The Impact of Women's Representation in Advertising For Cosmetics on Purchase Decision Making in Mansoura City: A Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to analyze the Mediating role of culture in the relationship between Women's Representation in the advertising message in Mansoura city and making a Purchasing Decision (PurchDec). The descriptive approach was used by depending on a questionnaire to achieve the main objective of this paper. Whereas, three hundred seventy-four individuals were the used sample size from the population of all the cosmetics customers in Mansoura city. The path analysis method was used to study the direct and indirect relationships between the independent and the dependent variables. The study found that there is a strong positive significant correlation between the independent variable (Women's Representation in the advertising message) and the dependent variable (Purchase Decision). Moreover, there is a strong positive significant correlation between the dependent variable (PurchDec), and the mediating variable (Culture). To further understand the links studied in the current study, researchers are encouraged to investigate potential mediators and moderators in their future work.

***Keywords**: Purchasing Decision; Culture; Women's Representation; Advertising message; Path Analysis.*

Introduction

The cultural beliefs of consumers are one of the basic components of their identity, which results in many cultural differences among the clients of any organization, especially the global ones. Therefore, cultural differences have become a critical component in developing effective marketing for branding strategies, especially the global ones (Asamoah & Chovancová, 2016; Herrmann & Heitmann, 2006).

Cultural differences between individuals are formed as a result of the different beliefs, experiences, and social standards adopted by the individual, and these differences construct the so-called value system of the individual, which was found to affect and be affected by the result of adopting or rejecting new cultures on him, and this system, in turn, affects the purchase decisions of the individual (Kusumawati et al., 2021). The consumers think these differences are related to age, sex, and economic level (Herrmann & Heitmann, 2006).

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Literature Review and Hypotheses

Women's Representation in the Advertising Message

We can view advertising from different perspectives, focusing only on how different personas it represented through marketing communication channels. Marketers and academics alike need to pay attention to the image of women in advertising (Lavikka, 2012). Advertisers attempt to impose what society views as normal through carefully selected imagery in the advertising that sell images, values, and ideas. Jim Fowles claims that shifting fashion trends constitute a cycle of attraction that is reflected in popular culture and manifested in advertising (Klein, 2013). The development of female roles in the attraction cycle can be seen as a reflection of changes in taste, fashion, and social standards. Through idealised representations, advertising reveals to consumers who they are and what they desire to be. Advertising manipulates text and information to affect consumers' critical judgments. The climate this generates for women's self-esteem is detrimental. (Stankovi and colleagues, 2018)

Women are frequently represented in advertisements, which should conjure associations with what is visually pleasing, the desirable appearance, and which viewers and customers should strive for. In advertisements, women are frequently shown as seductive objects, idealised stay-at-home mothers, or independent young women (Nagi, 2014). A first investigation on how women are portrayed in advertisements was conducted in a number of nations, including Australia (Browne, 1998), France and Denmark (Furnham et al., 2000), China (Cheng, 1997), Sweden (Milner & Collins, 2000), and others. The majority of studies indicated that while preconceptions are less common in western countries and gender stereotypes still exist (Furnham & Mak, 1999; Grau & Zotos, 2016), the situation in Asia and Africa has not changed (Furnham & Farrager, 2001). Using women as sex objects, depicting them as stay-at-home mothers, portraying them as mute, and other stereotypes are just a few examples of how women are portrayed in society. Matthes et al. (2016) used content analysis to show that a country's culture has a significant impact on gender stereotypes and came to the conclusion that gender stereotypes persist in nations with higher Hofstede masculinity scores.

For the independent variable Women's Representation, four dimensions of Sharma and Bumb's study (2021) were adopt because of their appropriate for the study. These dimensions are Sexual orientation (SexOri), Domestic Portrayal (DomPor), Submissive/Subservient Nature (SubNat), and Weak behavior (WkBeh).

Purchase Decision

A purchasing choice can be defined as the cognitive process that is essential to resolving a demand, weighing options, and selecting a particular product and brand (Furaji et al., 2013). Therefore, a set of questions is considered before making a purchase decision such as:

- What items do I need and for what?
- How much to pay?
- What type of brand and model?
- When is a purchase decision made?
- What other factors must be considered?

The next step in the decision-making process for consumers is to make a purchase after providing answers to inquiries. Marketers should provide their products to customers at the time of purchase and make sure that the transaction is quick and easy (Iblasi et al., 2016; Bui et al., 2021). Additionally, consumers' shopping experiences can be improved by using digital marketing channels to streamline the ordering, buying, and paying processes, saving them time and money (Qazzafi, 2019).

The decision-making process may be influenced by a variety of circumstances. External variables include things like culture, subculture, group, circumstance, social background, and family. Internal elements include perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, personality, way of life, commitment, and roles. Marketing considerations include the product, packaging design, advertising, distribution, service, and price (Xu & Chen, 2017). Scholarly articles have thoroughly examined a number of consumer decision-making models, including the How-

ard-Sheth model, the Nicosia model, the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell model, and the Sheth-Newman-Gross model (Prasad & Jha, 2014). Problem identification, information collecting, alternative appraisal, and product selection are all steps in the typical customer decision-making process (Solomon, 2012).

