



Understanding the Influence of Perceived Authenticity of Femvertising on Consumer Boycott Intentions: A Moderated Mediation Model of Consumers' Extrinsic Attributions and Power Distance

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Abstract

Building on attribution theory, the study proposes that consumers' extrinsic attributions towards femvertising mediates the relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' boycott intention. Furthermore, the study theoretically proposes that power distance as a cultural norms moderates the direct perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' extrinsic attributions towards femvertising. Finally the study contends power distance also moderates the indirect relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' boycott intention via consumers' extrinsic attributions towards femvertising. Using data collected from the 413 consumers and analysing using structural equation modelling in Mplus (8.9), the results reveals that all the hypothesized relationship were supported. In so doing the study contributes to the nascent yet growing literature on femvertising as well as offer novel practical insights for the managers and organizations.

Keywords: femvertising, extrinsic attributions, consumers' boycott intention, power distance, structural equation modelling

1. Introduction

In the modern times of socially conscious consumers, advertising serves as one of the key mediums in creating awareness about prevailing social issues, encouraging moral cognitive formation and behaviours, thereby, acting as crucial tool for bringing constructive social change. Although through the advertising imageries, brands stand by the social issues to speak on behalf of the conscious consumers, still not all the consumers are convinced of brands motivation to work for social wellbeing. As portrayal of social issues (like gender, racism, environmental concerns etc.) are observed as double-edged sword, having potential to both educate or polarize the consumers because they try to distinguish between legitimate efforts of the brands activism and the brands taking advantage of sustainable development movements.

One of the recent trends gaining momentum in advertising is the employment of female empowerment (i.e. femvertising) in brand communications due to growing feminist activism, transition in social environment and conscious capitalism (Varghese & Kumar, 2022). Even though, more studies have now shown how femvertising boosts women's self-esteem and increases their likability towards such adverts (Feng et al., 2019), femvertising still serves the brands' strategic objectives. Brands are encouraging empowerment through consumerism by exploiting female empowerment themes and a lack of authenticity (Qiao & Wang, 2019). Due to companies' lack of action, this is known in the field of advertising as "woke" or "fempower-washing" (Sterbenk et al, 2021; Sobande, 2019).

The fundamental essence of equality and empowerment for women has been suppressed by the political use of feminist discourse in brand advertising, hence influencing the brands image (Windels, et al., 2020). However, femvertising without either a broad, change-oriented objective or an authenticity in the depiction of all feminism-related issues might undermine corporate activism's aims and hinder the significant advancement of the feminist movement (Um, 2022; Varghese & Kumar, 2020).

Consumers who are sceptical of the authenticity of brand's activism may assume that brand is conveying social issues in marketing communications because of external factors like a desire for positive publicity or an attempt to capitalise on a trend. These are the extrinsic attributions consumers associate with the brands motives when they question the authenticity of the brands communications. As a result, businesses must demonstrate their commitment to and sincerity about the topics they claim to support in order to avoid triggering consumer extrinsic attributions and to maintain their consumers' trust. Extrinsic attributions of consumer towards brands activism refers to assumptions of consumers about brands social responsibility initiatives based on external factors like profit motives or brand reputation.

Extrinsic attributions of consumers are of prime importance as, such attributions may harm the brands reputation and long-term profits. Having said that extrinsic attributions may affect brand and nonbrand related outcomes. In this regard, based on attribution theory, the current study aims to close the gap by empirically examining the influence of consumers' perceptions of femvertising's authenticity on issue support behaviour (non-brand related outcome) and boycott intentions (brand related outcome). Issue support behaviour is the intention of a person to engage in the behaviour encouraged by an advertising campaign centred on a social issue. Also, when businesses provide additional support for a social cause, consumers may assume that the brand have their personal motives to support the issue.

