoor and Munjal's (2019) research where the scholars approach the same issue – positive approach to non-stereotypical ads – and discover that when these oversimplifications are avoided, the viewers' reaction is more favorable. The audience's attitude becomes even more positive if the focus of the ad is to emphasize how those stereotypes are not relevant anymore and shifts to femvertising to highlight societal changes.

2.3.2 Factors affecting overall buying behavior & purchase intention

Before discussing the measurement of actual purchase intention what factors generally lead to buying behavior should also be discussed. Although it is beneficial to find out about certain reasons behind it, some scholars do not believe that there is a sensible reason for buying behavior. For instance, Singh et al. (2023) claim that in some cases a purchase is done not because a consumer thinks about it, but because he/she is just triggered by something and does impulse buying. Nevertheless, if rational purchase is taken into account, Jayanthi and Rajendran (2014) suggest that existing variety in the market encourages consumers to try out a new product/service and leads to buying behavior where the consumer desires to take risk and purchase something that he/she has never bought before. The authors propose that this happens because of internal either risk aversion or risk loving characteristics of the individual. Correspondingly, it can be argued that then when a consumer feels that there is a gap between his/her actual state or status with the desired one, then a need can be “triggered” which can lead to the purchase behavior (Dahana et al., 2022). Besides the above-mentioned so-called internal factors, external environment and stimuli can also initiate purchase behavior for consumers. For example, focusing on online shopping, Bucko et al. (2018) confirm that discounts, accessibility of the website, or product availability determines possibility of buying behavior. Interestingly, in their research, the authors discover that for online buying behavior advertisement plays no or little role; meaning, the users do not pay attention to its

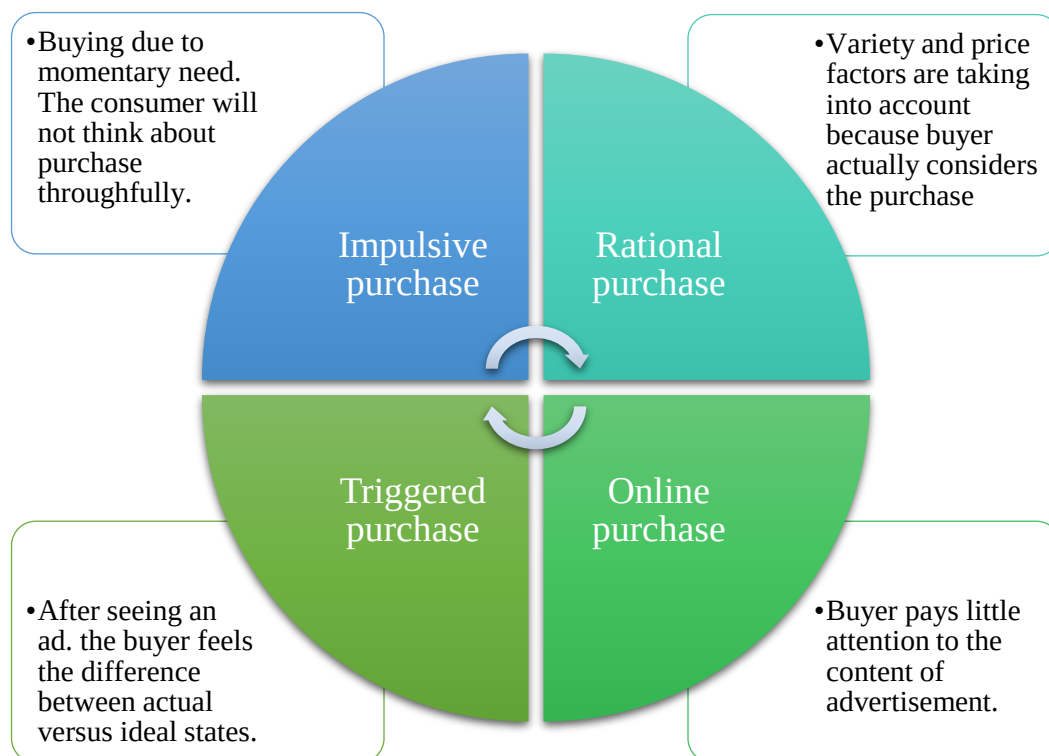
content. This can imply that the gender stereotypes in certain advertisements might not have any power or influence on the purchase decision of an online customer.

When it comes to purchase intention, it is considered to be more complex and time-consuming than behavior and requires more involvement from the consumer. As Younus et al. (2015) clearly define it, purchase intention means that consumer has already evaluated the product or service and can be willing to buy it whereas purchase behavior includes that evaluation phase as well.

To summarize, four different purchase situations may arise due to the above-mentioned factors: impulsive purchase, rational purchase, triggered purchase, and online purchase. The role of advertising, as mentioned earlier, might be dependent on the situation (Chang, 2016).

The figure below summarizes these cases.

Figure 2: Factors Leading to Different Purchase Situations.



Source: own edition

2.3.3 Gender-stereotyped ad attitude and purchase intention

After discussing gender stereotypes in advertising, attitude towards them, and buying behavior, their direct or indirect influence on actual purchase intention is investigated. Some researchers argue that attitude to an ad does not mean that there will be similar reaction to a brand or purchase intention. Specifically, in their research, Wirtz et al. (2018) explain that watching a stereotypical ad with sexual appeal, the attitude of males and females differed by one forming a positive attitude while the another having a more unfavorable one. However, this difference in attitude did not result in disparity in the attitude towards a specific brand and impact on purchase intention (Wirtz et al., 2018). On the other hand, Valek and Picherit-Duthler (2021) remark that whenever an ad is considered to be insulting towards women or uses commonly known stereotypes, it is highly possible that purchase intention of the viewer will decline, and vice versa can also happen; going with non-stereotypical content can increase buying intention. Another study of Huhmann and Limbu (2016) also supports this notion that an unfavorable attitude arising from gender roles in an advertisement will cause negative approach towards brand, and then the consumer (especially, if she is a female) will try to avoid purchasing from that brand. The authors indicate that this subtopic should be analyzed in depth because scholars have come up with quite different conclusions despite the fact there is no huge time difference between the dates that those studies have been conducted.

Furthermore, depending on how risky the purchase is, attitude towards the depicted stereotype can alter. Precisely, Zawisza et al. (2018) point out that when the ad is for a product that does not involve high risks or huge amount of money – low involvement product – the viewer will pay attention to the stereotypes and make purchase decision based on that, but if it is a high involvement product – high risk and expensive – more rational elements will affect the purchase intention.

2.3.4 Trust towards brand and purchase intention

Regardless of purchase being rational or irrational, low versus high involvement, or relating to one specific audience group, brands usually thrive to be considered as trustworthy to encourage more consumption. Kang and Hustvedt (2014) agree on this by stating that companies that are considered trustworthy by consumers can effortlessly obtain favorable reaction, not in

mind, but in action as well, such as visible purchase intention. Trust also positively impacts purchase intention when there are price differences; meaning, even if a brand is expensive than the other, if it is more trusted, it is likely that the customer will choose that one (Andaleeb & Anwar, 1996). An interesting detail here, thus, challenging point for the brands, is that trust is highly subjective and cannot be consistently agreed upon all the time because what can be considered unreliable by one party can be perceived in completely opposite manner by another one (Pennington et al., 2003/2004). When it comes to the factors affecting trust in brands, existing literature suggests variety of opinions on this. For instance, Husain et al. (2022), consider that prior information or interaction with the brand helps to develop trust towards a brand. Due to such knowledge and experience, diverse opinions can be formed about the brand, such as sincerity, mutual efforts, reliability, and being able to meet all these anticipations, which later on can be determinants of the trust (Sullivan and Peterson, 1982). Sometimes, however, a consumer has no prior acknowledgment towards either product, or specific brands. In those cases, when a brand that provides more information is more likely to be associated with trust and be included in the purchase decision of that consumer (Racherla et al., 2012) To sum it all up, as advertising is one of the ways to grab consumers' attention, it also helps to generate trust towards brand that can lead to increasing purchase intention by the target audience (Kim et al., 2019).

Although there are multiple facets of trust towards brand, in this research, only trust caused by the attitude towards the stereotypes depicted in the ad. Behind that is the fact that Azerbaijani dairy products industry being comparatively new and still evolving. When the industry is analyzed in detail, it appears that only direct promotional efforts (such as TV ads) are product specific; however, other communication techniques or marketing actions are designed to promote the brand as a whole, not specifically dairy products of that company. For instance, one of the local Azerbaijani brands – AzerSun, is well-known for its brand management and marketing campaigns; nevertheless, those campaigns are organized to promote AzerSun as a brand, not specifically its dairy branch – AzerSud. Therefore, this study will examine the sole impact of trust towards brands that rises because of watching an ad.

