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**CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN AND
MEN IN MARKETING IN UKRAINE**

Bachelor's thesis

programme International Business Administration, specialization Marketing

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Tallinn 2022

I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

The document length is 14131 words from the introduction to the end of the conclusion.

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(date)

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to explore customers' attitudes towards advertisements that use objectification and ways of how it might affect their purchasing behavior.

The study has been conducted in a qualitative approach with the use of in-depth semi-structured interviews. There were six interviewees of male and female genders, different ages and marital statuses. One of the requirements for participation was living in Ukraine in the present time or in the past. The interview questions were focused on participants' attitudes towards the examples of ads in Ukraine, presented by the author.

The results revealed that interviewees' attitudes remained mainly negative towards the ads which contained objectification. Women tended to react with more negative and angry emotions, while men remained neutral. Some male participants found objectification funny, pointing out that the quality of the product is more vital than the ad. The findings differ from a previous study in Finland, where contributors' opinions differ according to their age, not to gender, as it is in Ukraine, based on the current study.

The significance of the study is that it provides a baseline for future research on marketing in Ukraine and informs companies about possibilities of negative perceptions of ads using objectification and the development of negative attitudes towards such businesses. Thus, study participants showed potential loyalty to firms with ethical ads. The result of the study provides such a hypothesis for future quantitative research that sex does not sell.

Keywords: objectification, consumer attitudes, Ukraine

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-growing world, all the areas of life tend to change rapidly based on constant shifts in customer's desires. Marketing is one of those areas that has to constantly transform in order to find new ways to satisfy customer's needs and desires.

With the intention to grow sales and keep a customer interested, firms develop strategies for promoting their products. Among the substantial variety of existing marketing instruments there are some, which are questionable in their ethics and inclusivity, and may produce various degrees of harm to the customers. Such practices include but are not limited to sexism, objectification, body shaming, and ageism. In advertising materials, objectification often takes various forms and types, which affect the consumer in a multitude of ways. As stated by Khodachuk and Maslova (2021), advertisements that carry objectifying features form distorted stereotypical images, due to which their role is reduced in modern society and build new types of gender inequality. On the contrary, Fredrickson and Roberts (1997), state that objectification in marketing ads is not being a pressing issue, but might be perceived as surveillance, which describes observation a person's body or how others observe it (Hurt et al., 2007).

Keeping that in mind, it is essential to study such topics as society is strongly affected by images and role models from written media, TV programs, advertisements of various forms, and by rules dictated by them. Ads are quite often focused on depicting a certain image, a certain way of behavior, and a certain 'acceptable way' of being a woman. As a consequence, it contributes to the creation of social standards and embedded images, which, in its turn, affects both women and men. Moreover, there are such consequences as mental health problems, sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, and depression, which are caused by sexual objectification of women (Szymanski et al., 2010). As Khodachuk and Maslova (2021) stated in their paper, that such common beliefs as "a woman should be the one to wash the dishes", "a woman's place is in the kitchen," or "women are bad drivers compared to men" are a result of a constant portrayal of such a feminine image and stereotype in the advertising (Khodachuk & Maslova, 2021).

In Ukraine, companies often use sexism and objectification to draw attention to their products in various spheres (Lygina, 2017). There have been some studies performed concerning objectification in advertising (Andersson & Schytt, 2017; Busby & Leichty, 1993; Kellie et al., 2019; Lanseng, 2016; Rollero, 2013; Szymanski et al., 2010; Zimmerman & Dahlberg, 2008). Also, there was a study conducted that focused on the objectification of women in Ukrainian web series (Koval, 2022), but no studies have been performed regarding objectification in the area of advertising in Ukraine, especially consumers' perceptions regarding it, and how it influences people's purchasing decisions. Legally, such advertising is prohibited, but it still exists, as marketers believe that there is a demand for it and it works (Gorban, 2021). Therefore, in order to improve Ukrainian marketing and possibly adapt advertising in such a way that it still carries attractive elements, but is not discriminatory, the **research problem of this study** is shortage of knowledge about consumers' attitudes towards advertisements that use objectification in Ukraine and how it might affect their purchasing behaviour.

The **aim of this research** is to find out consumers' attitudes towards advertisements that use objectification and ways of how it might affect their purchasing behavior. The significance of this study is to draw the attention of society and the marketing community to the issue of marketing ethics, to discuss possible solutions, and to confidently move towards improving marketing activities in Ukraine. Additionally, to uncover the nuances of consumers' attitudes to lay down the ground for a future quantitative research.

In order to fulfil the aim of the research, the following two **research questions** were developed:

- How do Ukrainian consumers perceive advertisements that objectify women and men?
- How do consumers' attitudes toward the objectification of women and men affect their purchase decision?

In order to answer the research questions, a qualitative research strategy was chosen. The decision was made to use semi-structured interviews as a data collection method to find out potential customers' thoughts regarding objectification used in ads. The sample consisted of six participants acquired through convenience and criterion sampling. The participants were three men and three women of different age and marital statuses, coming from different Ukrainian cities .

The rest of the thesis consists of the main body, divided into three parts, and the conclusion. The theoretical part aims to overview consumer attitudes' importance, ethical consumerism, objectification in marketing, and objectification in Ukraine. The methodological chapter presents the way the research was established, and it maintains the information regarding the method used, which was the qualitative approach. The findings part of data and discussions contains the analysis concerning interviews made and the results obtained. The last paragraph contains conclusions, thoughts, suggestions, and the primary consequences, outcome.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical part provides an overview of the main concepts and theories used for answering the research questions and fulfilling the research aim. The chapter discusses purchasing behavior, consumer attitudes in marketing and the factors contributing to developing these. It also outlines the characteristics of objectification in marketing and provides an overview of previous studies on the topic.

1.1. Purchasing behavior

Consumer behavior is defined as a set of actions related to the acquisition, use and disposal of goods and services together with the decisions that precede and condition those actions (Bodnar & Burlitska, 2020).

The model of purchasing behavior is based, first of all, on the needs of consumers and the ability to satisfy them (Batkovets & Batkovets, 2018). Often equally motivated buyers in a similar action act differently, after which they perceive and assimilate information in different ways. The beliefs and attitudes of buyers towards certain goods are also individual. It could be said that they are based on previously acquired knowledge and previous experience of the buyer. Hence, consumer behavior is a science which examines why, where, how and when a person has made purchasing decision or not. Psychological, cultural, social, and personal factors tend to influence purchasing behavior (Bakshi, 2012). The reaction of consumers to the marketing strategy determines the success or failure of the product manufacturer (Buga & Dalevska, 2015). Consumers usually look for some signs in marketing offers that serve as guarantors of the attractiveness or value of such an offer for them (Lialiuk, 2017).

The way how marketing campaign affects potential customer defines how likely the possibility is that a person makes positive purchasing decision towards a product. Since there is an opportunity to model consumer behavior, it is accordingly influenced using various marketing tools (Bodnar

& Burlitska, 2020). Thus, prices, packaging and advertising are one of the factors of influence on the purchase behavior. If a human being has already become a customer of certain company, it is crucial to formulate the consumer's loyalty to the positive perception of the product. Loyalty differs from a simple positive attitude of deep trust in the product so that it determines the advantage in relation to competitive analogues (Derkach, 2020).