Dimensions of Culture

The general interaction of common qualities that shape a country's or group's response to its surroundings is known as culture (Hofstede, 2001). Culture heavily influenced consumers' attitudes and buying intentions toward a brand (Choi et al., 2020). As a result, it could act as a barrier for marketers trying to convey ideas and values to customers. Transnational marketers constantly struggle with how to have their brands acceptable by consumers in host nations with very distinct cultures (Theodosiou & Leonidou, 2003; Engelen & Brettel, 2011). On the other hand, cultural differences may cause the host consumers to think about fashion and exoticism, which would improve sales (Batra et al., 2000; Strizhakova et al., 2008). Choi et al. has conducted a study on the effects of each cultural variable mentioned by Hofstede (1980, 2001) on PDAs (Choi et al., 2020).

In social and economic studies, the Hofstede (1980, 2001) postulated cultural components had been found to be valid (Correia et al., 2011; Steel et al., 2018). Therefore, to represent the cultural variable in this study, Hofstede's (1980, 2001) suggested cultural dimensions were adopted. Five separate cultural dimensions were proposed by Hofstede (1980, 2001):

1- Power distance (PowDis),
2- Uncertainty avoidance (UncAvo),
3- Individualism/collectivism (IndCol),
4- Masculinity/femininity (MasFem),
5- Long-term orientation (LtO).

Tolerating human injustices, such as subordinates' unwillingness to voice their thoughts to superiors, is a key component of PowDis. UncAvo is a term used to describe state and social structures that have been developed through laws, rules, technology, religion, and ritual to prevent or avoid uncertain events and outcomes. The relationship between the individual and the collective is referred to as IndCol (e.g., nuclear versus extended family). A society is said to be individualistic when it has a stronger preference for the welfare of individuals or groups (collectivist). MasFem is a reflection of the method used to convert physical disparities into emotional and social gender roles. It specifically refers to a culture that places a premium on independence and success (housing and relationships). LtO refers to moral principles including frugality, shame, and perseverance (following custom and returning greetings and favours) as opposed to more society-specific principles.

Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis 1 (**H1**): It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation relationship between the dimensions of research variables. Moreover, H1 is divided into the following sub-hypotheses:

- The first sub-hypothesis (**H1a**): It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation between Women's Representation in the advertising message and the PurchDec.
- The Second sub-hypothesis (**H1b**): It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation between Women's Representation in the advertising message and the culture.
- The Third sub-hypothesis (**H1c**): It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation between the Culture and the PurchDec

Hypothesis 2 (**H2**): It is expected that there is a statistically significant effect of Women's Representation in the advertising message on the PurchDec through the culture as the mediating variable.

Methodology

Statistical analysis was used for this study where the analysis proceeds in two stages: (a) comparative of correlation coefficients and (b) path analysis test. By the next sub-sections more details will be illustrated.

Population and Research Sample

Researchers relied on systematic random sampling for the following reasons: First, there is a high degree of homogeneity among the study population. Second, in terms of the characteristics of the study, it focuses on the presence or absence of the framework of the study population.

The population of this research included all the cosmetics customers in Mansoura city which is the capital and the biggest city in Dakahlia governorate. Since Dakahlia Governorate occupies the fourth rank in terms of population density with a population (6.8%) of the total population of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

According to Bazra'a (Bazra'a, 1996), if the research population exceeds 100000, the sample size should be 384 individuals. Therefore, the questionnaires were used to get 384 responses from cosmetics company customers. Only 374 questionnaires out of 384 were returned that representing a response rate equal to 97.4%. Thus, the sample size in this study consisted of 374 people. Cronbach alpha for all variables was more than 0.7.

Methods of the Sampling

Given the difficulty in obtaining the names of the population, the second case of systematic sampling was used, which is the absence of the population of the research, and to achieve randomness in the selection, the steps for selecting the samples were as follows:

- A week has been chosen for every famous district in Mansoura City, starting from November 2021 to March 2022
- The number of data collection days has been chosen to be four days per week. On each day, one of the districts has been chosen: (Sunday: Hai El-Gamaa district - Monday: El-Galaa district - Tuesday: El-Sekka El-Gedida district - Wednesday: El-Terraa district). These districts were chosen because they are the most important places where cosmetics companies exist in Mansoura City. This procedure has been applied over four weeks (representing one month).
- The researchers made 10 minutes for the selection time, i.e., collecting one survey list every 10 minutes, and the time taken to collect data was two hours per day until the completion of the required sampling had been collected.
- After collecting the data into an Excel sheet, SPSS and AMOS were used to get the results of the study.

Measures:

A self-administered questionnaire was adopted to collect primary data. Whereas, a Likert scale of five points ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used. Moreover, the questionnaire is divided into four parts namely socio-demographic variables, the dimension of the independent variable (Women's Representation), the dimension of the mediating variable (Culture), and finally, the dimension of the dependent variable (Purchase Decision (PurchDec)).