This could convince consumers to shift their own "behavioural responses," increasing the possibility of distrust towards brands motives and hence mitigating their support towards the issue depicted in advertising, as consumers may assume that the brands efforts are the commodification of feminist centred advertising, or excessive utilization of feminist themes may dilute or rob the political spirit behind the gender empowering issues. Conversely, boycott intention is the purposeful selection of a product or service to support a company that expresses an opinion on social or political problems (Hong & Li, 2021; Neilson, 2010; Xu et al., 2021). The boycott intention of a customer is essential since it is expressive in nature, acting as a means of conveying emotions and attitudes, enhancing brand reputation, and positively affecting financial metrics like revenues (Hong & Li, 2021; Paek & Nelson, 2009).

Scholars have frequently stressed the significance of cultural differences in understanding gender-role depictions. Hofstede's cultural dimensions are the most frequently utilised cultural model in advertising research (De Mooji and Hofstede 2010; Hofstede 2001). It gives group members a lens through which to frame events and experiences, construct opinions and cognitive categories (Hong & Chiu, 2001; Zang, 2017). Multiple studies indicated that it is critical to assess cultural values at the person level in order to tie them

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to outcomes at the individual level and to determine how differently respondents score on the pertinent cultural dimensions (Clugston et al. 2000; Yoo et al., 2011). Figure 1 represents the theoretical model of the study.

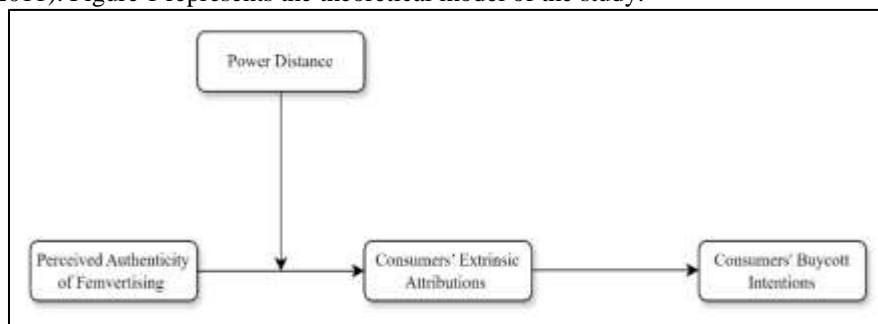


Figure 1: Theoretical Model

2. Theory and hypothesis

The individuals have tendency to give meaning to the incidents in this vein referring to attribution theory, determined by Heider (1958) “a theory that describes the cognitive processes by which people determine the causes of behavior and events in their world” (Mullen & Johnson, 2013, p. 174). The interpretation of the events or incidents depends upon the causal inferences, which play a significant role in formation of reactions to these behaviors or events (Chang et al., 2015). Research stated that when consumers evaluate corporate social efforts, they not only perceive what the company is doing but also make cognitive inferences why the company is putting efforts (Klein & Dawar 2004; Mahmood & Aslam, 2018; Lee et al. 2019).

Attribution theory is mainly used in consumer research with respect to understand, underlying psychological mechanisms as consumers gather information and develop causal judgements (Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley & Michela, 1980). For example, if the consumers have a general disbelief towards advertising, then they may attribute such advertising as manipulative and for profit (Habel et al., 2016; Pai et al., 2015; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). When consumers draw attributions about the company motives, it impacts consequent brand related attitudes, evaluation and purchasing intentions (Campbell & Kirmani 2000; Groza et al, 2011).

2.1. Relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and extrinsic attributions

The perception of authenticity originates from the concepts like genuineness, reality, and truth (Duffy, 2013; Holt, 2002; Nunes et al., 2021). Authenticity is observed as a predominant concept in advertising industry as it is considered a key driving factor for effective advertising. In the given study perceived authenticity refers to the sincerity of the brands communication, as understood by the viewers. Prior research denotes that the authenticity perception of advertising positively influences the brands image and its reputation which in turn effects the attitudes and purchasing behaviors (Beverland et al., 2008; Corneli & Peter 2017; Miller, 2017; Zafar & Younis, 2020). As perceived authenticity of the advertising better connects the consumers and brands it may help reduce scepticism towards the advertising claims (Campbell & Kirmani 2000; Kim et al., 2021; Nunes et al., 2021). As previously a well-established linked has been created between perceived authenticity and effectiveness of advertising (Shoenberger et al., 2020; Pattuglia et al., 2015). This study takes a step further by examining perceived authenticity of ad with respect to consumers attributions towards female empowering ads, as these perceptions are primarily subjective and complex.