In order to achieve success in business activities, it is constrained to know what motives of behavior initiate consumers into purchasing goods. A person's motives are formed to a greater extent through the environment, namely through internal and external factors affecting consciousness and subconsciousness. Motives could be emotional, which are influenced by advertising and emotions caused by it (Kapinus et al., 2020).

1.2. Consumer attitudes

Attitudes are the opinions, feelings, or beliefs towards some goods, services, or brands. Attitudes towards advertising in general, were expected to influence the success of any particular advertising (Mehta & Purvis, 1995). They relate to a consumer's positive or negative emotions, which also affect customer's buying behavior (Dean, 2010). Since the main focus of this research is on consumer attitudes, the decision to use Consumer Attitudes and Behavior theory was made (Ajzen, 2008). In the Theory of planned behavior, behavior is influenced by intentions, which in turn, are affected by three constructs: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Figure 1).

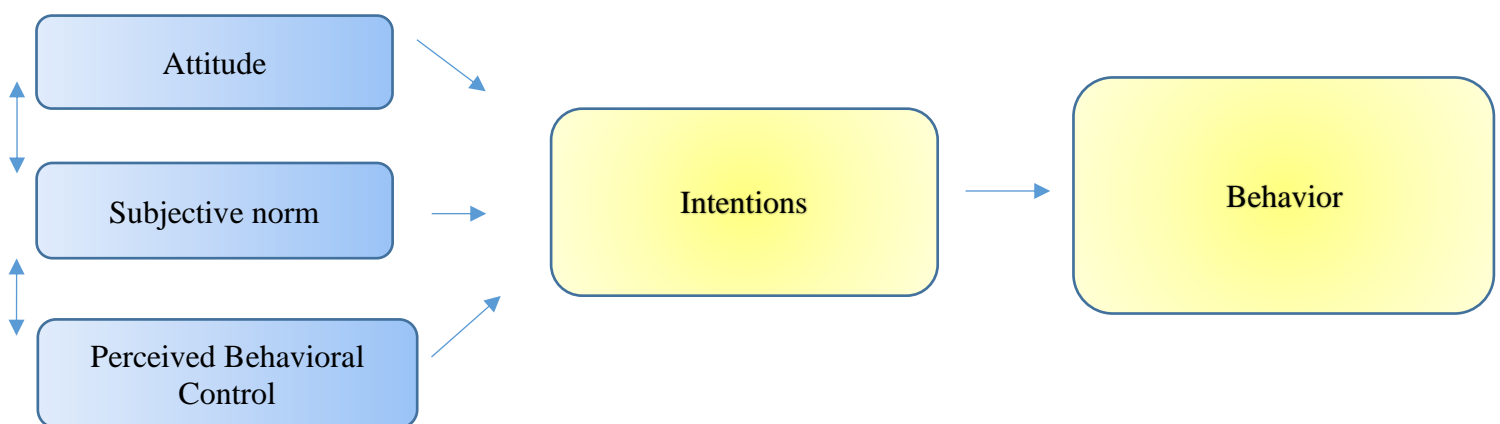


Figure 1. Components of Theory of planned behaviour
Source: compiled by the author based on Ajzen (2008).

Thus, here attitude means a person's belief that certain behavior makes a positive or negative contribution to this person's life. At the same time, the subjective norm factor focuses on the individual's surroundings: cultural norms, close people's opinions, and social media. The last block, perceived behavioral control, expresses a human being's belief about the ease or difficulty of behaving in a certain way. The theory predicts that a positive attitude towards the behavior, favorable social norms, and a high level of perceived behavioral control provides the most highly predictive in forming a behavioral intention, which leads to a predicted behavior. If one, two, or three of these constructs is unfavorable, the chance to behave in a certain way diminishes. (Ajzen, 2008).

Intentions, whether to buy something or not, depending on many factors, including both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, which can influence the final choice during the purchase decision process (Bagga & Bhat, 2013). Consumers make decisions based on these factors and make consistent and logical choices for them. A person's actions are usually quite rational, and they employ all available information methodically, and people think about the consequences of their actions before deciding how to respond to them (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977).

So, according to these authors, what comes first is that a person analyzes possible repercussions and, after that, behaves in a certain way. In this study, the author wants to find out the attitudes of a potential buyer when one sees advertising with objectification, whether they understand what the consequences are, if there are any, and how it influences their purchasing decision, consequently. The Theory of Planned behavior helps to explain what makes it possible for customers to purchase a good or not when there is objectification presented in an ad. Theory shows the intentions for certain behavior, which corresponds to the research questions in this thesis.

It can be said that the influence of attitudes toward advertising affects the possible purchase. The research by Mehta (2000) states that the level of how much the potential customer enjoy and pay attention to the magazine ad depends on how much they feel this ad keeps them updated on the news on the market and how much they consider not being manipulated by it.

Moreover, it is crucial to analyze and be accurate with customers' attitudes, according to the fact that Wilson et al., (2000) suggest that when attitudes change, the first one cannot be completely

replaced by a newcoming one (Ajzen, 2001). Additionally, the study of Lanseng (2016) indicated that women have a discrepancy among their commitment thoughts and attitudes and the sexual content in the advertisement and rate it negatively, while men have affirmative attitudes and positively rate sexually explicit advertisements (Lanseng, 2016).

1.3. Objectification in marketing

The advertising industry always reflects what society lives by. The norms and cultural institutions dictate the rules by which the picture of life in advertising is built. Many things that used to reflect everyday life have nothing to do with reality today: social norms are changing, and advertising is changing with them. In today's world, it is common to see a half-naked woman on the billboard, even if it is not an ad for lingerie, as well as a man depicted in the advertising of driving school, which represents a phenomenon denominated as objectification, a form of sexism. Objectification is the perception of a person exclusively as an object for obtaining sexual pleasure, the identification of a person with an inanimate object (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Nowadays, marketing follows people everywhere, ensuring it covers all the parts of a human being's life to offer goods for every sphere of life. "Advertising is any paid message that a firm delivers to consumers to make its offer more attractive to them" (Tellis, 2003, p. 9). Thus, advertising is non-personalized mass communication, so whatever message is behind the ad, it will be received by the target audience. As a fact, marketing experts play with emotions by creating an ad in order to make a consumer tempted into buying a product.

Marketing - is the most powerful instrument which dictates fashion trends, social norms, and behavioral and ethical norms. In order to carry out a potential buyer from a regular person, marketists come up with various tricks and utilize them as much as possible. Among a certain number of possible instruments to draw the potential customer's attention, there are the ones that achieve this goal, but in a non-ethical way, using harmful gender stereotypes such as sexism, ageism, body-shaming, etc. (Altman, 2021). When marketists use objectification as an instrument in their ad, they throwback to the 1960-s by picturing a woman or a man as not a live person with a soul but as an object because of their body or by pointing out to purely women's or only men's activities (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Historical illustration of objectification from 1960-s

Source: Vintage everyday. (2022, July 27). 1953 Alcoa Aluminum Ad: "You Mean a Woman Can Open It?"