For Women's Representation, four sub-dimensions were adopted that were suggested by Sharma and Bumb (2021) for their appropriateness for the study. They were Sexual Orientation (SexOri), Domestic Portrayal (DomPor), Submissive/Subservient Nature (SubNat), and weak behavior (WkBeh). For Culture, five sub-dimensions were adopted that were suggested by Hofstede (1980, 2001). They were PowDis, UncAvo, IndCol (IndCol), MasFem, and LtO. Finally, for PurchDec, it will be measured without using any sub-dimensions.

Questionnaire Developed

A questionnaire was used to collect the necessary data for the study and this questionnaire was divided into four parts. Part one was the customers' socio-demographic characteristics like age, income, and gender. In part two, the independent variable which was Women's Representation which was measured

according to Sharma & Bumb's study (2021) which use four dimensions. The four dimensions are SexOri, DomPor, SubNat, and WkBeh. Where SexOri consisted of 4 items and DomPor consisted of 4 items and SubNat consisted of 3 items and finally, WkBeh consisted of 8 items. Consequently, Women's Representation consisted of 19 items.

In part three, the dependent variable which is "purchase decision" involved four items and was measured according to (Choi et al., 2020). The final part, the mediating variable which is culture and consisted of five statements developed by Asamoah & Chovancová (2016) and also suggested by Hofstede (1980, 2001). Whereas, five distinct cultural dimensions: Power distance (PowDis), UncAvo, IndCol, MasFem, and LtO were used. Thus, 28 items were used to measure the whole study.

The Likert scale is a set of items in the form of statements represent the dimensions of hypothetical situation under study. For these statements, the participants are asked to choose the level of agreement from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The agreement level represents a ranked-weight from 1 to 5. In general, a dimension of the study may be represented by more than one statement. Where, all the statements for a specific dimension are combined to reveal the attitude towards this dimension. Therefore, the statements of each dimension must be inter-linked with each other.

For measuring the strength of opinion, a five-points Likert scale was used in this study's questionnaire. This scale is from strongly agree to strongly disagree and it is most successfully and commonly for such study (Viswanathan et al., 2004; Venkatesh, 2003). Moreover, the mean was used for describing the data where it is the most common measure of central tendency (Viswanathan et al., 2004). For determining the tendency of the composite scores, the weighted average was calculated for the five-point Likert scale where the length interval was calculated according to the following rule:

$$Class\ length = \frac{highest\ value - lowest\ value}{the\ number\ of\ levels} = \frac{5-1}{5} = 0.8$$

Table 1 illustrates the weighted average for the five-point Likert scale. Therefore, the data entered into SPSS represent the weights and the weighted averages to understand the mean of a score, and then the results can be analyzed and interpreted to illustrate the degree of approval for each factor.

Table 1 Weighted average for 5-point Likert scale

Weight of 5-point Likert scale	Weighted average	Result interpretation
1	1 - 1.79	Strongly disagree
2	1.8 – 2.59	Disagree
3	2.6 – 3.39	Neutral
4	3.4 – 4.19	Agree
5	4.2 - 5	Strongly agree

Validity and Reliability of Questionnaire List Variables

The Cronbach's Alpha test was used to test the reliability of measures of all dimensions and variables of the study. The value of the alpha coefficient reached (0.80) which is considered to have an excellent level of validity and reliability, which indicates a high degree of reliability on the used measures. the self-validity can be calculated mathematically through the square root of the reliability coefficient, and the data in Table 2 indicate the values of self-validity and reliability parameters for the questionnaire list.

Table 2 The validity and reliability parameters for the questionnaire list

Variable	Main Dimension	Sub-Dimension	alpha coefficient	Self-Validity coefficient
Independent	Women's Representation	SexOri	0.762	0.873
		DomPor	0.827	0.909
		SubNat	0.872	0.935
		WkBeh	0.751	0.869
	Women's Representation		0.927	0.963
Mediating	Culture	PowDis	0.823	0.907
		UncAvo	0.760	0.872
		IndCol	0.727	0.853
		MasFem	0.719	0.847
		LtO	0.879	0.937
	Culture		0.942	0.972
Dependent	PurchDec		0.968	0.990

As illustrated in table 2, for the dimensions of the independent variable (Women's Representation), the values of the alpha reliability coefficient ranged from 0.751 to 0.872 and the values of the self-validity coefficient

ranged from 0.869 to 0.935. Also, for the main dimension (Women's Representation), the coefficients of reliability and self-validity were 0.927 and 0.963 respectively. Thus, high degrees of reliability and validity were recorded for the main dimension (Women's Representation) and its sub-dimensions. Moreover, for the dimension (PurchDec), a high degree of reliability and validity is recorded where the reliability and the self-validity coefficients were 0.968 and 0.990 respectively. Finally, for the dimensions of the mediating variable (Culture), the value of the alpha reliability coefficient ranged from 0.719 to 0.879, and the self-validity coefficients ranged from 0.847 to 0.937. Also, the alpha coefficient of the mediating variable (Culture) was high, indicating a high degree of reliability and validity, as the value of the reliability coefficient was 0.942 and the value of the self-validity coefficient was 0.972. From the above, we conclude that the validity and reliability coefficients are high for the study's dimensions and variables, which indicates a high degree of reliability in the measures used later in the statistical analysis.