As to be successful, the perceived authenticity of the advertising communication plays an imperative role for brands. Therefore, in corporate social advertising, the consumers attributions towards company’s motives are reliant on the authenticity perceptions (Garcia de los Salmones & Perez, 2018). Similarly, advertisement which stand by social issues like gender equality, environmental concerns or other pressing issues in their messages are likely to receive certain attributions for their motives (Yu et al., 2019). Prior studies have found consumers initiate an attributional process to brand communication, this begins with extrinsic attributions, which means that the consumers assume that advertisers have their personal motives (i.e. increased sales, building reputation etc) when they support social issues in ads. Consumers simultaneously attribute the company motives as positive and negative, but if the negative attributions (extrinsic attributions) overpower the positive ones, it would possibly have negative attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the brand (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Foreh & Grier, 2003)

Moreover, these companies may be viewed by the consumers as untruthful and inauthentic, thus their support towards social issues is perceived as a manipulative tool for profitability (Pai et al., 2015). In accordance with the findings of a range of research, customers have a likelihood to cast doubt on the authenticity of the assertions that are made by corporations as part of their demonstration of social and environmental issues (Magee, 2022; Pittman et al., 2022; Yoo et al., 2006). In the same vein female empowering messages are also considered as prosocial brand communication that have the likelihood of causing consumers to doubt the company motives behind the initiative (Hainneville et al., 2022; Pérez and Gutiérrez, 2017). As consumers have intuitive belief that such advertising initiatives have objectives to enhance sales and publicity it could be perceived as being manipulative (Mantovani et al., 2017; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988).

Making the overall company’s social efforts as suspicious and ambiguous, the consumers would lead to negative evaluation of the social issue and brand related outcomes (Vredenburg et al., 2020). In addition, brands that support relevant issues through advertising have a good relationship with the e-word of mouth intentions of customers, which ultimately results in an increase in purchase intent, loyalty, and brand image. (Chu et al., 2022). The results also showed that consumers' trust and attitudes toward the social issue-related content of the corporate communications are facilitated by message authenticity (Pérez et al., 2020; Ratnakaran & Edward, 2019). As per the above discussion we can hypothesize that the relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising message and boycott intentions will be influenced by the attributions consumer associate with the brands motives behind these efforts.

H1: The relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and Boycott intentions will be mediated by consumers’ extrinsic attributions towards femvertising.

2.2. Moderating role of Power Distance

Despite substantial research on cultural values in the field of advertising, femvertising rarely takes these aspects into account. The way femvertising portrays empowered women is based on social processes that give women a sense of strength that motivates them to pursue their goals without being limited by gender stereotypes that dictate how particular roles are acceptable for them. (Duan, 2020). Cultural values have an impact on how consumers perceive female role depictions in femvertising, whether they are stereotyped or empowering. Numerous studies have shown that cultural values affect how consumers respond to representations of gender roles in advertising (Soares, et al., 2007; Tripathi et al., 2022; Zawisza & Cinnirella 2010). The cultural framework created by Hofstede (2001) is one that is frequently used by advertising scholars. Although being developed in a national culture for a work-related setting, this framework has been widely employed in marketing and advertising research (An & Kim., 2007; Eisend, 2019). Several authors have argued that it is crucial to evaluate cultural values at the individual level in order to link cultural values to person-level outcomes and to discover how differently respondents score on the relevant cultural dimensions (Lee & Chang, 2023; Yoo et al., 2011).