2.4 Hypotheses development and framework

As discussed in the earlier stages, there are several factors leading to the formation of attitude towards stereotypes which in return influences trust towards brand and eventually causing or ignoring the purchase intention. These stereotypes, one way or another, are sometimes depicted in advertisements as well causing varying trust and attitude towards the brand. As a result of this so-called trust, a consumer might or might not purchase a given product. Therefore, this paper focuses on the existence of such a relationship, potential result – purchase intention – of this connection, and whether the situation is analogous for both stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertisements.

As stereotypical depiction can be considered as an undesirable element of advertising, negative attitude, thus, purchase intention, can be formed towards the brand. Biel (1990) explains it by claiming that sometimes a positive attitude or action taken by a customer can be a way for customer to communicate appreciation to the brand in the recognition of “likeable” action done by the company, and similarly, negative one can be the sign of disapproval of the consumer (Biel, 1990). Nevertheless, it can be argued that this impact relationship can be dependent on several factors, including previous attitude towards gender stereotypical ads. To confirm this idea, in their work, Kapoor and Munjal (2019) find out that existing judgements and understanding about stereotypes in an advertisement helps to form both cognitive and behavioral response, which in this specific case, can be considered as trustworthy impression and purchase intention to a specific brand. Therefore, the role of general attitude towards stereotypical ads becomes an important element between the relationship of attitude to a specific ad and trust to the brand advertised. This brings the discussion to the first and second hypotheses of the research:

Hypothesis 1:

- a) *Attitude towards the stereotype in the stereotypical advertisement has a negative impact on trust towards the brand.*
- b) *Attitude towards the stereotype in the non-stereotypical advertisement has a negative impact on trust towards the brand.*

Hypothesis 2:

- a) *The relationship between attitude towards the stereotype in the stereotypical ad and trust towards brand is negatively moderated by general attitude towards stereotypical ads.*
- b) *The relationship between attitude towards the stereotype in the non-stereotypical ad and trust towards brand is positively moderated by general attitude towards stereotypical ads.*

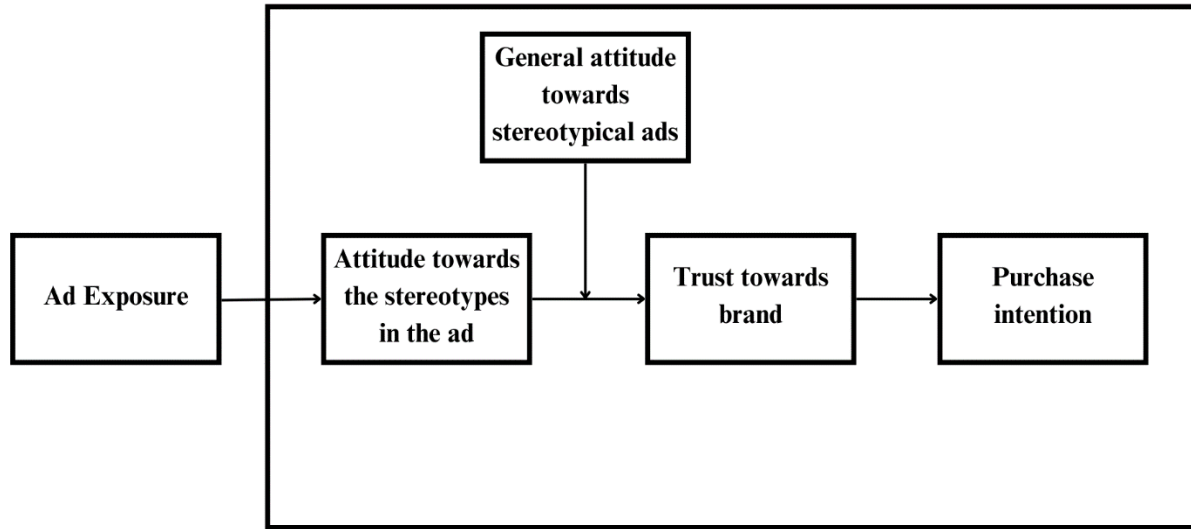
As discussed in earlier chapters, trusted brands are more likely to generate purchase intentions in their customers. To be precise, in their discussion, Beyari and Abareshi (2016) find out that when there is previous experience with multiple brands, the ones that are more trusted are more likely to be the “selected one” by the consumer for the next purchase. Furthermore, since brand trust is likely to help the customer to detach oneself from confusion about a product, it positively influences his/her purchase intentions (Kim & Kim, 2017, as cited in Ha, 2021). In another study, Carvalho et al. (2016) explains how as consumers become more conscious about their purchase, trust becomes a key player for the brand to be considered as a viable option. These previous judgements over trust towards brand and purchase intention, leads to developing the following hypothesis of this research:

Hypothesis 3:

- a) *Trust towards the brand has a positive impact on purchase intention for a brand with stereotypical advertisement.*
- b) *Trust towards the brand has a positive impact on purchase intention for a brand with non-stereotypical advertisement.*

The Figure 3 below is the graphical representation of the hypotheses and guiding framework for this research:

Figure 3: Framework for the analysis.



As in Figure 3, “Ad Exposure” is the stimulus which has an effect on the attitude towards the stereotypes in the advertisement. It indicates that the attitude towards the stereotypes specifically towards an ad is measured after the respondent is displayed the ad. Additionally, the general attitude towards stereotypical ads, as a moderator variable, is measured based on already existing opinion of the respondent and is not tied to specific ad. Furthermore, trust towards brand is the first dependent variable of the model that is predicted by the attitude towards the stereotypes in the ad and their relationship is moderated by the general attitude. Finally, purchase intention is the ultimate dependent variable that is predicted by the trust towards brand. In the next chapters of the research, more information about the ads will be provided.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this part of the study, research problems, research questions, data collection methodology, and data analysis techniques will be discussed.

3.1 Research problem

As mentioned earlier, advertising industry is relatively growing in Azerbaijan. The tight connections to the cultural elements, traditions, gender norms, and values makes them to be integrated part of not only daily life, but also professional fields are also impacted, and considering the advertising industry, it is affected by this from two perspective. Firstly, as a tool to reach

consumers, ads have become almost inevitable for any individual. In other words, Gurrieri et al. (2022) noticeably mention that the social effect of advertising is undeniable because of its comprehensiveness and pace of integration to daily life. The other influence on advertising is seen from a business perspective because the industry has to comply with and follow not only the regulations, but also societal expectations. However, as existing literature clearly highlights there is a clash of opinions when it comes to societal expectations; some people consider that there should be clearly defined traditional values and gender norms that needs to be followed while others are completely against such generalizations and challenge those roles (Huhmann & Limbu, 2016). Therefore, it is high time to analyze how these advertisements are fulfilling those expectations. To be precise, those cultural elements have created certain gender roles and stereotypes that are inevitable to encounter with. Thus, there is a need to understand why and how those stereotypes can be found in the advertisements. Even though basic examples can be found straightforwardly, the consumers' genuine reaction towards them cannot be reached that easily. Meaning, there is no or very few academic studies showing how the gender roles in the advertising impacts purchase decision of a regular Azerbaijani consumer. Hence, this research is focused on identifying the attitude and behavior of the consumer to those ads. The issue is that stereotypical ads in Azerbaijan mainly sticks with female gender role and does not limit males to traditional roles that often. This means that it is more common to see a female main character in ad performing traditional female role as a housewife or dependent on a man. The situation even worsens when it is about promotion of a dairy product. It is highly likely that the main character has to be a stay-at-home mother who fulfills all the traditional roles. To be specific, Castonguay and Bakir (2019) clearly mention that when the advertising needs to convey a message about healthy nutrition or highlight the importance of daily consumption of dairy products, the main character is more likely to be a female, especially a mother. Nevertheless, there have not been conducted any in-depth research to measure both males and females' reaction towards such ad. Consequently, the research problem here arises to discover the consumer behavior after viewing such an ad.

3.2 Research question

The following research question has been formed to understand consumer's purchase intention after seeing both a gender stereotypical and a non-stereotypical ad:

- How stereotypical female gender roles impact purchase intention of young Azerbaijani consumer?