Data Analysis and the Results

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Table (3) illustrates the demographic characteristics of the sample. According to the result, the number of females is higher than the number of males for those dealing with cosmetics companies in Mansoura city. Also, the monthly income categoh ry less than 3000 EGP pounds is the highest for the monthly income of those dealing with cosmetics companies in Mansoura city, followed by the income group from 6000 to less than 9000 pounds. Moreover, the age group from 20 years to less than 30 years is the highest for the age, followed by the age group less than 20 years.

Table 3 Demographic characteristics of the sample

Demographic characteristics		Count	Table N %	Rank
Sex	Male	66	17.6%	2
	Female	308	82.4%	1
	Total	374		
Monthly income	Less than 3000 EGP	125	33.4%	1
	From 3000 less than 6000 EGP	85	22.7%	3
	From 6000 less than 9000 EGP	92	19.3%	2
	From 9000 EGP or more	72	24.6%	4
	Total	374		
Age group	Less than 20 years	120	32.1%	2
	From 20 less than 30 years	196	52.4%	1
	From 30 less than 40 years	50	13.4%	3
	From 40 years and over	8	2.1%	4
	Total	374		

Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Study Variables:

By computing the mean and standard deviation of the study's variables and dimensions, the descriptive analysis presented below describes the variables and dimensions of the study. This descriptive analysis includes a presentation of the results of the awareness of the study sample on the dimensions and variables of the study. Tables 4 and 5 show the arithmetic averages and standard deviations.

The independent variable's dimensions, as shown in table 4's results, and the values of the arithmetic mean ranged from 3.467 to 4.052. The arithmetic mean values ranged from 3.471 to 3.954 for the mediating variable and its dimensions. The arithmetic mean for the dimension (PurchDec) was 3.645. As a result, the study sample tends to accept all dimensions and variables when the level of approval was universal (agree).

Table 4 Descriptive analysis of the study's dimensions and variables

Variable	Main Dimension	Sub-Dimension	No. of items	Mean	Standard deviation	Approval degree
Independent	**Women's Representation**	SexOri	4	3.467	0.718	agree
		DomPor	4	4.052	0.693	agree
		SubNat	3	3.858	0.748	agree
		WkBeh	8	3.766	0.684	agree
	Women's Representation		19	3.766	0.602	agree
Mediating	**Culture**	PowDis	1	3.471	0.823	agree
		UncAvo	1	3.954	0.694	agree
		IndCol	1	3.492	0.695	agree
		MasFem	1	3.812	0.778	agree
		LtO	1	3.577	0.738	agree
	Culture		5	3.57	0.65	Agree
Dependent	**PurchDec**		4	3.645	0.603	agree

Testing the Study Hypotheses

1- **The first main hypothesis (H1)**

For testing H1, testing each sub-hypothesis of H1 (H1a, H1b, and H1c) was done in the illustration in the next sub-sections.

A- **The First Sub-hypothesis (H1a)**

H1a: It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation between Women's Representation and the PurchDec. To test the validity of this hypothesis, statistical analysis was conducted using the Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Where, Women's Representation and its dimensions represented the independent variable, while the dependent variable was the PurchDec. The statistical results were illustrated in table 5.

Table 5 the correlation coefficient between Women's Representation in the advertising message and Purchase Decision

Dimension / variable	SexOri	Dom-Por	SubNat	WkBeh	Women's Representation	Pur-chDec
SexOri	1					
DomPor	0.666**	1				
SubNat	0.736**	0.514**	1			
WkBeh	0.727**	0.448**	0.529**	1		
Women's Representation	0.835**	0.554**	0.721**	0.666**	1	
PurchDec	0.735**	0.815**	0.708**	0.695**	0.845**	1

** Statistically significant at a significance level less than 0.01

According to the correlation coefficients that are shown in table 5, they indicate that the existence of a strong positive significant correlation between the independent variable, Women's Representation, and the dependent variable PurchDec, where the value of the correlation coefficient was 0.845 with a statistically significant value 0.01. Moreover, there is a significant strong positive correlation between PurchDec and the dimensions (Sexual orientation, Domestic Portrayal, Submissive/Subservient Nature, Weak behavior) where correlation coefficients were 0.735, 0.815, 0.708, 0.695, respectively, at a 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the first sub-hypothesis H1a is correct and thus: "There is a statistically significant correlation between the dependent variable (Purchase Decision) and the independent variable (Women's Representation in the advertising message) and its dimensions.

A- **The Second Sub-hypothesis (H1b)**

H1b: It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation between Women's Representation in the advertising message and the culture. To test the validity of this hypothesis, the researchers conducted a statistical analysis using the Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variable Women's Representation and its dimensions (DomPor, SexOri, SubNat, WkBeh), and the (Culture) and its dimensions (PowDis, UncAvo, IndCol, MasFem, LtO) as a mediating varit able and this is evident in table 6.