As it is imperative in understanding how individuals' cultural values influence their attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Yoo et al., 2011). Power distance one of the dimensions from the Hofstede's cultural framework have been found to have close theoretical significance and relevance in terms of attitude towards gender role (Glick 2006; Hofstede 2001). Power distance refers to the degree to which people "accept that power was distributed unequally" in a community (Hofstede, 2001, p. 79). People who hold strong beliefs in power distance are more likely to recognise, accept, and legitimise unequal power distribution and classification within a social hierarchy. It shows an individual's normative view in the function of power disparity and hierarchy in society is dependent upon his power distance cultural value (Han et al., 2017; Oyserman, 2006). Individuals high on power distance culture prioritise the opinions that are akin to their values and resist the campaigns advocating gender equality or women empowerment (Jung & Kellaris, 2006). On the contrary, Individuals who are low on power distance culture attribute gender equality as their core value and strive for supporting women empowerment campaigns through advertising.

According to attribution theory, individuals' construe attributes towards any situation, event, and communication by analysing the internal causes that shapes and develops their favourable and unfavourable reaction towards the situation, event, and communication. Drawing on attribution theory, the study contends that individuals' high on power distance culture may consider femvertising as a negative campaign as it contradict with their core cultural values and they may resist this campaign. On the other hand, individuals' low on power distance culture may consider femvertising as a positive and authentic campaign and support it as it aligns with their core values of gender equality. Building on these arguments, the study postulate the following hypothesis

H2: Power distance moderates the relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and extrinsic attributions toward femvertising such that the relationship is strong for consumers low on power distance as compared to the consumers high on power distance.

Perceived authenticity of femvertising, as previously suggested (Hypothesis 1), negatively affects consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising, which then in turn negatively influence consumers' boycott intentions. In other words, the impact of perceived authenticity of femvertising on consumers' boycott intentions is manifested through consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising. Besides that, in conjunction with hypothesis 2, high power distance stifles the link between perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' boycott intentions via consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising; thus, power distance functions as a crucial contingency of the indirect link between perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' boycott intentions via consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising. Consequently, the research study suggests a case of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015), in which power distance interacts with perceived authenticity of femvertising to moderate perceived authenticity of femvertising's indirect (via consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising) impact on consumers' boycott intentions. As a result, the study proposes the following hypothesis.

H3: Power distance moderates the indirect relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and boycott intentions via extrinsic attributions towards femvertising such that the indirect relationship is strong for consumers low on power distance as compared to the consumers high on power distance.

3. Methods

3.1. Procedure for data collection

The process of data collection involved the utilization of an online social media platform (fb, WhatsApp, etc.), whereby invitations were sent out to solicit the participation of individuals in the survey. In accordance with the scholarly work of Abitbol and Sternadori (2020), the participants were provided with a comprehensive introduction to the concept of femvertising, as explicated through an academically grounded definition. The study obtained a response rate of 75.5%, with 453 completed surveys out of 600 distributed. Data entry was conducted using Statistical software SPSS version 28. After collecting data, 23 responses with missing values were excluded through a screening process. The study used the Mahalanobis distance squared test with AMOS 28 to detect outliers, finding 17 responses that deviated from the norm. These were deemed inappropriate by respondents and excluded from the dataset, resulting in a final sample size of 413 responses for analyzing the proposed hypothesis.

The final sample was comprised of 53% men and 47% women. The average age is 30.6 years of the survey informants. In response to the survey, it was found that 43.3% of the participants held bachelor's degrees, 32.7% possessed master's degrees, 4.1% had PhDs, and the remaining individuals held intermediate or lower level degrees. As the current research study collected self-reported data from the customers which is single time point same source data so the CMV may emerge as potential issue in the data. The study employed Harman single-factor test and CFA marker variable technique to analyse the potential threat of common method variance. The results of Harman single-factor test demonstrates that the current study's data explained 20.53% variance which is well below the threshold criteria of 50%, so common method variance may not be an issue in the data.