The term objectification means a disparaging image of a person and treating him or her as an object. In advertising, this often refers to the sexual objectification of women, where they are portrayed as objects of sexual desire and focus on the body (Altman, 2021). In the industry, there are still many examples of sexual objectification being used in advertising for various products.

In accordance with this data, it can be said that the fact of sexism and, appropriately, objectification can still be seen in advertisements nowadays, through the decades, and the only thing that has changed is consumer attitudes towards such kinds of ads used in mass media. However, the distinguishing detail can be noticed in the objectification of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. The first one tended to picture women as a 'tool' for the home, as if this is the place she belongs or for the man, that she has to be afraid of him leaving her. Thus, in the 21st century, world mass culture in general and the advertising industry, in particular, have begun to actively get rid of the disclosure of stereotyping and sexism, which can possibly be explained by the activation of women's human rights organizations in most countries of the world.

Of course, not only women are sexually objectified, but also men, although this does not happen so often. However, men in the media or advertising are rarely presented in underwear. Ward (2003)

stated that a common finding across many forms of media is that women are more frequently depicted as sexual objects than men (Rollero, 2013). A man with a bare torso is perceived more normally and not vulgarly, unlike a woman with bare breasts (Teenergizer!..., 2021). Although, the image of a naked male body has also been used in advertising to attract attention (Sexism and objectification: what is it?, 2020). In the mass consciousness, a naked female body attracts more attention than a male body. One of the previous studies showed that the fact that a man can be depicted in an erotic manner in advertising depends on the political situation, cultural factors, and the support of the gay movement (Rohlinger, 2002).

1.4. Overview of previous studies of objectification in marketing

Since the birth of business ethics and social responsibility movements in the 1960s, managing ethics has become a management discipline (Ho, 2011). However, at the same time, there was noticed objectification of women in advertising. Looking at the advertisements of that time, one can understand that women were assigned secondary roles and that the main aspirations of women were related to the kitchen and bedroom (Reclamesecret.ru, 2017).

Objectification often refers to the sexual objectification of women, where they are portrayed as objects of sexual desire, and the focus is on the body in advertising. In the marketing industry, there are still many examples of sexual objectification being used in advertising for various products which leads to the fact that the subconscious puts the female body next to the product being advertised, which means that sometimes objectification is not direct, but hinted so that people make the connection that was intended by the marketers in their minds. It can be said that objectification is a kind of sexism that is common to use in advertising and causes a representation of a woman as a commodity to attract the attention of the consumer to the advertised product or service.

Norms and standards that have existed in society are not applicable anymore in the modern world. Past research and increased awareness about marketing ethics show that they can be traumatic and harmful for people of different ages. The study by Yong et al. (2021, p.1) suggests that “...the association between the combination of objective body weight and subjective body shape and suicidal ideation differs according to the developmental stage”. To depose social stereotypes, brands transmit beliefs by portraying people with various appearances, looks, and ages through

their communications. It is mandatory to remain inclusive in a corresponding way, even with good intentions, otherwise, it can cause damage.

Cash et al. (1983), Thornton and Moore (1993), and Stice and Shaw (1994) found negative effects on self-perceptions, such as body dissatisfaction, depression, guilt, stress, and shame when women and young girls were exposed to ads or photographs with highly attractive and thin models (Martin & Gentry, 1997). According to Mueller et al. (2021), the number of suicides has risen over the past 20 years and this is the exact time when the advertising sphere has become changing, pointing out to new obligatory women's body forms. Youth with mental health issues spend more time on social networking websites and use them to communicate with others and seek social support. At the same time, advertising is all over the Internet nowadays, on every platform, in every social media, and in every video.

The study from 2019 discovered that the degree to which a woman has objectified increases with judgments that she has more casual sex decreases with perceptions of her greater attractiveness is unrelated to perceived age and is greater by male compared to female perceivers (Kellie et al., 2019). Also, in 1977 Fredrickson and Roberts suggested the Sexual Objectification theory, according to which sexual objectification of females is probable to contribute to mental health problems of women such as sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, and depression (Szymanski et al., 2010).

In conclusion, observing objectification when one has mental issues, or worries about being overweight, for example, can cause irreparable consequences. In addition, previous studies' findings suggest that self-harm is related to self-objectification (Erchull et al., 2013) and that the same self-objectification can cause such consequences as body shame, reduced concentration, and anxiety (Calogero, 2012). Human beings, especially girls, tend to objectify themselves after seeing objectification on a regular basis in the media, it gives them the understanding that they will be judged depending on their appearance (McKenzie et al., 2018).

According to previous studies of Dahl et al. men tend to evaluate an ad with sexual content positively, so that sex sells, but not to women (O'Reilly, 2013). The results of the 1991 research by Ford et al. revealed that women were critical of how they were depicted in ad campaigns: women continued to believe that that the portrayal of women in advertising was offensive, that adverts portrayed them primarily as sex objects and as if they were dependent on men (Zimmerman & Dahlberg, 2008).

The results of similar research for another country - Finland - showed that consumers had negative reactions towards the advertisements with objectification, which means that the presence of objectification in the advertising affects consumer behavior. Nevertheless, the qualities of the products are more vital than ethics when it comes to purchasing decisions. (Aaltonen, 2020).

Overall, there have been some studies examined sex-role of women in advertising timed the 1950s, 1960, and 1970s, the results of which discovered a decrease in the number of ads showing women at home, but accordingly, there was an increase in the number of women portrayed in seductive roles or as decoration for the product (Busby & Leichty, 1993). Nevertheless, the study performed in 2017 shows that nowadays, there is still a tremendous amount of sexual objectification used in advertising, although “In general, the respondents’ perception and attitudes towards the companies were affected negatively by the sexist ads” (Andersson & Schytt, 2017, p. 56).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section provides an overview of the research context, followed by a detailed explanation of the research design, data collection and data analysis methods. Also, the socio-demographic information about study participants is highlighted.

2.1. Overview of research context: regulation and practice of unethical marketing in Ukraine

In Ukraine, discriminatory advertising is legally prohibited - in particular, the one based on gender. At the same time, advertising with gender-based discrimination can be seen on the streets, in transport, on television, and on the Internet (Pylypyuk, 2020). This means that the law about advertising is not written clearly enough to hold advertisers responsible for generating such content, however some of the cases were noticed and were not left without attention.

On the other hand, these regulations work, and some businesses get fined. Thus, the store providing electronic devices was fined for sexist advertising. Particular ads included slogans 'A gift is better than a cake', 'The size of your resume is not the main thing' and 'Give an Apple and steam a carrot'. Each of the slogans was constructed in such a way to provide a play on words that would lead to associations with sexual activity in one way or another. Social response to such ads led to the fact that Odesa Administrative Court ordered to collect UAH 6800 from the store (ZMINA, 2019).