The correlation coefficients are shown in table 6 indicate that:

- For the main dimension (Women's Representation), there is high positive correlation between this dimension and the main dimension (culture) where the correlation coefficient was 0.784. Also, there is a medium positive

Table 6 The correlation coefficient between Women's Representation in the advertising message and Culture

Dimension / variable		Dimensions of Culture					Culture
LtO		MasFem	IndCol	UncAvo	PowDis		
Women's Representation	SexOri	0.457**	0.304**	0.253**	0.375**	0.430**	0.385**
	DomPor	0.385**	0.500**	0.712**	0.626**	0.333**	0.500**
	SubNat	0.509**	0.336**	0.312**	0.427**	0.360**	0.712**
	WkBeh	0.658**	0.479**	0.454**	0.594**	0.422**	0.626**
Women's Representation		0.606**	0.515**	0.547**	0.632**	0.430**	0.784**

** Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

correlation between this dimension and the dimensions (long-term orientation, MasFem, IndCol, UncAvo, and PowDis) where the correlation coefficients were 0.606, 0.515, 0.547, 0.632, and 0.430 respectively and at a statistically significant level 0.01 for all.

- For the dimension Sexual Orientation, there is a high and significant positive correlation between this dimension and the mediating variable Culture, where the correlation coefficient was 0.384 at a 0.01 level of significant. In addition, there is a medium significant correlation between this dimension and dimensions (LtO, PowDis, UncAvo, MasFem), where the values of correlation coefficients were 0.457, 0.340, 0.375, 0.375 respectively. Furthermore, a low correlation between this dimension and dimension Individualism/Collectivism where the correlation coefficient was 0.253 at a 0.01 level of significant.
- For the dimension DomPor, there is a high and significant positive correlation between this dimension and the variable (Culture), where the correlation coefficient was 0.500 at a 0.01 level of significant. Moreover, there is a high and significant correlation between this dimension and the dimension (IndCol, UncAvo, MasFem, LtO), where the correlation coefficients were 0.712, 0.626, 0.500, 0.385, respectively. In addition, there was a medium correlation between this dimension and the dimension PowDis where the correlation coefficient was 0.333 at a 0.01 level of significant.
- For the dimension SubNat, there is a high positive correlation between this dimension and the variable Culture, where the correlation coefficient was 0.712 at a 0.01 level of significant. Besides, there is a high positive correlation between this dimension and the dimension LtO where the correlation coefficient was 0.509 and a medium positive correlation between this dimension and dimensions (UncAvo, PowDis, MasFem, IndCol) where the correlation coefficients were 0.427, 0.360, 0.336, 0.312, respectively, at a 0.01 level of significant.
- For the dimension WkBeh, there is a high positive correlation between this dimension and the variable Culture, where the correlation coefficient was 0.626 at a 0.01 level of significant. Furthermore, there is a high correlation between this dimension and the dimensions (LtO, UncAvo) where the correlation coefficients were 0.685, 0.594 respectively. In addition, there is a medium positive correlation between this dimension and dimensions (MasFem, IndCol, PowDis) where the correlation coefficients were 0.479, 0.454, 0.422 respectively at a 0.01 level of significant.

Consequently, the second sub-hypothesis H1b is correct and thus: "There is a statistically significant correlation between the variable (Women's Representation in the advertising message) and its dimensions, and the (Culture) and its dimensions as a mediating variable.

A- **The Third Sub-hypothesis (H1c)**

H1c: It is expected that there is a statistically significant correlation between the dependent variable (Purchase Decision) and the mediating variable (Culture) and its dimensions. the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship, and this is evident in Table 7.

The illustrated correlation coefficients in table 7 indicate that, at a 0.01 level of statistically significant, there were positive correlation coefficients between the dependent variable (PurchDec) and the mediating variable (Culture) and its dimensions. Whereas, the relation was strong between PurchDec and the Culture where the correlation coefficient was

Table 7 The correlation coefficient between (Purchase Decision) and (Culture) and its dimensions

Dimension	LtO	Mas-Fem	IndCol	UncAvo	PowDis	Culture	Purch-Dec
LtO	1						
MasFem	0.492**	1					
IndCol	0.631**	0.611**	1				
UncAvo	0.590**	0.605**	0.552**	1			
PowDis	0.578**	0.596**	0.539**	0.588**	1		
Cul	**0.666	**0.674	**0.662	**0.736	**0.660	1	
PurchDec	0.735**	0.715**	0.608**	0.695**	0.480**	0.802**	1

** Statistically significant at a significance level less than 0.01

0.802. Also, it is strong between the dependent variable and each of the dimensions (LtO, MasFem, UncAt vo, IndCol) where the correlation coefficients reached 0.735, 0.715, 0.695, 0.608 respectively. While there was a medium correlation between (PurchDec) and (PowDis) where the correlation coefficient was 0.480. Therefore, the hypothesis (H1c) is correct, and thus: There is a statistically significant correlation between the dependent variable (PurchDec) and the mediating variable (Culture) and its dimensions.

Finally, since the sub-hypotheses (H1a, H1b, and H1c) were correct then the first main hypothesis (H1) is correct, and thus: There is a statistically significant correlation relationship between the dimensions of research variables.

2- **The Second Main Hypothesis (H2)**

H2 states that: It is expected that there is a statistically significant effect of Women's Representation in the advertising message on the purchase decis sion through the culture as the mediating variable. To investigate the validity of this hypothesis, the path analysis method was used which in essence relies on multiple regression analysis. A proposed model was formulated for testing this hypothesis as illustrated in figure 1 and AMOS v23 program was used to study the direct and indirect relationships.