3.2. Measures and Variables

3.2.1. Perceived authenticity of femvertising ($\alpha = .91$)

Perceived authenticity of femvertising was assessed adapting a five-item scale developed and validated by Shoenberger et al. (2020). “The advertising messaging was authentic” and “The advertising message seemed genuine” are the sample items. Intrinsic attribution towards femvertising”.

3.2.2. Extrinsic attributions toward femvertising ($\alpha = .88$)

Extrinsic attributions toward femvertising was assessed by adapting a three-item scale developed and validated by Vlachos et al. (2013) “The advertising engages in socially responsible initiatives because it feels competitive pressures to engage in such activities” was a sample item.

3.2.3. Buycott intention ($\alpha = .83$)

Buycott intention was assessed by adapting three-item scale developed by Peak and Nelson (2009). Sample item includes “I intend to make a special effort to buy from brands showing female empowering ads”. The complete compilation of all remaining items related to the different measures can be found in Appendix A.

3.2.4. Power distance ($\alpha = .93$)

Power distance was measured by using a five-item scale proposed by Yoo et al. (2011) “People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in higher positions” and “People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently” were sample items.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1. Means and Correlation

Table 1 demonstrates the means and correlation of the understudy constructs. All the correlations were in the anticipated direction.

Table 1: Means and correlations

Construct	Means	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Perceived authenticity of femvertising	3.07	1.24				
2. Extrinsic attributions towards femvertising	2.82	1.26	-.27**			
3. Buycott intention	3.06	1.18	.21**	-.32**		
4. Power distance	2.84	1.33	-.09	-.09	-.04	

Note. N=413. *p <.05. **p <.01 level (2-tailed). SD = standard deviation.

4.2. Measurement Model

To assess the measurement model and the distinctiveness of the constructs under investigation, the present study conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in Mplus (version 8.9). By utilizing CFA, the study aimed to determine the distinctiveness of each construct and assess the accuracy of the measurement model. Our proposed model consisting on perceived authenticity of femvertising, extrinsic attributions towards femvertising, boycott intentions and power distance demonstrated $-\chi^2(98) = 132.95$, $\chi^2/df = 1.57$, CFI = .99, TLI = .99, SRMR = .03, RMSEA = .03, - a good fit with data. All the indicators demonstrated factor loadings above .60.

4.3. Reliability and Validity

Table 2: Discriminant Validity, Convergent Validity, and Internal Consistency

Construct	1	2	3	4	α	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
1. PAF	.82				.91	.91	.68	.09	.05
2. EAF	-.27	.84			.88	.88	.71	.12	.06
3. BUI	.21	-.32	.79		.83	.83	.63	.10	.04
4. PD	-.09	-.09	-.04	.85	.93	.93	.72	.008	.005

Note. N=413. *p <.05. **p <.01 level (2-tailed). SD = standard deviation. PAF= Perceived authenticity of femvertising, EAF = Extrinsic attributions towards femvertising, BUI = Buycott intention, PD = Power distance, MSV = Maximum shared variance. ASV = Average shared variance. AVE = Average variance extracted and CR = Composite Reliability. Bolded values on the diagonals of columns 1 to 4 are the square root values of AVE. α = Cronbach alpha.

The values of the average extracted variance (AVE), maximum shared variance (MSV), average shared variance, and Cronbach alpha (α) are shown in Table 2. The value of is shown to be bigger than .70 in Table 2. Additionally, it was found that, as shown in Table 2, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each variable was greater than its correlations with other constructs. Furthermore, it is clear that the value of ASV is lower than the value of MSV, and that the values of MSV and ASV are also lower than the value of AVE. Acceptable levels of internal consistency, discriminant validity, and convergent validity were demonstrated by the measuring scales used in the current study for the variables being studied.