Among other cases, an owner of a pizzeria was fined by a court decision for advertisement that depicted a woman on a sofa standing on her knees in front of five men, and eating different pieces of pizza. They were handed to her from the hands of men and she would eat them

exclusively with her mouth, while also saying such phrases as ‘wow, how big it is!’, ‘There are so many of you...’, ‘...let's all at once’. Such portrayal of a woman indicates the discriminatory nature of advertising based on gender (Gorban, 2021). In addition, a company of building materials and commodity concrete received a fine for the advertisement depicting a half-naked woman with the phrase ‘It hardens with me’ (Kharchenko, 2017). Also, a company that offers apartment-moving services was fined with UAH 5083 for using an advertising campaign with the slogan ‘Value your husband's health. Don't make him carry boxes when moving, he's fine with you sitting on his neck’ accompanied by an image of a woman holding a man by the neck (Gorban, 2021). In addition, the advertising of stretch ceilings was portrayed with the inscription ‘Everyone can pull. To satisfy – only a professional’, which is a play on words to make viewers think about sexual activity. Thus, fines were applied to the company (ZMINA, 2017)”. An example of a male discrimination was presented in advertising from the company called "Citrus", which created a poster timed for March 8. The poster depicted a naked man in an apron mopping the floor with the text ‘Just not your day, bro!’ (Khodachuk & Maslova, 2021).

As can be derived from previous paragraphs, there are plenty of examples of objectification and gender discrimination in Ukrainian marketing. While one may disregard such situation as a problem, some media organizations in Ukraine have decided to confront it with the launch of an anti-award for discriminative material and statements present in the mainstream media or made by public figures (Sexism and objectification: what is it? ..., 2020). This, ones again, supports the relevance of this reseach.

One may assume that comparatively recent the adoption of the relevant law (No. 3427) by the Verkhovna Rada in 2020 would directly influence the creation of advertisements. The mentioned law focuses on prohibiting gender discrimination in any form of advertising (Gorban. 2021). It is about the objectification of the human body, the consolidation of male and female roles, and the superiority of one gender over the other. "This is, for example, when naked women with sexual connotations are placed on the boards, advertising sushi, or concrete advertising with the image of a man and the inscription ‘hardens with me’ - says Maryna Bardyna, co-autor of the law (Gorban, 2021). The fact that such creativity has acquired a spontaneous and comprehensive character in Ukraine remains a huge problem.

2.2. Research method and sample

This research is made by using the qualitative approach as it provides detailed insights into the aspects of the issue (Yin, 2015). The author decided to choose an in-depth interview method for a data collection because it allows participants of the study to describe in their own words the set of opinions that shapes their attitude while communicating with the interviewer face-to-face. Further, the cross-case analysis method was applied to the data. Such a comprehensive understanding of people's views is impossible to achieve by using the quantitative research approach and its methods (Ambrose et al., 2005).

The decision was made to have individual semi-structured interviews, which contained pre-set, open-ended questions, with further questions emerging during the dialogue (Denny & Weckesser, 2022). The semi-structured interview provides two-way communication, it gives the interviewer time to take their time in coming up with the answer and to be open and honest with their opinions and motives. In the interview method, interviewers have opportunities to probe for additional information, come up with follow-up questions, and return to key questions later in the interview to gain more insight into attitudes, perceptions, and motivations, which is needed for answering research questions in this study.

This paper explored the consumer's attitudes with one-on-one interviews, which enhanced the interviewee's desire to answer truthfully, provide detailed information and thoughts without a fear of being criticized from the side. The interview questions were developed based on the Theory of Planned Behavior of I. Ajzen, which was previously discussed in the theory chapter. The interview guide consists of two parts (two columns) reflecting the two research questions, and twelve interview questions. The questions for participants were constructed based on the analysis of the previous studies, including one conducted by a TalTech student for the thesis defence "Consumer attitudes towards objectification of women and men in advertising - An example of Finland" (Aaltonen, 2020). First, the participants were asked questions 1.1 - 1.7, which are related to the first research question. Further, based on the second research question, interviewees were asked questions 2.1 - 2.5, that can be found in the second part of the table in the Appendix 1.

The first research question of the thesis is "How do Ukrainian consumers perceive advertisements that objectify women and men?". Accordingly, the first interview question examines interviewees' awareness regarding the existence of such a tool used in advertising and

asks interviewees to explain what it means for them. The second interview question comes from the attitudes part of the theory and is constructed in way for participants to narrate their feelings and attitudes towards objectification. With the following two interview questions, the author attempted to understand if people participating in the research are aware of the possible consequences of such kinds of ads, which is why the questions are related to the subjective norm part of the theory. The next two interview questions were aimed to acquire information in order to narrow down the research to the specific region geographically. They were also focused on obtaining the data regarding awareness about the presence of objectification in marketing in Ukraine. The last interview question in the first column was taken from a previous study concerning ethical and unethical minded consumer groups (Megat Husni & Dugleux, 2020).

The second column consists of the interview questions related to the second research question: “How do consumers' attitudes toward the objectification of women and men affect their purchase decision?”. Thus, the questions are designed in the way to find out persons’ attitudes, and to point out participants’ desires based on the perceived behavioural control. The consecutive question determines if people truthfully enjoy this kind of advertising. Two last questions include interaction by showing the examples of ads containing objectification in order to find out if people would consider becoming customers of companies, who advertise their products with this tool.

Overall, the author identified three area based on the overview of objectification in Ukraine presented in sub-chapter 2.1. where objectification was used in advertising most commonly, which are food, electronic devices, and building materials. Therefore, six pictures were used to show to the interviewees, two from each of the sectors.

Thus, the first picture from the food sector is the screenshot from the pelmenis restaurant from Kyiv depicting a woman with sour cream all over her face and a man’s hand holding her hair with the caption saying ‘Тільки не на обличчя - слова, які можна забути, насолоджуючись фірмовим П.пельмешком на Бесарабці’ (‘Not on the face, please - words, that can be forgotten when enjoying original P.pelmen’). And the second picture is from a Kyiv hot-dog restaurant, however, it represents a man with pumped hands with the capture ‘... and if you're not yet like this hero, tape your abs to your stomach (abdominal cubes) and your arms like biceps and go on a date! ... show your sausage - your inner world...’.

Moving forward to electronic devices, the author showed a picture of a woman’s face with the text ‘Даю в розстрочку до 15 разів!’ (‘I give in instalments up to 15 times!’) with a phone number underneath, while the second ad illustrates female breasts of different sizes with the heading ‘Бажаєш прохолоди? Розстрочка до 25 платежів на всі моделі кондиціонерів, холодильників та морозильних камер’ (‘Do you want coolness? Instalments of up to 25 payments for all models of air conditioners, refrigerators, and freezers’).

The last sector identified by author that used objectification for advertising was building materials. The first picture presented to the participants was an ad of concrete, portraying a half-naked woman with the caption ‘Комбінат будівельних матеріалів пропонує залізобетонні конструкції - зі мною твердіє’ (‘The building materials plant offers reinforced concrete structures - it hardens with me’). The second example used in the interview was the ad of stretch ceiling services that depicted a woman with the text ‘Натянуть может каждый. Удовлетворить - профессионал’ (‘Anyone can pull. Satisfy - only a professional’).