3.3 Qualitative data collection

When it comes to data collection, to get better understanding both qualitative and quantitative methods will be utilized. In this way, it becomes more realistic to get better, deeper, and more authentic results to analyze the data.

Before going into analysis, in order to have fundamental understanding, it would be beneficial to discuss the content of the ads. As mentioned earlier, there were three stereotypical advertisements from 3 various brands: AzerSud, WestGold, and Milla. All three brands produce various kinds of dairy products. The advertisement of AzerSud revolves around four different characters (3 female, 1 male) who are using or consuming the product in various contexts. The characters are signing about diverse benefits of the product while using it. The main stereotype here is that all the female characters are described as cooks and are in the process of preparing something for the family (family element is shown for 2 of the characters) whereas the only male character is served the food and tastes the product with the meal. This highlights the stereotype of women being depicted as caretakers and men being shown as the one who is served. Specifically, as Bauer (2015) mentions, as these stereotypes are associated with women, men are considered incapable or insufficient in doing house work. Second ad belongs to WestGold brand and depicts a traditional Azerbaijani family celebrating a national holiday – Nowruz. For the context, it is important to note that Nowruz is a holiday that is highly associated with cooking, sweets, and family gatherings around a shared meal. In this ad, there is a family, where there is a stay-at-home mother who is taking care of the children while cooking all the national dishes for Nowruz with the mentioned brand. Meanwhile, the mother also sees the father off who is going on a business trip to another country. Again, similarly to the previous ad, here the female character is again representing a society where women are home-makers while the male character describes the men as breadwinner and outside of the home working for family. Lastly, to have a different version of the stereotypes Milla milk ad was utilized. In this ad, there are several teenage boys who are arguing about buying an ice-cream, and eventually, one of them goes into supermarket, but returns with a bottle of milk. Then others go inside, and the same thing happens over and over again. In

the last scene we see one of the boys in the supermarket; he is in front of the ice-cream aisle, but he sees a woman and directly gazes his attention on her chest and immediately buys milk instead of ice-cream. As it is obvious from the content, here women are sexualized due to their physical characteristics. In the literature, such depictions are also considered to be over-generalized stereotypical roles for women. For instance, claim that using humor by objectifying or making comments about a woman's body is an aggressive form of sex-related stereotype (Seethaler, 2013). Therefore, this ad was outside of the typical stereotypical gender roles that are generally shown in Azerbaijani ads. Hence, the interviewees' reaction (that will be discussed in further paragraphs) determined not to include this ad for the final quantitative analysis. The pictures from the those ads are attached below with relevant links on YouTube.

Image 1: AzerSud ad:

[AzerSud ad - YouTube link](#)



Source: YouTube/Azersud

Image 2: WestGold ad:

[WestGold ad - YouTube link](#)



Source: YouTube/Westgold Azerbaijan

Image 3: Milla ad:

[Milla ad - YouTube link](#)



Source: YouTube / Baku FM

On the other hand, another brand was chosen as having a non-stereotypical advertisement in the same product category to comprehend different views. The ad belongs to a brand called

Final that specializes in the production of various dairy products. Similar to the previous advertisements, this one also concentrates on using the product in the kitchen while mentioning its qualities. However, what makes this ad non-stereotypical is the characters who are cooking. Precisely, in the other ads, it is only the female character that explains how to use the product by being the cook herself. Nevertheless, in the advertisement of Final, there are 2 different cooking scenes. In the first one there is a woman who preparing meal for the guests (there is no family element), and in the second one, there is a couple where the man is fully invested in the preparation of the dish, and they are cooking together. The ad ends with the couple visiting the other woman and having a dinner party. Besides involving man in kitchen, what makes this ad non-traditional is the fact that for first main character (the woman preparing for guests) is alone and is not in the main role of taking care of children, and it gives the impression that she is doing all just for herself. Therefore, this advertising is considered to be outside of the stereotypical view towards what men and women are expected to do.

Image 4: Final ad

[Final ad - YouTube link](#)



Source: YouTube / Final Qida Məhsulları

As a qualitative method, semi-structured in-depth interviews were organized. This data collection method is performed for exploratory purposes. Therefore, the main intent here is to

perceive the preferences and attitude of the target group towards the topic and make relevant adjustments for the subsequent quantitative data collection. Due to its exploratory nature, this method helps to understand the complexity of the issue, possible points to be considered for the next stage, and better plan the quantitative methodology (Middleton et al., 2020).

The interviews were conducted with both males and females between the age groups of 21-26, overall, 6 interviews (3 male, 3 female interviewees) were conducted, so that viewpoint from different perspectives can be received. In order to avoid gender-specific bias, the gender ratio is balanced (Vo et al., 2023). The interviews were done with the same interview guide and question sets. As the interview was designed as semi-structured, variation in the questions was expected, and they were fully dependent on the participants' answer to a previous question or specific statement they mentioned. Considering the fact that the research is about Azerbaijan but is being done outside of the country, some interviews were online, while others offline – face to face. Also, in the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was informed about confidentiality and asked permission regarding voice recording. The Table 3 below summarizes the demographic information about the interviewees.

Table 3: Interviewees' details.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Employment status</i>	<i>Industry</i>
<i>Namazov I.</i>	Male	24	Student / Employed	Marketing
<i>Vakhidzade L.</i>	Female	21	Student	Human Resources
<i>Imanzada S.</i>	Male	24	Employed	Finance
<i>Yolchuyev A.</i>	Male	26	Employed	IT
<i>Abbasova K.</i>	Female	23	Employed	Marketing
<i>Alizade F.</i>	Female	24	Employed	Finance

Source: own edition

Generally, the interview consisted of three stages. In the first stage, general questions about demographics, overall understanding regarding gender stereotypes, factors affecting that person's attitude formation, and purchasing habits will be asked. The next stage was about demonstration

of 4 dairy advertisement. After viewing several advertisements by researcher, these four ads were chosen based on perceived understanding of gender stereotypes and whether those ads include any of those traditional roles. Based on this perception, three of the ads were stereotypical and one was outside of traditional gender roles. In this phase, word associations were used as a projection technique; the interviewee was requested to say at least 2-3 adjectives about what the ad made them feel. The last stage will include the discussion of the ad, where the inquire was about what the specific feelings about stereotypes and brand the ad caused and whether the ad seems normal or there is something unacceptable about it. Additionally, how likely the respondent would be to purchase any of the advertised brands because of the advertising was also asked. Interviewees were requested to explain their purchase intention, taking into account their previous buying habits and the impact of the ads. Overall, each interview was around 40-45 minutes.

3.4 Quantitative data collection

Moving on to the second part of the data collection, it was done through usage of online questionnaire method. Conversely to the interviews, this technique was utilized in order to obtain primary data, analyze the results, and test the hypotheses mentioned earlier. Additionally, as Åkestam (2018) highlights, using such additional methods could help identifying missed points with one methodology. Therefore, the main findings of the research were received through this method that was formed based on insights from the interviews.

To discuss the specifics of data collections, to build a more reliable and completely randomized survey, Qualtrics online survey builder was used. Additionally, in order to ensure that the respondents completely comprehend the questions, the survey was designed both in English and Azerbaijani. This feature also enabled the questionnaire to reach more people than expected in a short period of time.

When it comes to question types and overall structure, the survey was divided into four main parts. In the beginning, basic demographics related questions were asked, where a feature was activated so that people above certain age group would automatically directed to the end of the survey. This was aimed in order not to waste respondents' time in case they do not fit the prespecified age category. The next part of the survey included questions measuring general attitude towards the gender roles and stereotypes in the dairy products' advertisements by usage of

five-point Likert scale. For this part, four questions were used and adapted from Kyrrousi et. al (2016) who implemented a 12-item question set from Lundstrom and Sciglimpaglia (1977). After this point, the above-mentioned randomization occurs for the third segment of the questionnaire. As a result of interviews two ads were selected that were ranked highly to depict the common stereotype in Azerbaijan – women being the homemaker and stay-at-home-mom. As it would be time-consuming and discouraging for the respondents to watch and answer questions related to the same type of content, only one of those ads was shown. Here, randomization option was utilized, in an even distribution system, one video was randomly displayed to the respondents. To measure the results, a question by Kyrrousi et. al. (2016) was used to determine whether the respondent recognized a stereotype. Additionally, to determine the trust level and purchase intention questions by Williams and Drolet (2005), and Herbst et al. (2013) and Xie et al. (2015) (who adopted questionnaire by Zeithaml et al. (1996)) respectively (see Appendix, 7.2 for list of all the questions used). For the last part of the survey, the same question sets were used, but this time the ad shown was non-stereotypical one as described by the interviewees in the previous stage of the research. The randomization and usage of the ads that were agreed upon in the interviews helped to minimize the researcher's bias tendency.