4.4. Hypotheses testing results

The hypotheses presented in the study were evaluated using structural equation modeling (SEM) in Mplus (8.9), the results presented in Table. 3 posited a significant indirect relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and buycott intention via extrinsic attributions towards femvertising ($B = .07$, $SE = .02$, $p < .01$, $95\% CI = [.04, .11]$). This indicates that perceived authenticity of femvertising undermines extrinsic attributions towards femvertising that in turn dampens the influence extrinsic attributions on buycott intention. Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported. The present study employed Mplus 8.9 to test the moderation effect of power distance on the direct relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and extrinsic attributions towards femvertising. The interaction of perceived authenticity of femvertising with power distance ($B = .14$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$, $95\% CI = [.07, .21]$)

demonstrated a significant positive effect on extrinsic attributions. Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported. The graphical depiction of the interaction effect is shown in Figure. 2.

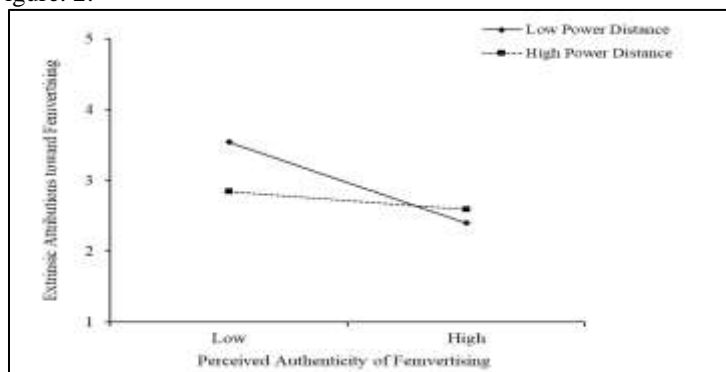


Figure 2: The Moderating effect of Power Distance on the relationship between Perceived Authenticity of Femvertising and Extrinsic Attributions toward Femvertising

The graph was mapped at \pm SD from the mean of power distance (moderator). The simple slope test verified that the negative relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and extrinsic attributions towards femvertising was significant ($B = -.47, SE = .06, p < .01, 95\% CI = [-.59, -.34]$) for the consumers low on power distance and insignificant ($B = -.09, SE = .07, P > .05, CI = [-.23, .05]$) for consumers high on power distance.

The present study tested the conditional indirect effect of power distance on the indirect relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and boycott intentions via extrinsic attributions towards femvertising. The index of moderated mediation was found to be significant for the proposed indirect relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and boycott intentions via extrinsic attributions towards femvertising (index = $-.04, SE = .01, 95\% CI = [-.06, -.02]$). Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported. The conditional indirect effect of perceived authenticity of femvertising and boycott intentions via extrinsic attributions towards femvertising was significant for consumers low on power distance ($B = .13, SE = .03, p < .01, 95\% CI = [.08, .18]$) and insignificant for consumers high on power distance ($B = .02, SE = .02, p > .05, CI = [-.01, -.07]$).

Table 3: Hypotheses Testing Results

	B	SE	95% CI
<i>Direct paths</i>			
PAF \rightarrow EAF	-.28**	.05	-.38, -.18
EAF \rightarrow BUI	-.27**	.05	-.36, -.17
PAF \rightarrow BUI	.06	.04	-.02, .15
<i>Indirect paths</i>			
PAF \rightarrow EAF \rightarrow BUI	.07**	.02	.04, .11
<i>Moderated paths</i>			
PAF *PD \rightarrow EAF	.14**	.04	.07, .21
PAF *PD \rightarrow EAF \rightarrow BUI	-.04**	.01	-.06, -.02

Sample size (N) = 413. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ PAF= Perceived authenticity of femvertising, EAF = Extrinsic attributions toward femvertising, BUI = Boycott intention, PD = Power distance