The study uses convenience sampling and criterion sampling, which allow participants to be free in their statements, giving opinions about their attitudes. Also, it allows getting answers from Ukrainians with different backgrounds, which is needed for the research. The criteria for including participants in the interview include gender, place of residence, marital status, age, and fluency in English. The interviewees are both men and women, from different cities in Ukraine, with different marital statuses, older than 18 years old, fluent in English, and have been living or currently live now in Ukraine (Table 1).

Table 1. Overview of the interviewees

Interviewees	Age	Place of residence	Fluent English	Marital status
Male 1	22	Warsaw	yes	Single
Male 2	26	Odesa	yes	Married
Male 3	42	Kyiv	yes	In relationship
Female 1	22	Kyiv	yes	In relationship

Female 2	31	Pryluky	yes	Divorced
Female 3	37	Tallinn	yes	Married

Source: Compiled by the author

In order to gather needed information, the author decided to have three men and three women as participants in the study, so that the amount of people of different genders is equal. In this way, it is possible to get information about attitudes, as there could be three different points of view: positive, negative, or indifferent, from both men and women, which in total equals six. Obtaining data from both genders allows the author to get both points of view, from different perspectives, which is necessary for this research due to the tendency that mostly women are the ones who are objectified, as was mentioned earlier in the theory part. As the research aims to understand the purchasing decisions and, based on that, the behavior, no children were a part of the interviewing process.

After the interviews were conducted and transcribed, they were analysed with the use of a cross-case analysis method, in which each participant had been viewed as a separate case. The analysis was done by comparing and contrasting each interview. Such a decision was made in order to highlight the most relevant information from the interviews, and compare it among participants. Cross-case analysis is a method which aligns to compare similarities and differences among detailed studies in order to discuss the findings (Hartmann, 2014).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results and discussion of the interviews, by looking at consumers' attitudes towards advertisements, and the role of attitudes in purchasing decisions. Research questions are analysed using cross-case analysis method.

3.1. Findings

3.1.1. Ukrainian consumers' attitudes towards advertisements that depict women and men

The understanding of interviewees regarding objectification varied and the different patterns are presented in Appendix 6. Male 2, female 2, male 3, and female 3 were able to describe objectification in their own words. On the contrary, male 1 and female 1 did not know the term. Male 3 and female 2 established such definitions:

“Objectification is perceived by me as the use of some kind of use of a person or a part of the human body in order to attract attention in a sexual sense even if the object of attention itself and the product promoted are not connected” - Male 3.

“About objectification, I think that comes from the word ‘object’, when a person is treated like an object, forgetting about the soul, basically” - Female 2.

Interview questions number 1.2, 1.5, and 1.8 as well as questions number 2.4 and 2.5 (see Appendix 1) were designed to find out interviewees' emotions and feelings that arise during exposure to real examples of objectification in Ukrainian online and offline media. During the interview, the author showed examples of advertisements, which contained various levels of objectification ranged from mild to strong, and the reactions to that differed. Only one person, female 3 had previously seen one out of the six images.

The second question (1.2) was paired with the image depicting a half-naked young woman on the ad of concrete and aimed at exploring the interviewee's reaction to it as well as the feelings and attitudes they develop. The answers obtained from male 1 and male 2 were about the same. Meanwhile, the other one mentioned it was funny for him at first look, but he agreed it was unethical. The other one noted it was not correct, but it was good from the marketing point of view in order to reach more people. The opinion of male 3 differed a bit, saying it was funny for him. Women, on the other hand, were all strongly offended by such an ad. In one way or another all three of them were pointing out that such an ad is completely unethical since it uses stereotypes. None of the female interviewees were attracted to the ad, moreover, they were convinced that such an ad would not attract customers at all. As can be seen, this particular ad divided the interviewees into two groups with opposite opinions. This is an interesting insight that could be further explored in the future studies. The point of view from the female side towards the shown ad could be seen in the following citation:

“... it offends the rights of women and the use of ancient stereotypes. And playing with words is completely inappropriate. This method of advertising is primarily irrelevant, it does not do its job and does not attract consumers to this brand” - Female 1.

The third and fourth interview questions (1.3, 1.4) determined the level of customers' perception regarding the effect of objectification on society and its consequences. Here, male 1 and male 3 said they do not consider objectification as something that has a globally bad effect. Yet, they did show consideration about the fact that it might hurt someone. While five other interviewees considered it a truly hurtful phenomenon for society in terms of basic communication and lifestyle among different genders. Besides, abuse in relationships, lower self-esteem, eating disorders, childhood depression, and diminished achievements was brought up by five persons as consequences of objectification. At the time when one of the interviewees, male 1, could not mention any. The eldest participants of the interview, male 3 and female 3 shared their thoughts on the possible consequences of objectification:

“The relationship of a man to a woman can deteriorate because they will naturally expect their women to look in accordance with the ideal of beauty imposed by society” - Male 3.

“I just feel that it not only affects the level of abuse in society, but this also diminishes women's achievements. ... A woman might know several languages or be able to build a car, but people will just see her as a sexual object” - Female 3.

The picture related to the fifth interview question was utilized and demonstrated seeking for partakers' feelings, in order to find out which effect such ads might have on potential customers (1.5). The image projected the stretched ceiling' advertising with a half-naked woman depicted there. All six participants developed a negatively colored attitude towards an ad. Male 1 mentioned that it might make him smile for a short time, but it is still offensive. On the other side, female 1 and 2 experienced the opposite emotions:

“It is horrible and funny at the same time, it is a play on words that can make you smile at how stupid it is, but never sell this service. It is ridiculous to me” - Female 1.

“For me, it is really harmful and offensive, I feel disgusted by this picture” - Female 2.

The question intended to explore the interviewees' opinions on objectification in Ukraine was under number six (1.6). The question lies in geographical, ethical, and cultural dimensions. Previously, male 1 mentioned:

“It cannot be presented as an advertisement, especially in European countries... Yes, I think there is a difference between advertisements that are acceptable in European and in non-European countries... there is lack of departments that check if it is acceptable to present such advertisements on the streets or not. But it's different in big cities. For example, I haven't seen advertisements like this on the streets of Kyiv, but I fully understand that in some villages or small cities these kinds of ads do exist”.

The perceptions varied accordingly, three females pointed out the historical part, while two males mentioned the current governmental situation. Male 1 and male 3 marked that there are not enough regulations and establishments for adjusting advertising, whereas female 1, 2 and 3 considered it comes from the Soviet Union, where sex was a forbidden topic, so people use this freedom now, which is mentioned in the citation:

“It’s common in our country, because women tended to be housewives, while men were at work and tended to have magazines with girls with bare bodies. It comes from the historical part, from the USSR, where it was a normal picture of a normal family” - Female 2.

The next interview question (1.7) delineates the participants’ knowledge concerning how to react to advertising if it is offensive for them. All 6 participants had some degree of knowledge on what to do and which actions to take, but they are more confident regarding online advertisements, rather than offline ones. Thus, female 2 mentioned she would take action against online ads by leaving comments, reposting, contacting managers, and encouraging other people to do the same, letting them know about her feelings regarding the ad. Female 3 would contact the structures in charge of it, write a complaint or report online, mentioning sexual objectification, and another female 1 would do the same things online. Male 1 noted he would look into what to do on the Internet or would use an app, which was designed for reporting abusive advertising. The males’ point of view could be described with the citation of the eldest male participant:

“I believe that in Ukraine this may occur more often because there are not enough regulatory bodies or services that could prevent the such massive distribution of such advertising” - Male 3.