Coming to the results and analyses of the survey, various correlations, factor analyses, and linear regressions were conducted as quantitative method. Precisely, as it was mentioned in the framework above, there are some variables that are independent variables for certain analyses, but then need to be considered as dependent variables. As, in the survey, multi-item scales were utilized to measure those variables, they needed to be converted into a single variable for regression analysis. Therefore, firstly correlation analyses were done to check if those variables are fit for dimension reduction, and then if it matches, factor analyses were performed. These factors, in the further stages, were part of various linear regression analyses.

4. RESULTS

As the data collection was divided into two techniques (qualitative – interviews and quantitative – survey), the results, therefore, were also analyzed in two different manners. Firstly, the analysis of the interviews is explained, then quantitative analysis – the regression analyses were conducted. It is important to note that results of the qualitative analysis, as it was an

exploratory method, significantly impacted the data collection and analysis of the quantitative method.

4.1 Qualitative analysis results

When it comes to analysis of the interviews, since interviewees were asked same questions with little bit variations, certain categories were identified and how their responses matched is going to be discussed here.

First of all, the reaction to these ads, the stereotypical ads received diverse perspectives. Some respondents immediately recognized the overgeneralizations and started commenting on those whereas others questioned existence of the stereotypes there. To avoid confusion, it should be remarked that none of the participants were told beforehand whether the next ad was going to be stereotypical or non-stereotypical ad. They were just informed that they were going to be shown some advertisements that match the content of the discussion going on. Therefore, the overgeneralized gender roles being obvious to some and being unnoticeable to others is a significant detail to note here. Further paragraphs of the qualitative analysis are dedicated to analyze the participants views on those ads.

Additionally, to understand and learn from the perspective of interviewees four different advertisements were demonstrated in the last stage of the interview, as mentioned earlier. Among these four, three were aligned with traditional gender roles, while one was “showing progress” as an interviewee described. Important thing to note here is that the interviewees were asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 5 on how realistic the ad in terms of was depicting stereotypes of the Azerbaijani society. The aim here was to be sure the relevant ads would be selected to be used for quantitative analysis as well. Based on the responses provided, two out of three stereotypical ads and one non-stereotypical ad were kept for the further stages of the research.

To begin with, buying patterns of the respondents, the interviews discovered all of them consumes dairy products, at least, regularly and do shopping on their own. Interesting finding here is that mainly there is not any specific brand that participants declared that they would buy no matter what. To be precise, some said that they can easily change their opinion if someone they trust would recommend something else, while others indicated that they would go for a comparably

cheaper or moderately priced one. None of the interviewees mentioned that an ad they had previously seen had an influence on their purchase decision.

Moving on to the interviewees' perception and attitude towards existing gender stereotypes in Azerbaijani society, there was mixed perspectives on them here although similar explanations were used. Meaning, they all explained what type of stereotypes exist in the society, but while some of them used words that described those stereotypes as problematic and something that was there to be enforced against one's choice, others' word choice made it seem like it was a must to follow those stereotypes. For instance, one interviewee expressed the following statement and explained why this was problematic:

"Generally, I see the genders' behavior to be dictated by society. I do not see much deviation from the accepted standards, stereotypes."

However, another respondent voiced his opinion by saying:

"If you have the blood of this culture, you should obey the societal expectations."

This indicates that every interviewee accepted the existence of stereotypes, however, their ideas about following them were, in some respect, opposite.

Speaking of culture, another element to analyze, as mentioned in the previous parts of this study, is whether Hofstede's cultural dimensions for Azerbaijan are accurate or not from interviewees' perspective. However, before engaging thoroughly with the subject, it is important to note that not every dimension was commented on or provided a comprehensive opinion on. Nevertheless, femininity versus masculinity and individualism versus collectivism were discussed in detail by the participants although the latter was not covered profoundly. In the literature review of the paper, it was revealed that, according to Hofstede's dimensions, Azerbaijan is balanced in terms of femininity versus masculinity with each having equal importance of 50%. That is to say, in the majority of the interviews, it was explained how men were seen as more powerful than women in this culture. Another interviewee approximated strength of masculinity and added the following:

"If Hofstede claimed 50/50 estimation for this dimension, it means he had never been in Azerbaijan."

One more controversial point was mentioned by another respondent who argued why society was, to some extent, proud of high masculinity and believed that the underlying reason might be lack of education or willingness to go outside of the stereotypical roles. The conclusion reached with the femininity versus masculinity dimension indicates a high level of masculinity with huge difference. Furthermore, the next dimension that resulted in contrasting opinions with Hofstede's original predictions was individualism versus collectivism. According to certain interviewees, Azerbaijan should not be considered as individualistic culture. To be precise, it was highlighted thoroughly how societal expectations urged people to act collectivistically, and most of the time this collectivism would be, once more, dependent on the traditional gender roles. Therefore, some interviewees believed that as long as the gender roles were upheld, society would be more inclined to be collectivistic.

Additionally, whether advertisements accurately reflect existing stereotypes in society was also discussed in detail in the interviews. There was a common agreement in the responses in a sense that everyone explained how and why ads reflect the stereotypes prevailed in society. Nevertheless, for some it caused, as one interviewee expressed, "*irritation*", for others it was expected to see such overgeneralization as part of any content that is made to grab attention. Remarkably, one respondent mentioned that he was not aware of such stereotypes in the advertisements, but when he was asked to describe how society is portrayed in the promotional media, his own explanation led him to realize the stereotypes that are generally displayed in those ads. However, typical answers were revolving around the idea that advertisements are mirroring the society with quite frequent depiction of stereotypical gender roles, such as women being a stay-at-home mother and caregiver and men being the breadwinner and leader of the family.

Furthermore, as traditional gender roles were agreed to be repeatedly represented, any possible changes both in society and ads were also settled similarly among participants. A noteworthy detail here is that almost all participants used the word "*hope*" while describing the potential alterations. Precisely, comparing their parents' generations with their own generation - Gen Z, they explained how conservative opinions society held a few decades ago and how that attitude is leaning to change with them. Highlighting the importance of education, participants mainly focused their view around how accessible it has become and how it makes people more aware of stereotypes and willing to break them. One interviewee justified this by stating that in the

past it was only a nurture thing; meaning, past generations were willing to accept the stereotypical roles because that was how they were raised. However, now, the element of nature – implying education and environment around a person besides his/her family – is also shaping the perceptions around following or disregarding traditional roles. Therefore, the conclusion reached was that companies take note of these changes and start to adjust the content of the ads slowly. As it is remarked by a participant *“brands are more cautious and pickier about the issue”* and try to minimize stereotypes in the advertisements. Another perspective was that sometimes brands depicted a completely non-stereotypical approach to gender roles, and this was quite far away from the reality. However, as an interviewee observed, though this was not realistic, it was hopeful to notice such effort from brands. One last instance on the views on changes, the other respondent pointed out that as the *“more aware”* generations, such Gen Z, would occupy decision-maker positions in brand management, the ads that they would approve could be away from traditional and stereotypical gender roles.

4.1.1 Results on stereotypical ads

To discuss the specifics of the reactions to the ads, since the participants had more opposing views and rationalizations on the stereotypical ads, it would be more exploratory to start with them. To start with the WestGold ad, as mentioned earlier it is a special ad that promotes the product via celebration of a national holiday. Unsurprisingly, this element was the central point that the interviewees mentioned while describing the ad and explaining why it relates to a traditional Azerbaijani family. What is uncommon about responses was that while some appreciated the ad depicting a family and evoking warm feelings, others discussed why that was not a genuine representation of society. Precisely, one interviewee explained her view by voicing:

“I wouldn't say I felt something heartwarming because I saw the mother and kids as the family, and father is someone from outside, just working and earning money.”