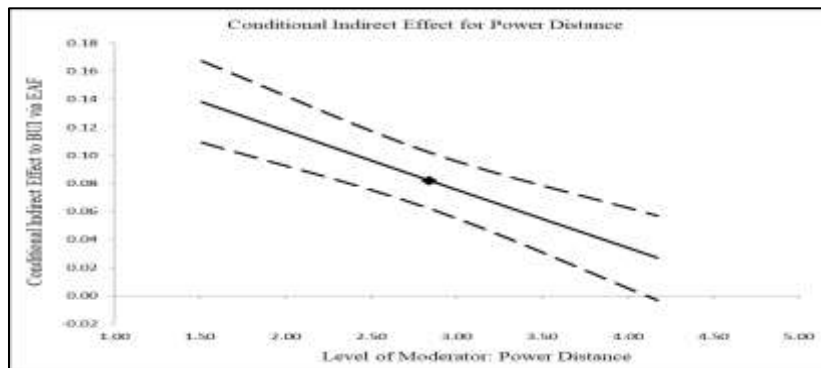


Figure 3: The conditional indirect effect of Power Distance on Boycott Intention via Extrinsic Attributions toward Femvertising

5. Discussion

The study found a significant indirect relationships of perceived authenticity of femvertising and boycott intentions via consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising. These findings imply that when consumers perceive femvertising as lacking authenticity, it not only shapes extrinsic attributions, where consumers question the sincerity and genuineness of brands' motives but also leads

to a diminished likelihood of supporting the social issues promoted in these ads. Furthermore it triggers negative extrinsic attributions, where doubts and skepticism arise regarding the sincerity of the brand's motives. Importantly, these negative attributions, in turn, contribute to a diminished inclination for boycott intentions, indicating a reluctance among consumers to actively support a brand based on its alignment with feminist values.

This points to a potential disconnect between consumers and brands when authenticity is in question, revealing that skepticism about the motives behind femvertising can have tangible consequences on boycott intentions. Marketers and advertisers should heed this insight, recognizing that a perceived lack of authenticity not only impacts immediate attitudes but also influences the broader narrative consumers construct about the brand's intentions. In essence, the finding highlights the pivotal role of authenticity in shaping not only consumer perceptions but also the subsequent behavioral outcomes related to issue support. This finding aligns with prior studies that have underscored the negative emotional responses experienced by consumers because of their extrinsic attributions to corporate social advertising, subsequently shaping their attitudes and behaviours (García -De los Salmones & Perez, 2018; Ginder et al., 2021).

The current research study's finding that power distance moderated the direct relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising and indirect relationships of perceived authenticity with boycott intentions via extrinsic attributions such that the relationship was significant when power distance was high while insignificant when it was low. The finding suggests that the strength of the relationship varies based on the level of power distance within a given cultural context. Interestingly, in societies characterized by high power distance, where hierarchical structures and authority are more deeply ingrained, the negative relationship between perceived authenticity and extrinsic attributions toward femvertising is notably weak. This implies that consumers in such cultures are more likely to form extrinsic attributions, attributing scepticism and doubts about the motives of brands when femvertising is perceived as inauthentic that can hamper consumer purchase related behaviours.

These findings underscore the need for marketers and advertisers to tailor femvertising strategies to align with cultural dynamics, recognizing that the impact of perceived authenticity on extrinsic attributions may vary significantly depending on the prevailing power distance that in turn influence their actions and purchase intentions. In sum, the study provides valuable insights into the interplay between cultural factors, perceived authenticity, and extrinsic attributions, offering a roadmap for crafting culturally sensitive and effective femvertising campaigns that resonate with diverse audiences. These findings are consistent with previous research emphasizing the crucial role of power distance culture in elucidating consumers' attitudes and behaviors, highlighting how power distance culture shapes consumers' perceptions and actions (De Mooij, 2016; Tarhini et al., 2017). Moreover, our findings diverge from existing research by specifically investigating the influence of power distance in the context of femvertising (De Mooij, 2021; Hong & Li, 2020; Tarhini et al., 2017).