The youngest female participant mentioned, that she is aware only of the actions to take online, not offline:

“To be honest, I don't know what to do when this is outdoor advertising on the streets of the city. But if it concerns advertising on the Internet, then you can always complain about the content that is unacceptable to you, indicate the problem, why it is like that and what problems are raised there” - Female 1.

The eighth question (1.8) asked the participants of the study to imagine a person close to them or the interviewee him/herself instead of the depicted character. The illustration of an ad with a woman's face and text which means you can delay payment for the product up to 15 times, which might be perceived in the context that this woman can have intercourse up to 15 times. In this case, even those participants, who previously considered such a game of words together with the picture as a funny trick, were disturbed imagining mom/sister/close friend or themselves on the poster. Moreover, they were not satisfied as potential customers either. All of the interviewees were offended by thinking of being objectified. Female 3, mentioned that using such text under these

kinds of pictures was inappropriate. Male 1 said, “Despite the fact that I was smiling because of previous ones, now if I see such an advertisement where my mom, my sister, or a close friend would be presented, I would not be so happy about it”. Female 1 brought up that it would be disappointing to see someone close at the poster, as it is a high level of sexism: “...this ad degrades women by portraying them as frivolous, easily available. I would not like to see someone from my family in this woman's place...”. She also mentioned that the use of red color in the ad, according to her words, adds aggression to it. Male 2 commented that if the person presented there agreed to that, and was rewarded with money for that, then it is his/her business. However, being presented in such an ad might influence his future career in an adulterated way: “...anyway, as for me, I would say it's not a good thing because it would reduce my social credibility”. In addition, among other negative attitudes, man 3 affirmed:

“This advertisement seems offensive to me at the very moment when I began to think that I or someone from my relatives could be in the place of this person and I think that this is the main problem of society in this case because people start to worry about anything just only when it concerns them”.

3.1.2. The role of attitudes in consumers' purchasing decisions

The purchasing behaviour of interviewees varied when encountering an ad containing objectification and the different patterns are presented in Appendix 7. The second part of the interview is connected to the second research question and consists of five questions 2.1 - 2.5 (see Appendix 1). The second research question aims to find out how the purchasing decision is influenced by customers' perception of objectification presented in the ad for a product or service.

In this case, the purchasing decision of male 2 depends on the value, urgency, price of the needed product, and overall attitude towards the company. Male 1 and 3 mentioned it will not influence their purchasing decision. Female 1, 2 and 3 stated it would influence their purchasing decision in negative way. Also, female 3, shared a story on how the ad which objectifies women made her change her mind about buying the phone at this company, when she was on her way to this exact store to buy it.

The first interview question in the second block of questions (2.1) asks about interviewees purchasing behavior when they know that a certain company uses objectification in their ads. The author endeavors to find out if the presence of objectification in the ad affects purchasing decisions at all. Opinions are differentiated correspondingly to gender. In the way that male 2 stated that his decision depends on the urgency of the need for a certain product and on how consistently objectification was used by a company. He mentioned, that if it was once, which the company apologized for, then he would become a customer: “but if they have done it consistently and they don't think that they have any issues with it, then I would most likely try to find an alternative for this product or service and would go with it instead”. At the same time, male 3 said that the quality and what he gets as a customer are important factors, not the ad, which leads to the answer that advertisement, with objectification or not, will not influence purchasing decisions. The same answer was provided by male 1:

“To be honest, no, it will not influence my purchase decision. For example, if I want to buy some products from a certain company and I know that this company uses this marketing tool, it will not change my decision at all”.

In contrast, the three next citations show that women’s answers were strongly negative towards possible purchasing decisions:

“I do not want to be portrayed as a dumb blondie or to be treated as an object, so I do not support this. I will not go for this ad to be the customer, as it only raises negative emotions” - Female 2.

“I want to support those who care about their customers and employees, and for whom their reputation is important” - Female 1.

“...I feel like objectification has a huge impact on society and I don't want to be part of that. I don't want to buy from a company that uses this tool” - Female 3.

The answers regarding the presence of objectification diverge. Hence, the next question seeks to examine if the presence of it makes it more likely for people to become customers of a company, or if it would be the reason for looking for an analog on the market. There was no answer confirming that objectification attracts a participant as a customer, raising the purchasing desire. Female 3 and male 2 would become customers, saying if it is a matter of urgency or will start

looking for analogs abroad, which might have to do with certain circumstances of the economy of Ukraine. Male 1 and Male 3 pointed out that objectification is just a trick for getting attention and it might be done with a humorous goal, and if it is not too insulting they would go for the product. The contrast could be seen in the answers of female and male participants:

“The presence of objectification will cut my relationships with the company as a customer. I will scroll the Internet, to find a company, maybe an international one, that respects any gender. Objectification affects my purchase decision in a negative way” - Female 2.

“... no, it doesn't really matter for me, because I need a product, I need a good price for the product, and the fact that they use objectification or not, it doesn't matter for me. I need a product, and if they made the advertisement that took my attention they made a good job, so that's it.” - Male 1.

The third question of the second part of the interview (2.3) was designed to find out the interviewees' previous experience as customers in terms of buying products, advertised with objectification. Female 3 and female 1 admitted they have previously been customers of companies that tend to use objectification in their marketing campaigns. Female 3 shared a story that she used to be a client at the restaurant which served her favorite food, however after seeing their objectifying advertising, she would never visit it again, even when she misses it. Also, female 1 added:

“Yes, earlier I could buy such a product because I was younger, less knowledgeable, without certain principles. I just needed something and I bought it, but it was definitely NOT because I liked that kind of advertising”.

The opinions of female 2, male 1, male 2 and male 3 were as following: female 2 claimed she would never look at such advertising with the desire to purchase the product advertised in the first place. Male 1 and 2 answered they were not affected, saying such advertising has never influenced their purchasing decision. Male 3 shared what he is looking for in the ad as a potential customer, mentioning objectification - has never been one of the factors, which could be seen from the citation:

“I think I haven't bought any, at least I don't know about it. In ads, I'm looking for specific results or maybe if it's something that would change me, then I would try to see someone in there that is shown to me as someone whom I would like to become” - Male 2.

Based on showing pictures of ads the three last questions of the study included showing pictures to the participants - examples of ads in order to comprehend people's perception of them and their reactions as potential clients. Question number four (2.4) is composed of two pictures from different spheres - electronic devices and food. The genders of the persons depicted also differ in the images. The first one is a woman's body part, the second one is a man's. This advertisement is the only one from all six examples used in the interview which included a man, as this was the only one the author could find.