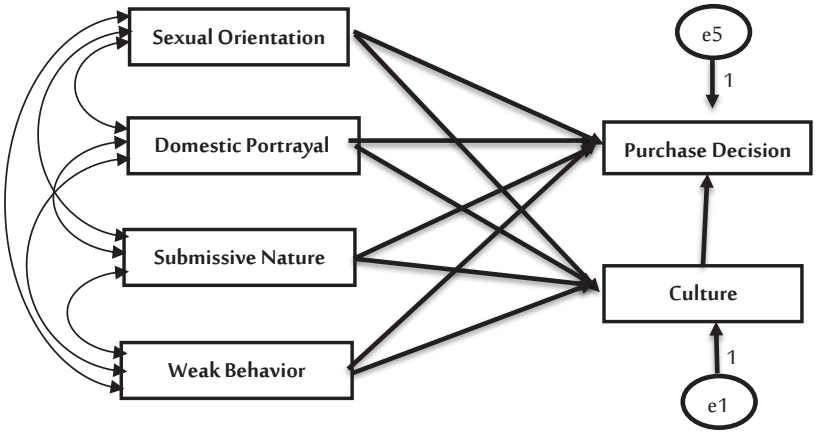

Figure 1 The proposed model for the effect of the dimensions of Women's Representation in the advertising message on purchase decision in the existence of the culture

After applying a path analysis using AMOS for the proposed model, table 8 illustrates the results of the direct, indirect, and total effects of the dimensions of Women's Representation on PurchDec in the exa istence of the culture as a mediating variable.

The results which exist in table 8 indicated that:

- The estimated effects of Domestic Portrayal, Submissive Nature, and Weak Behavior on Culture have reached 0.638, 0.702, and 0.780 respectively, and had a statistically significant level of significance. On the other hand, the estimated effect of Sexual Orientation on Culture has reached 0.305 with no statistically significant.
- The estimated effect of Culture on PurchDec was 0.620 with a statistically significant level of significance.
- The estimated effects of Domestic Portrayal, Submissive Nature, and Weak Behavior on PurchDec have reached 0.699, 0.589, and 0.650 respectively, and had a statistically significant level of significance. On the other hand, the estimated effect of Sexual Orientation on PurchDec has reached 0.376 with no statistically significant.

Table 8 The results of using AMOS for the statistically analyzing the proposed model

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SexOrie → Culture	0.305	0.248	0.045	0.96
DomPor → Culture	0.638	0.258	1.310	0.04
SubNat → Culture	0.702	0.244	4.872	***
WkBeh → Culture	0.780	0.142	8.043	***
Culture → PurchDec	0.620	0.040	8.780	***
SexOri → PurchDec	0.376	0.199	0.399	0.016
DomPor → PurchDec	0.699	0.207	4.827	***
SubNat → PurchDec	0.589	0.201	0.682	0.459
WkBeh → PurchDec	0.650	0.122	0.181	0.856

*** Statistically significant at a level of significance less than 0.001

Depending upon the analysis of the proposed model, a modified model was created by excluding the dimension of Sexual Orientation as illustrated in figure 2.

To identify the level of significance of the direct relationships between the variables of the model, the greatest likelihood method was used, and the significance of the model as a whole was proven as shown in table 9.

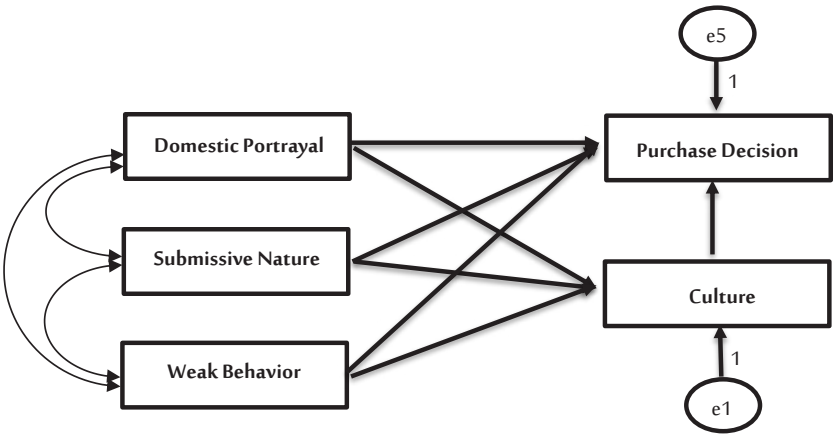

Figure 2 The modified model for the effect of the dimensions of Women's Representation in the advertising message on purchase decision in the existence of the culture

The results of testing the modified model for the effect were illustrated in table 10. Obviously, there is a statistically significant effect for the dimensions (Domestic Portrayal - Submissive Nature - Weak Behavior) on mediating variable (Culture) where the estimated values were 0.788, 0.693, and 0.660 respectively. Besides, there is a statistically significant effect for the dimensions on the dependent variable (PurchDec) where the estimated values were 0.590, 0.615, and 0.737 respectively

Table 9 Indicators of statistically significance for the modified model

Indicators	Standard value	Calculated value
Chi square standard (p-value)	0.05 >	0.000
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.90 <	1
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.95 <	1
Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)	0.06 >	0