This opinion indicates that father's only role as breadwinner should not represent society. The important detail here is that although for some respondents father working for the family was the expected behavior of the man, thus, the ad was actual representation of the Azerbaijani family, others do not share similar opinion. Opposingly, another respondent was determined in communicating that as there were children it was normal that the female character was with the

kids and male was at the business trip and making money for his family. However, this part of the discussion was not as polarized as the remaining segments. To be precise, from some interviewees' perspectives, this was an expected portrayal of Azerbaijani family while highlighting how stereotypical it was to display "*full dependency on father*". Uniformly, it was a common opinion in the discussions that one main reason for the stereotypical depiction might be due to the nature of the product and its main target audience. In the words of an interviewee, "*brands need to confirm societal expectations*". Implying that in order to get accepted by the target audience they need to show what is considered as "*norm*". This gives another direction to the discussion, that is what the interviewees felt or thought about the ad and how that impacted their purchase intention. The most frequently used adjective here was "*familiar*" as the interviewees explained in what sense the family in the ad appeared analogous to their own or families around them. Therefore, the idea immediately following these descriptive words was how traditional or typical the ad was trying to be. Furthermore, except one interviewee, everyone explained why the ad evoked negative feelings and pushed them away from trusting this specific brand. This, surprisingly, was not fully reflected in their actual purchase intention of the brand. Meaning, although there were partially shared ideas how the ad was stereotypical and evoked negative feelings, almost all respondents indicated that they would not change their purchase intention. One interviewee put it out interestingly by denoting that if he paid attention to stereotypical content of the ads or had an ethical judgement of them based on his own values, he would probably buy nothing from most of those brands. By expressing that he mentioned that he would still criticize the brand or the agency that produced the ad but would not mind consuming the product of WestGold. Another approach was that, as a consumer, an interviewee did not usually buy this brand; however, if the ad depicted the family in non-traditional manner, she would consider trying the product and make judgement based on the quality of the product and because then the perceived brand image would more favorable and aligning with her own morals. Essentially, based on her words, if there was not a pressure on woman about being the caregiver or the cook, the brand would stand out and be worth trying. Only one participant mentioned that the brand was something that she would occasionally use, but after the ad she would look for other brands in order to avoid this one specifically. Overall, WestGold ad was something that both divided and united the interviewees in their opinions. While majority saw it as a problematic stereotypical ad, for one it was acceptable to see such depiction of an

Azerbaijani family. The fractional unanimity was with still continuing to purchase the product because of various reasons.

Moving on to the second stereotypical ad, this one belongs to the brand called AzerSud. As noted earlier, in this advertising content there are four characters who are either preparing something in the kitchen with the product or consuming it. Those who are in the kitchen are all women, and the only character that just consumes the product is a man. In contradiction with the previous ad, the majority of interviewees did not mention feeling of any warmth about the families shown with different characters. Only one interviewee again focused on depiction of family here and his overall ideas were completely conflicting with the rest of the interviewees. Precisely, most of the participants recognized the stereotypes in the ad and started commenting on them while giving definite narratives. However, one interviewee required a detailed explanation of what is considered to be stereotypical in this ad. By keeping researcher's neutral viewpoint, based on previous interviewees' description, what was considered to be stereotypical was explained briefly. After that the interviewee provided his opinion why this should not be considered as stereotypical by articulating that if the man is working outside, he should not be doing the cooking by himself as well, and thus, be served the prepared meal. When it was noted down that there is no background information about the male character and it is unknown whether he earned money, the interviewee explained that if a male character is depicted as sit down and food being served, then he should definitely be the one working for the family. On the other hand, other interviewees voiced completely opposing ideas. For instance, one interviewee clarified that she was not against women being in the kitchen; if one works, another can do chores, however, the ad should not give the idea that man is the working person of the family and woman is only stay-at-home mother. Another said:

“Three women are shown as the cook and waitresses and the man was shown as the client of the restaurant.”

And as a last example, one interviewee explained why he felt like there was no need for the man in the ad because he thought that character did nothing for the promotion of the product and it was illogical to have him there just to be served. These words by different people indicates that the main “irritation”, as one interviewee emphasized multiple times, was not only due to women being in the kitchen, but due to the fact that the ad made the viewer to form an

understanding that must be based on previously enforced societal expectations. Moving on actual purchase intentions, they were highly dependent on the way the interviewee described different elements of the ad, thus, were quite various. Some interviewees mentioned that the ad made them focus on gender imbalance and how their portrayal was completely opposite. Meaning, these participants recognized the stereotypes immediately and made decision based on these and not based on the product. Therefore, they were certain about not buying or trying to ignore the product as much as possible. Another respondent declared himself a self-claimed feminist, and stated that although the melody, actors, coloring and other details about the ad was fun to him, buying these products after recognizing all the stereotypes would go against his values. Others, however, remarked the gender over-generalizations, discussed how it is problematic, but also expressed that they would still buy the product because it is not only this brand having such campaigns. A point worth mentioning here is that none of them were encouraged or felt the urge to buy or try the product because of this advertising. The ones who would keep buying would still buy it because of its price or convenience. However, only one interviewee said that he was impressed by the ad and would not mind buying it next time. All in all, this ad also caused differences in opinions, but generally, here more focus was on the perception on how the ad made them uncomfortable with the (almost) common idea being about “male is being served while women are just cooking” stereotype.

The last stereotypical ad comes from the brand called – Milla, and it was only used in qualitative part of the study due to interviewees reactions. As will be specified further, this ad has completely different stereotypes compared to all other advertisements selected for the research. Hence, objectification of woman being the focus point to advertise the product raised the only cohesive reaction among interviewees. “*Disgust*”, “*embarrassment*”, “*shocking*”, and “*disappointment*” were most frequently used adjectives when the participants were asked to describe their first thoughts or feelings about the ad. The point here is that regardless of the genders, previously declared values or viewpoints, the majority perceived the ad in the same manner. Additionally, perspectives aligned while the interviewees tried to make sense out of the reason why the ad was filmed in that way. For instance, one interviewee said that although the advertising was disgusting for him, still the marketers’ effort to go out of box and do something creative or completely different from all other brands was something positive. Similarly, another participant considered this a mistake while trying to be creative. On the other hand, some interviewees had

more judgmental reasoning. Precisely, again, there was one outlier among the respondents who stated that this ad would encourage him to buy more of this product even though he thought:

“It is embarrassing and is not acceptable in our culture.”

However, the basis of his purchase intention decision was that by objectifying women the ad aimed to target men, and he believed, it was a successful move by the brand. On top of that, another respondent, who made it clear that though he likes this brand, he would not buy it anymore, formed a similar logical connotation. He arrived a conclusion that if in a traditional society male was considered the one making money, he would be considered the key player in purchase decisions of a family; thus, sexualization of woman was the trick to target the males. Kimmel (2013) (as cited in Moloney and Pelehach, 2014) indicates that such objectification of women is done so that the advertiser can also grab the heterosexual male viewers’ attention. Besides trying to rationalize, some respondents explained in detail why this is not the reflection of society. Some of them explained that it is not part of Azerbaijani culture to sexualize women, and thus, this cannot be considered a stereotype that was reassured by the society. Few minutes in discussion, an interviewee asked whether the ad was still promoted by the brand, and after learning that it was banned and deleted by Milla a week later due to public’s critics, she “*thanked*” to the society and elaborated how this was the proof that the ad was not depicting Azerbaijani society. However, despite all the disapprovals, only two of the interviewees mentioned that they would stop buying the products of Milla even though they like its quality or taste. The main purpose in avoiding this brand for one of them was that as a new mother she felt it was disrespectful towards her, and the other considered buying this product would go against his feminist viewpoint. Nevertheless, the rest of the interviewees considered it a mistake of the past brand management, and it should not be reason to avoid the product now. To finalize, although this Milla ad evoked comparatively akin feelings in interviewees, their continuation of purchasing it was variable due to personal reasons. As supplementary note, since five out of six interviewees rated this ad as non-realistic and not depicting stereotypes prevailed in Azerbaijani society, this ad was eliminated from the further quantitative analysis.

4.1.2 Results on non-stereotypical ad

Moving on to non-stereotypical ad, this one belonged to a brand called Final. The ad depicts similar situation, but without assigning traditional gender roles; there is a woman who is cooking at her home and there is a heterosexual couple making a dish together, and the ad ends with they all are visiting each other. What is non-stereotypical here is inclusion of man to the kitchen and cooking not being considered as a female job to do at home. When the interviewees were asked what factors grabbed their attention or whether there was something different about this ad, everyone noted that man being in the kitchen was something that was definitely against traditional gender roles. Attitude towards this ad, thus, was more positive and constructive than any other ads that were discussed earlier. Precisely, as one interviewee put it out:

“It evokes positive feelings in me to see that it is not only a woman cooking.”