The first picture in question 2.4 was the picture of a woman's breast on the fridges' and freezers' advertising, and the interview question sought to get answers whether interviewees consider it as objectification and what are their feelings regarding the ad. All of the interviewees recognized objectification in the ad, although male 1 said there was no face depicted, which made it not that obvious for him. The interest in buying the product did not evoke in any of the six participants, while two female 2 and 3 were quite offended and got angry at the image. At the same time when male 1 and male 2 noted it is objectification, but without any emotions. The distinctive approaches of different genders could be discernible from two shown quotes:

“This is absolutely an example of objectification in advertising! Using the female body to attract the attention of (male) buyers, this advertisement is unethical and unacceptable for today's world, such pictures can be in a Playboy magazine, but not on an advertising poster of a self-respecting company” - Female 1

“I can say for sure that it is a 100% attention-grabbing thing, but has absolutely no impact on how much I will be interested in this product that is offered in this advertisement and on my decision to buy it or not. But for sure, this is the case of objectification” - Male 3.

The second picture in the 2.4 question was a screenshot from the Instagram page of a hot-dog restaurant in Kyiv. The man is pictured there in gym clothes with strong muscles, eating a hot-dog, but the caption says one can use these hot dogs for creating the same muscles as the depicted man, and that when going on a date, one has to show the inner world - sausage. The aim of the

question was the same if interviewees see it as an example of objectification, and what are their attitudes to it. Female 1, 2 and 3 and male 1, 2 and 3 confirmed they see objectification in it, although it is not that obvious, as it is done to a man, and shared that the text is the worst part. Female, 22 also noted that this ad was also a trick to catch attention:

“This is also an example of advertising using objectification, although it may not seem so obvious, because usually this technique is used with the female body, but the principles are the same - the use of patterns and stereotypes with sexual undertones to attract attention” - Female 1.

The very last, twelfth question (2.5) investigates if interviewees would want to become customers of the pelmeni restaurant, while the author showed their advertisement to them. The picture shown included a woman with sour cream all over her face, while a man’s hand is holding her hair. The picture evoked most of the negative emotions and answers among participants, compared to the whole interview.

Female 1, 2 and 3 and male 1, 2 and 3 mentioned that it was the worst example they had seen, saying it prevented them from becoming a customer of this restaurant. Male 2 mentioned the hand that grabbed the hair might lead to abuse, which might even lead to jail and wasting someone’s life. Female 3 said: “...this is probably one of the worst pictures. No, it definitely doesn't make me wanna try their pelmeni. It makes me want to go on a protest against objectification. Both the picture and the text, portray social sexual intercourse, clearly, it's not about the taste of the food or the quality, and again they used the picture of a woman and I think it's a man holding her hair, this is awful. I should find this ad and write a complaint. Thank you for writing your research on this topic because I think it's very important to talk about it and I'm very glad to be a part of your research”.

3.2. Discussion

Referring to the views of interviewees, the attitudes towards objectification presented as mainly negative. Male 1, 2 and 3 remained neutral at their attitudes. Yet, their subjective norm and perceived behavioral control remained negative. This reduces the possibility of their choice being leaned towards objectification in advertisements.

The female interviewees aged 22-37 answered that they will not purchase anything advertised with objectification. At the same time, men 22-42 remained neutral in cases, where the level of objectification was not perceived as strong, while also understanding the consequences brought by its occurrence.

When looking at the data through the lens of Consumer attitudes and behavior theory, it could be stated that the attitudes of the respondents were on the negative side of the spectrum. It is so because participants believed that the phenomenon of objectification brings negative emotions to their life. This was also supported by the expression of negative feelings by interviewees and the author's observation of their reactions during the interviews. However, it has to be mentioned that those emotions were expressed only by women, while men remained neutral. The subjective norm also influences such an attitude. Question 1.8 proves this statement, as participants cared about their close people's opinions. Also, looking in terms of the perceived behavioral control from the theory, interviewees believed objectification brings negative moments in behaving this way.

All six participants did not have an increased desire to become a customer of a certain company if it uses objectification to get the attention towards its ads. Female interviewees had contradictory attitudes toward such campaigns. Male interviewees understood possible negligent consequences and did not support it, although they were unconcerned regarding it. Moreover, Man 1, 2, and 3 stated that objectification does not affect their purchasing decision.

So, including the fact that it is less possible that a person behaves in a certain way, when one of these three is negative, it could be said that those people will not decide to purchase a product or service portrayed in the ad with the use of objectification. Of course, the data is limited by the small number of interviewees, since the opinions of six people cannot be generalized to the whole population of Ukraine. Essentially, this assumption opens up a possibility for future research with a quantitative approach and such a hypothesis.

Compared to the previous study conducted in Finland (Aaltonen, 2020), Finnish people aged 22-31 were more concerned about objectification than the participants of the 53-61 age group. However, in Ukraine, there was no great difference between points of view on this topic in terms of age, but there was one in terms of gender. This leads to the conclusion that the perception of objectification differs according to the cultural dimensions, as the results of the present study differ from the previous one. What is in common, that some of the respondents' answers stated that the

quality and benefits from the product play more essential role, than the advertising that was used to promote the product. Also, the results of the current study are compatible with the one of the studies done by Dahl et al., as it was revealed that men usually evaluate an ad with sexual content more in a positive way, than women (O'Reilly, 2013). The male participant of the current research also mentioned that objectification might be funny in terms of ads. Zimmerman & Dahlberg (2008) mentioned that in the study completed by Ford in 1991, women tended to believe that the image of women in advertising was offensive because it depicted them as objects only, which are the same thoughts, as interviewees had in the presented study. This leads to an assumption that despite the huge progress the humanity made in the last 30 years, the issue of objectification in advertisements remains unresolved.

3.3. Conclusions and practical suggestions

According to the gathered data, in order to avoid objectification in marketing campaigns, the following steps could be offered:

- The author of the marketing campaign should check if the model is not used only for his/her body in an advertising
- The author of the marketing campaign should imagine him/herself instead of the portrayed character before creating an ad
- The definition of beauty ought to be enlarged by marketing companies by engaging with models that are of different gender, age, race, shapes, and sizes
- Apply ethical advertising into marketing campaigns

By implementing such criteria into work, the level of objectification should be reduced. It is vital for businesses to refuse to use gender-based discrimination in advertising, for the reason that potential customers tend to choose firms that use ethical, moral ads. From the governmental institutions' side, fines could be implemented for advertising with sexual content which has no connection to the product. Also, institutions that could control the gap between what is perceived as funny and offensive ads should be created. As well as raise people's awareness, with created institutions, on what are their possible actions if they were offended by a marketing campaign. This could be achieved by sharing the information that it is possible to contact the advertiser with a request to refuse its distribution, file a complaint with the authorized institution, or to the inspection authorities. Besides, encourage people to use the "complain" option when it comes to

discriminative ads on social networks. It is also effective to write feedback to the advertiser: explaining the reason why this ad is unacceptable.

The research reveals that ethical advertising is what attracts customers. The companies which stay or are about to appear on the Ukrainian market have to consider their marketing decisions with regard ethical advertising. As the study shows, three female study participants tended to have pessimistic viewpoints when facing the presence of objectification in advertisements and raised desire to convey emotions and to complain about it. Nowadays, consumers are more aware of what is needed from a product, as they are more informed, but not always could it be seen in their purchasing decisions. The problem of ethical choice depends on the personal ethical principles of each buyer. Consumers may not be aware whether a firm follows ethical policy, but if they do, it most likely would affect their purchasing decision.