Table 10 The results of testing the modified model

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
DomPor	→	Culture	0.788	0.218	3.609	***
SubNat	→	Culture	0.693	0.149	3.976	***
WkBeh	→	Culture	0.660	0.162	3.462	***
Culture	→	PurchDec	0.482	0.044	8.714	***
DomPor	→	PurchDec	0.590	0.206	1.894	0.028
SubNat	→	PurchDec	0.615	0.129	2.447	0.014
WkBeh	→	PurchDec	0.737	0.195	8.394	***

***Statistically significant at a level of significance less than 0.001

The direct, indirect, and total effects for the modified model was illustrated in table 11. Clearly, there is a statistically significant effect from mediating culture between the proposed dimensions of Women's Representation and PurchDec. Concerning the indirect effect, it was found that the positive significant effect of Women's Representation dimensions on PurchDec increasses when mediating (culture), as the increase in indirect paths coefficients ranged between (0.301 to 0.467). Therefore, the second main hypothesis is partially accepted.

Table 11 The direct, indirect, and total effects for the modified model

Variable			Parameter value of		
independent	mediator	dependent	A direct path	An indirect path	A total path
DomPor	Culture	**PurchDec**	0.390	0.463	0.854***
SubNat			0.315	0.467	0.782***
WkBeh			0.637	0.301	0.938***

Discussion

For the variable Women's Representation, the mean was the highest and registered at 3.747. Therefore, the approval degree was Agree on the five-point Likert scale. Consequently, the study sample, in general, tended to accept this variable. Besides, there was a strong positive correlation between this variable and the dependent variable (PurchDec) where the value of the correlation coefficient was 0.845 at a statistically significant level.

There was a significant positive correlation between the dimensions (SexOri, DomPor, SubNat, WkBeh) and the dependent variable (PurchDec). The correlation relationship came strong with the dimensions

(DomPor, SexOri, SubNat, WkBeh) respectively, where the values of correlation coefficients reached 0.815, 0.735, 0.708, and 0.695 at 0.01 level. Therefore, the first sub-hypothesis (H1a) is correct and thus: "There is a statistically significant correlation between the variable (Women's Representation in the advertising message and its dimensions) and the (Purchase Decision) as a dependent variable.

Female participants' opinions toward purchases were negatively impacted by "female sexuality" questions, which included questions about specific body parts, wanted objects/sexual objects, and sexy/thin clothing. The findings corroborate earlier research by Liu et al. (2009) and Mayer et al. (2019), which found that respondents who identified as female are less likely than respondents who identified as male to be attracted to overtly sexist advertisements featuring female models, regardless of the country under study. This is true because women are more sensitive to sexuality-related issues and are offended by overly sexualized media. It is still taboo in Egyptian society to talk about issues with overt sexual implications, thus this is a topical subject. This has been demonstrated in various studies, proving the cliche "sex sells." According to Zank et al. (2005), nudity and other sexual appeals have the best power to draw attention and thus frequently boost purchase intent. There is an increase in the usage of sex appeals in advertisements as a result of these commercials' attention-grabbing qualities (Reichert & Carpenter, 2004).

Because they perceive women as a threat at work, men attempt to force women to stay at home. Men allocate management roles only to male coworkers, are less willing to work for female managers, and are less likely to hire women for clerical jobs, according to Hoover et al. (2019). Men try to restore their control when they feel threatened (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). Because they still associate women with home duties, male participants and the group as a whole have a non-negative readiness to buy.

The idea that women have a "subservient/submissive nature," which includes traits like unfocused attention, weak posture, feminine touch, passive behaviour, being portrayed as younger than men, weak physical positioning, physical ageing being taboo, and successful women being sexually attractive, has a negative impact on their willingness to engage in sexual activity. This is due to the misconception that portraying women as weak and deferential to men in the twenty-first century. In every community, women are currently breaking records and opening doors. However, if a commercial portrays women as weak or deferential to men, it will surely be seen as clichéd and may generate unfavourable audience reaction. Due to significant public protest, advertising has been prohibited in a number of situations. Examples include a 2019 Philadelphia Cream Cheese commercial that implies only women are capable of raising children, and a 2019 Volkswagen eGolf commercial that portrays women as passive while men are shown in daring scenarios (2019). Both adverts were outlawed by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) for stereotypically portraying women. Women are less inclined to purchase a product if they are depicted in stereotypical images or as sexual objects, the study finds. As a result, marketers can design commercials that positively image women, such as showing them making self-assured decisions. If people view women in strong roles who are equally burdened with males, men are also more likely to buy the product. To improve the appeal of the advertisement to men and encourage them to make a purchase, she might, however, be dressed in a sensual costume. Showing women in the same light as men will assist in the development of a society where both sexes have equal standing.