The rest of the participants had the analogous view on the optimistic description of the gender roles, and, as it was mentioned frequently in the discussions, the ad was proving that the industry can also go along with the changes that is coming with Gen Z and the next generations. Another noteworthy comment came from an interviewee who said that out of all four ads, this one was the only one that she could actually focus on the product itself instead of the over-generalizations in the ad. To be precise, according to the interviewee, it was more relaxing to realize that there was not any role assigned to woman, so, focusing on the product straightforwardly became the sole purpose of the ad. A similar alternative came from another participant who stated that this Final ad depicted the growing minority in the society who are against traditional gender roles, and thus, was more progressive. However, although everyone talked about the positivity of the ad, there were still complaints about the ad. Some mentioned how cliché it was to depict happiness as cooking and eating together, or some just did not like the actors playing. Regardless of the drawbacks mentioned, everyone homogeneously agreed that the ad caused them to feel more trusted and positive feelings towards the brand. Another common point was in the purchase intention. All the participants indicated that the ad made them more open to the offerings of this specific brand due to the brand trying to be more inclusive. For some interviewees, this brand was already their regular choice, and one of them mentioned that after seeing where the brand stands in the depiction of gender roles, she would purchase other products of this brand as well to contribute them more. On the other hand, another person explained how he

had a somewhat negative attitude towards the brand; since the brand had cheaper prices, he would consider that it had lower quality as well. However, he was now encouraged to try the products of this brand because now he had a better view on the brand image. Overall, the last ad caused more positive emotions and reaction towards the brand and seemed to result in more expressive purchase intentions.

4.2 Quantitative analysis results

To start the analysis, descriptive statistics of the sample were identified. Even though the survey was fulfilled by 224 people, since some of them filled partially and some did not fit the age category, around 73 responses were deleted later on. Thus, the number of observations becomes 151 for the quantitative assessment. As descriptive indicators, overall, majority were female (92), 58 of respondents were male, and 1 participant preferred not to disclose their gender. In terms of education level, people holding bachelor's degree were the highest number by 79, which was followed by master's degree with 63 respondent, and high school and doctorate education were the least popular (with 8 and 1 respectively). Finally, when the current place of residence was asked, not surprisingly, more than 65% of respondents (101) were in Azerbaijan, around 31% (48) were in Europe, and less than 2% (2) reported residing in other places. Table 2 below summarizes the descriptive statistics of the sample. As every respondent was shown both stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertisements, the numbers are same for the viewers of each ad.

	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage of respondents</i>	<i>Total number of respondents</i>
<i>Gender</i>			151
<i>Female</i>	92	60.9 %	
<i>Male</i>	58	38.4 %	
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	1	0.7 %	
<i>Education level</i>			151
<i>High school</i>	8	5.3 %	
<i>Bachelor's degree</i>	79	52.3 %	
<i>Master's degree</i>	63	41.7 %	
<i>Doctorate</i>	1	0.7 %	
<i>Place of Residence</i>			151
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	101	66.9 %	
<i>Europe</i>	48	31.8 %	
<i>Other</i>	2	1.3 %	

Table 2: Descriptive statistics about sample.

Source: own edition

4.2.1 Results on correlations and Factor Analysis

In order to come up with a single measure for certain variables, dimension reduction, specifically factor analysis, was needed. As a rule of thumb, to go with the factor analysis, there should be high and significant correlation between the variables that are to be factored. As the framework above details it clearly, in different stages of analyses, “trust towards brand” and “purchase intention” variables will become dependent variables for various regressions. Both of them being measured via multi-item Likert scales, their items are required to go through factor analysis. Therefore, the correlation between the items in each of them is required to be calculated. The results for the measures of the trust towards brand indicated high correlation. Similar outcome is observed with the components of the purchase intention. Additionally, all the correlations demonstrated statistically significant results with the p-value being <0.001 . It is important to note that since there were two types of ads in the study (both stereotypical and non-stereotypical), the analysis was conducted twice to cover both types. Table 4 and 5 below summarizes the results for the correlation analysis:

STEREOTYPICAL ADS		TRUST TOWARDS BRAND		
	Ad is believable	Ad is realistic	Ad is credible	
Ad is believable	1	0.709	0.537	
Ad is realistic	0.709	1	0.611	
Ad is credible	0.537	0.611	1	
NON-STEREOTYPICAL AD		TRUST TOWARDS BRAND		
	Ad is believable	Ad is realistic	Ad is credible	
Ad is believable	1	0.727	0.700	
Ad is realistic	0.727	1	0.758	
Ad is credible	0.700	0.758	1	

TABLE 4. Correlation between the variables of Trust towards brand.

Source: own edition

STEREOTYPICAL ADS				
PURCHASE INTENTION				
	Purchase likelihood	First choice in relevant products	Choice in product category	Trial of new product
Purchase likelihood	1	0.649	0.601	.555
First choice in relevant products	0.649	1	0.775	0.666
Choice in product category	0.601	0.775	1	0.752
Trial of new product	0.555	0.666	0.752	1
NON-STEREOTYPICAL AD				
PURCHASE INTENTION				
	Purchase likelihood	First choice in relevant products	Choice in product category	Trial of new product
Purchase likelihood	1	0.767	0.802	0.737
First choice in relevant products	0.767	1	0.867	0.809
Choice in product category	0.802	0.867	1	0.814
Trial of new product	0.737	0.809	0.814	1

TABLE 5. Correlation between the variables of Purchase intention.**Source: own edition**

As the results indicated strong and significant correlations, it became reliable to go with dimension reduction, meaning, the factor analysis. Furthermore, the high correlations were also reflected in KMO and Bartlett's Test; specifically, for each factor analysis this number was more than 0.6 (mainly, 0.7 or close to 0.8) with high significance (p-value <0.001). This again verifies that the variables are fit for the factor analysis. In this analysis, 1 factor variable was created for each of the above-mentioned categories. All the extractions were based on Eigenvalues, where the results that were more than 1 would create a new factor. As the items in each variable were three and four, only one component for each (in total four) was created. Therefore, as a result, four new factor variables were created overall (two for stereotypical and two for non-stereotypical ads). The total variance in the sample explained by these factors also resulted in high values, making it safe to use these factored variables in further analysis. The Table 6 below summarizes the KMO metrics, and the percentage value of the total variance explained for each variable:

Table 6: Factor Analysis Metrics.

<i>Factored variable</i>	<i>KMO</i>	<i>% of Total variance explained</i>
<i>Factored Trust for Stereotypical Ads</i>	0.696	74.69 %
<i>Factored Purchase Intention for Stereotypical Ads</i>	0.812	75.12 %
<i>Factored Trust for Non-Stereotypical Ads</i>	0.745	81.89 %
<i>Factored Purchase Intention for Non-Stereotypical Ads</i>	0.861	84.99 %

Source: own edition

4.2.2 Results on regressions for stereotypical ad

As the factor analysis allowed creation of single variables as dependent variables, simple and multiple linear regressions became possible. To start with the first part of the framework, attitude towards the stereotype in the ad, as the predicting variable, is regressed against trust towards brand which is the dependent variable in this case. Here, the first analysis was done

without the moderating impact of general attitude towards stereotypical ads in order to test whether such relationship exists between the above-mentioned variables without any moderation. As mentioned in the framework earlier, there is an additional ad exposure element that is noted outside of the main frame. The reason behind that is to indicate that all the analyses are indirectly connected to the fact that every participant has seen both stereotypical and non-stereotypical ads. Therefore, even though ad exposure is not included in the analysis, it is the main stimuli for the hypothesized relationship between variables.