Furthermore, by establishing consumers' extrinsic attributions toward femvertising as a mediator in the relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and boycott intentions. The study contributes to existing literature on perceived authenticity of femvertising (Becker-Herby, 2016; Hainneville et al., 202; Varghese & Kumar, 2022), consumers' extrinsic attribution toward femvertising (Ginder et al., 2021; Story & Neves, 2015) and boycott intentions (Hong & Li., 2021; Xu et al., 2022). In doing so, the study provides the process through which perceived authenticity of femvertising affects boycott intentions. Consequently, the study provides valuable insights by proposing a missing mediator that influences brand related outcome (boycott intention) which is of prime importance for brands in long-term.

The present study also contributes to the existing literature by examining the role of consumers' power distance as a contingent factor in the relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and consumers' extrinsic attributions towards femvertising. This investigation expands the boundaries of knowledge pertaining to the conditions under which the relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising and extrinsic attributions is influenced (Bartsch et al., 2020; Moulard et al., 2021). Thus, the study highlights the significance of considering cultural values, specifically power distance, as a determinant of the underlying mechanisms at play in the success of femvertising.

Finally, by establishing the indirect relationship between perceived authenticity of femvertising, and boycott intentions through mediator extrinsic attributions toward femvertising when power distance moderated the relationship. The study contribute to the existing literature on perceived authenticity of femvertising (Becker et al., 2019; Duffy, 2013; Shoenberger et al., 2021), consumers' extrinsic attribution toward femvertising (Lee & Pounders, 2019) and boycott intention (Lee et al., 2019; Yang, 2018) and individual power distance (Chu et al., 2020; Matthes et al., 2016). The study's contribution lies in shedding light on the intricate interplay between cultural values, femvertising authenticity, extrinsic attributions, and boycott intention. By acknowledging and incorporating cultural considerations in advertising strategies, marketers can enhance the effectiveness of their campaigns and establish a stronger connection with consumers across different cultural contexts. This aligns with the broader goal of creating meaningful and authentic advertising experiences that resonate with consumers and drive positive behavioural outcomes.

5.1. Practical Implications

This current research study provides valuable insights for advertisers and marketers, enabling them to optimize the effectiveness of femvertising strategies. Initially, it is imperative for brands to provide comprehensive and unambiguous information pertaining to their internal practices and policies concerning gender equality. By doing so, brands can demonstrate their commitment to promoting gender equality within their structural arrangements. This transparency allows stakeholders, including consumers, employees, and investors, to assess the brand's efforts and hold them accountable for their gender-related initiatives. By providing clear and accessible information, brands can contribute to a more informed and empowered society, where gender equality is prioritized and actively pursued. Brands have the opportunity to effectively demonstrate the impact of their campaigns by presenting concrete evidence of the favorable outcomes stemming from their initiatives. Through the utilization of websites, brands have the ability to furnish quantifiable outcomes, statistical data that accentuates the advancements achieved, and the dissemination of success narratives pertaining to individuals or groups that have experienced positive effects because of the campaign. By adopting this approach, brands have the ability to address the commonly held perceptions of superficiality and effectively showcase the genuine

nature of their endeavors. Upon witnessing the tangible impact of brands' femvertising endeavors, consumers are inclined to discern the genuineness of the underlying cause and become motivated to extend their support towards it.

5.2. Future research directions

As the experience sampling method has gained increasing attention in social science research due to its unique ability to capture day-to-day variations by collecting data at the daily level over a period of five to ten consecutive days (Arndt et al., 2023; Goos & Kaya, 2020; Zirkel et al., 2015). This method provides researchers with valuable insights into how the variables being studied fluctuate over time and the factors contributing to these changes (Arndt et al., 2023; Goos & Kaya, 2020; Zirkel et al., 2015). Given the potential advantages of the experience sampling method, it is recommended that future research adopts this approach to measure moment-to-moment variability in the variables of interest within the proposed model. The future research should look for other potential boundary conditions in addition to power distance, for the relationships. Additionally, future researchers might consider conducting a comparative study on the impacts of femvertising in power distant cultures.

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