The results of the current investigation demonstrated that culture significantly affects the PurchDec (PowDis) (0.620). This result is consistent with those of (Gao et al., 2018), who discovered that PowDis had a negative impact on the quality of the products and services, although Correia et al. (2011) discovered positive benefits. It is theoretically plausible that PowDis, which refers to the tolerance for power disparities while holding grievances or resentments, has a favourable effect on quality awareness. For instance, 51% of customers never return after receiving subpar customer service or making a horrible purchase (New- Voice-Media, 2016). Customers with higher PowDis are more likely to be reserved, put up with poorer quality

goods and services (e.g., complain less), and never come back (i.e., the bigger impact of PowDis on PDAs). This outcome is in line with that of Choi et al. (2020), who discovered that PowDis and LtO had far stronger positive effects on PDAs among Chinese amusement park guests as demonstrated by group invariance model analysis.

The current study's findings revealed a strong, statistically significant correlation between the independent variable, women's representation in advertising messages, and the mediating variable, culture. The correlation coefficient for these two variables was (0.784), which is a statistically significant value (0.01). The dimensions of the independent variable "Women's Representation in the Advertising Message" and the dimensions "UncAvo, Long-Term Orientation, Individualism/Collectivism, MasFem," where the values of correlation coefficients reached (0.632, 0.606,0.547, 0.515) respectively at (0.01) level, exhibit a strong and significant positive correlation. The independent variable "Women's Representation in the Advertising Message" and the dimension "Power Distance" also have a medium and substantial link, with values of the correlation coefficients reaching (0.430) at (0.01) level. This result conflicts with a study by Stankovi et al. (2018), which indicated that advertising as a vehicle for marketing communication has a significant impact on how women are portrayed in current commercials and in society. The survey responses from consumers support the notion that they are aware of such hazardous activity and do not, in general, approve of it. This involves, among other things, inaccurate representations of a woman's body as well as how it is used and objectified in order to arouse sex. In this way, the main finding of the study was confirmed: contemporary representations of women in advertisements harm their self-perception and self-confidence and create a negative image of women in society based on aspects of their appearance, role, and values that they have traditionally assumed.

The findings of (Salem et al., 2020), which revealed that female Palestinian customers' perceptions of female exploitation in advertisements have a negative impact on their purchase decisions, are likewise in conflict with these results. Additionally, advertising was viewed negatively since it transgressed community values without the marketer's knowledge or intention of doing so. In essence, advertising's function as a sales motivator was rendered useless since it was incompatible with the dominant civilizations' cultures. Cultural norms and societal expectations have an impact on how consumers perceive exploitation. What is absolutely acceptable in one location or culture may not be accepted at all in another. These results are in line with those of earlier studies (Gallagher, 2015; Alpay et al., 2015; Gulati, 2014; Mehmood & Malik, 2014), which discovered that the existence of negative portrayals of women in advertising and its harmful effects on society.

The findings of the present study revealed a considerable strong positive correlation between the mediating variable "Culture" and the dependent variable "PurchDec," with a correlation coefficient of (0.802), a statistically significant value of (0.01). The dependent variable and the dimensions (PowDis, UncAvo, IndCol, MasFem, and LtO) have a substantial positive connection (PurchDec) The dimensions (LtO, MasFem, UncAvo, and IndCol) each showed a substantial association link, with correlation coefficient values reaching (0.735, 0.715, 0.695, 0.608). The dimension "Power Distance" and the PurchDec variable have a moderately significant link at the (0.01) level, with correlation coefficient values of (0.480) at this level. The results of the (Asamoah & Chovancová, 2016) study, which found no significant associations between respondents' cultural inclinations and sex, are at odds with this conclusion. P-values more than 0.05 were found for each of the five questions about cultural traits of Ghanaian clients, indicating that they were all statistically significant. Concerning the indirect effect, the current study found that there is a positive significant effect of Women's Representation in the advertising message dimensions on purchase decision increases when mediating "culture", as the increase in indirect paths coefficients ranged between (0.301 to 0.467).

Conclusions and Future Researchers

The major goal of this study is to examine how culture plays a mediating role in the link between women's representation in Mansoura city's advertising message and purchasing decisions (PurchDec). To accomplish the main goal of this paper, a questionnaire was employed in conjunction with the descriptive approach. In contrast, 374 people—the population of all cosmetics clients in Mansoura city—were the sample size that was employed. The direct and indirect links between the independent and dependent variables were examined using the path analysis method. The study discovered a considerable strong positive association between the dependent variable (Purchase Decision) and the independent variable (Women's Representation in the Advertising Message). Additionally, there is a substantial positive correlation between the mediating variable and the dependent variable (PurchDec) (Culture). Although the majority of respondents believed that such a characteristic would not affect their decision to purchase, the fact that the majority of respondents agreed with the assertion that the product would sell better if it were marketed by a gorgeous and attractive girl presents a paradox. Unfortunately, advertisers overly rely on the idea that "sex sells," therefore it can be said that the strategy of contemporary advertising is increasingly founded on the idea that "the end justifies the means" based on the instances from practise that were examined in this study. Nevertheless, changing the means and their uses is what culture is all about. Such a strategy, as well as the idea of feminist advertising, which strives to inspire women, boost their confidence, and dispel misconceptions about them, should be adopted by all advertisers. Companies need to recognise the enormous responsibility they bear towards women consumers and approach that responsibility as a humane challenge in shaping their personalities and social positions. Doing so will inspire them to act morally, fostering a healthy advertising environment and, in turn, a healthy society.

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