The first analysis is done between attitude towards the stereotype in the ad and trust towards brand for the stereotypical ads. Results of this analysis did not indicate any significant relationship between the above-mentioned variables. The $F(1, 149) = 2.579$ and p-value of 0.110, the model resulted in insignificance, demonstrating that there was no significant relationship. Similar numbers are also seen with R^2 , with R^2 being also too low with 0.017 and insignificant p-value (0.110). This also validates that the variance in the trust towards brand is not explained by this specific model. Therefore, the first hypothesis, which highlighted that attitude towards the stereotypes in the ad is influential on the trust towards brand, is partially not supported. To be precise, **H 1-a is, thus, rejected.**

Moving on to the second hypothesis regarding stereotypical ads, here whether there is moderating effect of general attitude towards stereotypical ads on the relationship between attitude towards stereotype in the ad and trust towards brand is measured. According to the results of this analysis, the model is statistically significant. With $F(6, 144) = 12.380$ and p-value of <0.001 , the model meets the required criteria for statistical significance. Based on the analysis of the Scatter plot, homoscedasticity is not observed. Additionally, the variance in dependent variable is explained by the combined impact of independent variable, moderator, and their interaction term in fair degree. To be precise, R^2 of 0.34 (with statistical significance) indicates that there is moderately good fit for the model. However, when the coefficients and their p-values are analyzed in detail, it becomes apparent that even though the measurements of the moderator have statistical significance, the same cannot be stated about the independent variable and the interaction term. Specifically, the coefficient values that the attitude towards the stereotype in the ad, as the independent variable, ($\beta=0.038$, $t=0.519$, and $p\text{-value}=0.605$) and interaction term ($\beta=0$, $t=-0.997$, and $p\text{-value}=0.321$) have highlight that though these variables together form the model and explain

the variance in the dependent variable, individually, they are affecting the relationship. Therefore, even though there is a statistically significant relationship, there is not any moderation by the general attitude towards stereotypical ads. Hence, the second hypothesis – **H 2-a is also rejected.**

Coming to the last analysis on stereotypical ad, whether trust towards brand impacts the purchase intention is analyzed. As factor analysis was conducted in previous stages, at this point factors of both independent and dependent variable were used and the results were statistically significant. Based on the ANOVA table, the F (1, 149) test of 91.016 and p-value with <0.001 , it can conclude that trust towards brand, in fact, has positive impact on purchase intention. Furthermore, based on the R^2 results, 37.9% of the variance in the dependent variable, purchase intention, can be explained by this model considering the low p-value (<0.001). When it comes to the specifics of this relationship – the coefficients, $\beta=0.616$, $t=9.540$, and $p\text{-value}<0.001$ indicate strong and significant correlation. Additionally, homoscedasticity did not occur as it was observable from the Scatter plot. Considering all these factors, it is safe to claim that the third hypothesis is supported for the stereotypical ad; thus, **H 3-a is supported.**

4.2.3 Results on regressions for non-stereotypical ad

On the other hand, the same analyses were done for the non-stereotypical advertisement as well. The situation was analogous for this advertisement as well; meaning, the first analysis of the relationship between attitude towards the stereotype in the ad and trust towards the brand was statistically insignificant. This is proven by the values of F (1, 149) test and p-value with 0.088 and 0.768 respectively. Similarly, R^2 results indicated no significance and only being 0.001 which shows that the model almost does not explain the variance in the response variable – trust towards brand. Even though there is no use of the coefficients here, just to have an idea, $\beta= - 0.019$, $t = 0.296$, and p-value is 0.768. One reason behind this issue might be the homoscedasticity that was observed in the Scatter plot. Therefore, the second part of hypothesis 1 is also not supported; hence **H 1-b is rejected.**

Looking at the moderation impact again, here, results are more or less similar in the non-stereotypical ad to what they were for stereotypical one. To be clear, the main parts to analyze gave statistically significant conclusions. First of all, the ANOVA table demonstrates that independent

variable, moderator, and their interaction term predict the dependent variable – trust towards brand. Precisely, with $F(6, 144) = 91.87$ and $p\text{-value} < 0.001$, the statistical significance is obvious. Correspondingly, this is also observable from the value of R^2 which shows that 27.7% of variance in the dependent variable is fit to be explained by the model. However, again, if the coefficients and their significance level are measured individually, it will be noticeable that both the independent variable and the interaction term are not statistically significant on their own. Since, $\beta = -0.120$, $t = -1.663$, and $p\text{-value} = 0.099$ for independent variable and $\beta = 0$, $t = 1.413$, and $p\text{-value} = 0.160$ for the moderator, their individual statistical significance is not accepted. Even though $p\text{-value}$ for the independent variable is less than 0.10, still this is not considered a reliable measurement in the literature; thus, it is also not significant. Additionally, as homoscedasticity was checked via Scatter plot, it was not detected. Considering all these factors, although there is a statistically significant relationship, there is no moderation. Therefore, **H 2-b is also rejected.**

Last, but not least, trust towards brand is hypothesized to have positive influence on the purchase intention for the products with non-stereotypical ad. The last regression analysis was focused on finding out this connection, and it resulted in statistically significant outcomes. To start with the ANOVA table, with $F(1, 149)$ test of 165.783 and $p\text{-value} < 0.001$, this analysis indicated that trust towards brand can actually predict the purchase intention of a customer. This was also supported by the moderately good value of R^2 which is 0.527, meaning that 52.7% variance of the dependent variable is explained by this model. There was no homoscedasticity in this model as well according to the Scatter plot. The coefficient values for this regression indicates that β is 0.726, $t\text{-test}$ is 12.876, and $p\text{-value}$ is < 0.001 . Therefore, this model responds to the requirements of the third hypothesis. Hence, **H 3-b is supported.**

The Table 7 below, summarizes the results of the regression analyses:

Hypotheses	Regression	p-value	R ²	Results
H 1-a (Stereotypical ad)	Att_Ad → Trs	0.110	0.017	Rejected
H 1-b (Non-stereotypical ad)	Att_Ad → Trs	0.768	0.001	Rejected
H 2-a (Stereotypical ad)	Att_Ad → Trs moderated by Gen_Att	<0.001	0.34	Rejected
H 2-b(Non-stereotypical ad)	Att_Ad → Trs moderated by Gen_Att	<0.001	0.277	Rejected
H 3-a (Stereotypical ad)	Trs → PI	<0.001	0.379	Supported
H 3-b (Non-stereotypical ad)	Trs → PI	<0.001	0.527	Supported
Notes:				
Att_Ad: Attitude towards stereotypes in the ad				
Gen_Att: General attitude towards stereotypical ads				
Trs: Trust towards brands				
PI: Purchase intention				

Table 7: Summary of hypothesis testing (own source).

5. DISCUSSION

This research is aimed to measure whether there is an impactful change in the purchase intention of the customers towards a brand if they recognize or consider an ad as stereotypical by depicting traditional gender roles. Specifically, as in online and offline environments, the younger generation – mainly Gen Z – discusses how stereotypical gender roles should not be prevailed and be source of attention in advertisements, the hypotheses revolved around whether they are actually changing their purchase intention. The outcomes of the research indicated that even though trust towards brand (triggered by ad exposure) is significantly affecting purchase intention, neither general attitude towards stereotypical ads nor attitude towards stereotypes in the ad has any considerable impact. Expectedly, analogous conclusions about trust towards the brand and purchase intention were reached by Mcknight & Chervany (2001) (as cited in Balarabe, and Bambale, 2016) who stated that trust via advertising is the key factor to drive purchase intention.

On a similar note, Mesiya et al. (2020) also agreed with the previous literature and concluded that trust towards the brand was in fact the main trigger for purchase intention. On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, this research could not find any significant correlation between attitude towards the stereotype in the ad and trust towards brand without moderating impact of the general attitude towards brand. However, previous research, such as one done by Huhmann and Limbu (2016), explicitly articulated that stereotypical advertising can cause negative emotions and attitude in the viewers, who in return form unconstructive and untrustworthy opinion towards the brand advertised. Another opposite opinion to the findings of this research was voiced by Åkestam (2017), who claimed that certain attitude towards brand (which can include trust as well) was highly dependent on the attitude toward its advertisement. Overall, it is visible that although the first two hypotheses were not supported in this research, existing literature could find meaningful relationships. However, the relationship between the trust towards brand and purchase intention was consistent with previous works.

Before concluding this research, it would also be beneficial to look at the overall link between qualitative and quantitative methodology of this study. Surprisingly, as mentioned earlier, interviews mainly indicated that although people were sensitive towards the stereotypes and did not consider them appropriate for the advertisements, and even some believed they were both disappointing and irritating, the purchase intention did not differ that much. As it was revealed by some participants, despite the fact that their attitude towards those stereotypes in the shown ad was negative, but they still found the ad to be realistic and sometimes believable. This might be related to the disparity that was found for the first two hypotheses as well. Meaning, even though people rated those ads negatively, they still considered that the ad trustworthy. Another unexpected finding of the study revealed the fact that both stereotypical and non-stereotypical ads had the same impact on purchase intention. To be precise, it was not predicted that both would be considered trustable and lead to purchase intention. However, as interviews gave certain signs in the earlier stages of the research, people might be aware of the stereotypical content, but still ignore it for one reason or another.

6. CONCLUSION

The main goal of this research was to address the lack of literature on Azerbaijani advertising industry and its implications. As the existing literature do not fully cover stereotypes in the society, their demonstration on advertisements, and how they influence purchase intention, this study provided certain insights regarding the mentioned factors in Azerbaijan. Despite the fact that findings were mainly not in line with the majority of the global research on the issue, one important result indicated that young Azerbaijani consumers are more likely to make purchase if they sense that the ad leads them to trust the brand.

6.1 Limitations

When it comes to the limitations of the study, there were multiple difficulties throughout the research process. To begin with, due to the short time period of data collection, 224, out of which only 151 observations were valid to continue the analyses, respondents participated in the online survey. Therefore, the research should be given a second consideration with a larger sample size in the future. Additionally, revision of the existing literature for Azerbaijan was limited by the lack of academic or peer-reviewed sources about the country. Therefore, it could not be analyzed throughout fully. Furthermore, as most of FMCG products in Azerbaijan have promotional campaigns under the one family brand name (instead of individual brand names), it was not possible to use other sources of marketing for the dairy products. Consequently, only the advertisements of those products were included in this study.

6.2 Future research

Looking into the future research, since Azerbaijan is developing country and is taking small but reliable steps in the researching, there are several points that can be analyzed for further on this topic. First and foremost, with greater sample size, systematical review of the stereotypical advertisements and their impact on purchase intention can be explored further. Additionally, since this research only focused on dairy products, it would be beneficial to see whether analogous findings came into surface with other product categories such as technological devices. Last, but not least, based on the results of the interviews, it is understandable that young customers do not appreciate the stereotypes in the advertisements. Therefore, additional study from the viewpoints

of the industry professionals – creative agency experts, marketers, or brand managers – would give reasoning for the usage of traditional over-generalizations in the advertising field.

Overall, even though there are obvious or criticized stereotypes exist, it is effect on the trust and purchase intention is still questionable. Therefore, concluding this research by a noteworthy statement of LaViolette and Silvert (1951) would be a hopeful glance to the future. According to this almost eight-decade old idea, a more realistic depiction of the world is achievable if an individual is willing to give up the stereotypes in his/her mind.

7. APPENDIX

7.1 Interview guideline

1. Introduction to the research:
Hello, and thank you for accepting my invitation to the interview. We will be talking about advertisements, gender stereotypes, and their overall situation in Azerbaijan in general. Do you agree with the interview being recorded for research purposes? Your confidentiality will be kept, and your opinions will be used for research purposes only.
2. Introduction of the interviewee:
Could you, please, give little bit background information about yourself?
3. Existing purchase behavior for dairy products:
3.1 Do you consume dairy products? (screening question)
3.2 Do you do your shopping for these products? (screening question)
3.3 Do you have a favorite brand, and if so why that one?
3.4 Is there a brand that you used to use, but now you do not buy?
4. Advertisement related questions:
4.1 Do you generally notice an ad when you are watching TV?
4.2 When you see an ad, what are the main elements you pay attention to?
4.3 How do you associate the context (e.g. home, office, etc.) and the content of the ad?
5. Gender portrayals in the ads:
5.1 How do you think women and men are portrayed in the ads?
5.2 What is your opinion on gender portrayals in the ads?
5.3 Do you like or dislike the portrayal that you just described?
5.4 Do you find disparity or similarity with those portrayals and real life?
6. Gender roles in society:
6.1 Could you, please, discuss how you society to be constructed in terms of such roles?
6.2 How do you think it is progressing? Is there a change or stability?
6.3 Do you see the same change (stability) patterns in the ads as well?

7. Questions about the specific ads:

Note: This questions were asked for all 4 four ads.

- 7.1 What is your first feelings? Could you, please, describe them using 2-3 adjectives?
- 7.2 One a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being completely unrealistic, 5 being completely realistic, where would you put this ad in terms showing the reality of Azerbaijan? (This question was asked to determine whether to add this ad to the quantitative study as well or not.)
- 7.3 Did the ad evoke trust or similar feelings?
- 7.4 After seeing the ad, if it is not your favorite brand, would you still purchase the products of this brand?
- 7.5 After seeing the ad, if it is your favorite brand, would you still purchase the products of this brand?

8. Questions about overall impression after the ads:

- 8.1 What do you think about gender portrayals in all these four ads?
- 8.2 Are you left with more positive or negative emotions after these ads?
- 8.3 Do you think ads are affected by the stereotypes in society, or is it vice versa?
- 8.4 Do you sense any type of change that might happen with our or the next generations?

9. Interview closure:

Thank you for accepting the invitation, taking your time, and participating in our research! Your opinions are highly appreciated and are valuable for further study. If you are left with any questions, please, let me know. Also, if you, later on, would like to know more about the research or would like ask questions on this topic, please, feel free to reach out to me anytime! Thank you!

7.2 Survey questions

The survey was also translated into Azerbaijani for convenience of the respondents.

1. Survey description:

“Hello and welcome!

As part of my MSc thesis research in Marketing at Corvinus University, I'm conducting a study about gender stereotypes in dairy product advertisements. Your participation in this survey is immensely valuable and will contribute to our understanding of this important topic.

Completing this survey will take approximately 4-5 minutes of your time.

Rest assured, all responses provided in this survey will be kept strictly confidential. Your anonymity is guaranteed, and your responses will only be used for academic purposes.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You have the freedom to withdraw from the survey at any time.

If you have any questions or require further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me at leyla.hasanova@stud.uni-corvinus.hu.

Thank you once again for your willingness to participate. Let's begin!”

2. Demographics

2.1 What is your age?

2.2 What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

2.3 What is your level of education?

- High school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate

- Post-doctorate

2.4 What is your current location?

- Azerbaijan
- Europe
- Other

Note: In this section, those who put a number higher than 29 for the age were directed to the end of the survey.

3. General attitude towards stereotypes

“In this section, we kindly ask you to remember all the ads about dairy products (milk, cheese, butter, oil, etc.) that you have seen anywhere by now. Please, answer the questions below by considering only those ads.”

Note: 4-items were adapted from 12-item measurement of Lundstrom and Sciglimpaglia, 1977.

3.1 Dairy product ads which I see accurately portray women in most of their daily activities.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

3.2 Dairy product ads which I see accurately portray men in most of their daily activities.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

3.3 I find the portrayal of women in advertising of dairy products to be offensive.

- Strongly disagree

- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

3.4 Overall, I believe that the portrayal of women in advertising of dairy products is changing for the better.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

4. Stereotypical ad display.

Note: Here, randomization enabled, and one of the two stereotypical ads mentioned earlier was shown.

Please, watch the video and answer the questions below by considering only this ad.

4.1 *To measure attitude towards the stereotypes in the ad (1 item adapted from 2-item scale by Kyrousi et al., 2016):*

This advertisement depicts women in a stereotyped manner.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

4.2 *To measure trust (adapted from 3-item scale by Williams and Drolet, 2005):*

Please, indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly) to which extent you agree/disagree with each of the statements below.

- The advertisement is believable.
- The advertisement is realistic.
- The advertisement is credible.

4.3 *To measure purchase intention (adapted from a 1-item scale by Herbst et al., 2013):*

Based on what you have heard in this advertisement, how likely are you to purchase this product?

- Extremely unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Neither likely, nor unlikely
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

4.4 *To measure purchase intention (adapted from a 3-item scale by Xie et al., 2015):*

Please, indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly) to which extent you agree/disagree with each of the statements below.

- I believe this brand is my first choice for relevant products.
- I will choose this brand next time when I buy this product category.
- I am willing to try new products of this brand.

5. Non-stereotypical ad display.

Please, watch the video and answer the questions below by considering only this ad.

5.1 *To measure attitude towards the stereotypes in the ad (1 item adapted from 2-item scale of Kyrousi et al., 2016):*

This advertisement depicts women in a stereotyped manner.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

5.2 *To measure trust (adapted from 3-item scale by Williams and Drolet, 2005):*

Please, indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly) to which extent you agree/disagree with each of the statements below.

- The advertisement is believable.
- The advertisement is realistic.

- The advertisement is credible.

5.3 *To measure purchase intention (adapted from a 1-item scale by Herbst et al., 2013):*

Based on what you have heard in this advertisement, how likely are you to purchase this product?

- Extremely unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Neither likely, nor unlikely
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

5.4 *To measure purchase intention (adapted from a 3-item scale by Xie et al., 2015):*

Please, indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly) to which extent you agree/disagree with each of the statements below.

- I believe this brand is my first choice for relevant products.
- I will choose this brand next time when I buy this product category.
- I am willing to try new products of this brand.

6. Survey closure:

“We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your response has been recorded.”

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