The author advised that the future studies use a quantitative approach to reach a larger sample, or qualitative but with additional criterias for the sample. To use advertisements as examples from a larger amount of various areas. Also, the first advertising from appendix 3 divided the interviewees into two groups with opposite opinions. This is an interesting insight that could be further explored in the future studies. Moreover, it would add beneficial cognition, to find and use examples of advertising with men depicted in there, as well as conduct a research about the objectified male auditoriums. Also, this is a very interesting moment, that male 1 enjoyed the advertising with non-familiar models to him, but he felt the opposite if he imagined his close people. This may be due to the fact that he cannot objectify women he knows, because he has a deep emotional connection with them. But in other cases, the objectification of unfamiliar women was normal for him, because there was no connection, and he liked looking at separate parts of the body. Moreover, Female 1 and Male 1 did not know what to do when a one is offended by an outdoor advertising. At the same time, Female 1, 2 and 3 as well as Male 1, 2 and 3 knew how to complain about online advertising which gives an idea to study the question. To understand which actions might be taken in case of offensive advertising and educate people on how they can influence it and which actions to take.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis refers to find out customers' attitudes towards advertisements that use objectification and ways of how it might affect their purchasing behavior. Objectification could be seen in both offline and online marketing spheres, which means it is crucial to know potential clients' attitudes towards it.

The two research questions "How do Ukrainian consumers perceive advertisements that objectify women and men?" along with "How do consumers' attitudes toward the objectification of women and men affect their purchase decision?" revealed that potential customers mainly have negative attitudes towards objectification.

Even though male participants tend to stay more neutral towards ads that used objectification, than females, they did not have an increased desire to become a buyer after seeing such ads. Moreover, objectification did not influence their purchasing decision, one man among three of them mentioned that if he had a possibility to choose a company that does not use this tool, he would go for it. Female interviewees' attitudes remained strongly negative and, as consumers, would choose anything, but not companies that objectify people.

This research could be strongly beneficial for Ukrainian companies whose target audiences are both men and women. Some of the consumers' attitudes might stay neutral towards presented objectification in the ad, however, almost all of them are aware of what this term means, and to which consequences it might lead and four out of six participants would choose a company that does not use this kind of advertising. Since more than half of the contributors were tormented by objectification, hence, sexism, and worried about the fact that women have been objectified that much, unquestionably, consumers require ethical advertising. Clientele would be influenced by objectified human beings in the ad only in the way which will make them want to become customers of other, ethical firms.

The current research was limited by a small number of interviewees. Further research could involve a larger sample to get a better overview of society as a whole and employ in addition to qualitative research methods also quantitative ones. The limited number of ads was discussed, so further research could cover ads in other sectors omitted from the present study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview questions

<p>1. How do Ukrainian consumers perceive advertisements that objectify women and men?</p>	<p>2. How do consumers' attitudes toward the objectification of women and men affect their purchase decision?</p>
<p>1.1. Do you know what is objectification? How would you define it?</p> <p>1.2. Do you find this ad (picture building 2) a funny one, or do you think it might be offensive, or non-ethical? How does it make you feel?</p> <p>1.3. What do you think, how does such kind of advertising affect society?</p> <p>1.4. Do you know which consequences may objectification have?</p> <p>1.5. How does it make you feel? (picture building 2)</p> <p>1.6. In your opinion, why objectification is used in Ukraine in ads?</p> <p>1.7. Do you know what are the actions when you find an ad a discriminative one?</p> <p>1.8. Do you feel uncomfortable imagining your sister, best friend or yourself instead of the depicted character? (picture electr. 1)</p>	<p>2.1. When you know that a certain company uses objectification as a tool in advertising, how would it influence your purchase decision? Does it affect your purchase decision at all?</p> <p>2.2. Does it make you want to buy the product even more, or the opposite, you would start to look for analogs on the market in order not to support such advertising?</p> <p>2.3. Have you purchased a product, which were advertised using objectification? Did you purchase it because you enjoyed this ad?</p> <p>2.4. (showing two pictures, electr 2. food 1) do you think it is an example of obj-n or no? How does it make you feel?</p> <p>2.5. When you see this ad (picture food 2), does it make you want to buy their products?</p>

Appendix 2. Interview transcripts

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s_Vr_Gm_yibaaGFFQeoaxa3aPA0hxIat2vRYNdyDjv8/edit#

Appendix 3. Advertisement from the first sector - building



Source: *In the Poltava region, a scandalous advertisement with an erotic subtext was fined.* (2017, November 1). Central.



Source: *The Ombudsman "removed" an advertisement with a female sex object in Sumy.* (2017, October 20). ZMINA.

Appendix 4. Advertisement from the second sector - electronic devices



Source: Lygina, A. (2017, November 24). *I'm Against: How You Can Fight Objectification and Why It Matters*. Gender in detail.

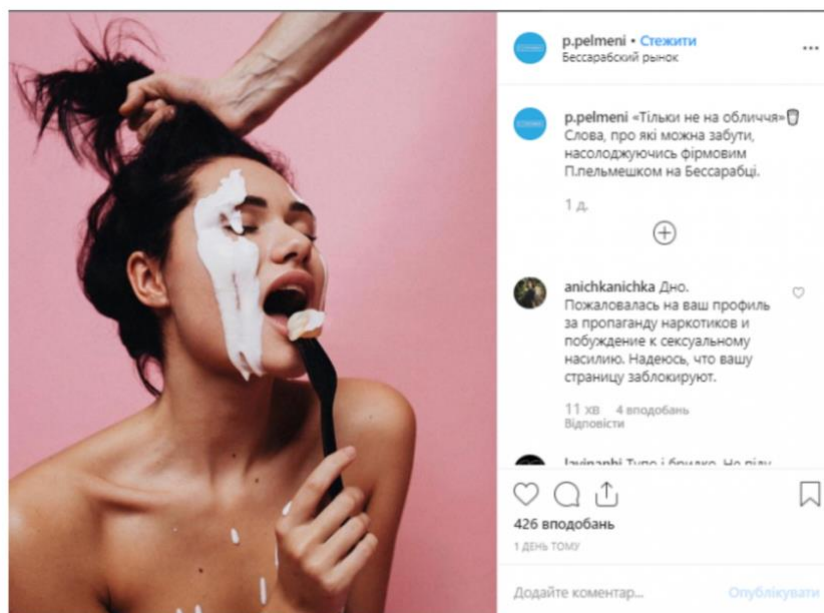


Source: *The advertising of four companies in Vinnytsia was recognized as discriminatory*. (2017, July 22). Vlasno.

Appendix 5. Advertisement from the third sector - food



Source: Pylypuyk, S. (2017, October 30). *There is a question of what sexual objectification is.* The Village.



Source: Gorban, Y. (2021, October 1). *Advertising revolution: now sexism has no place on billboards and in commercials.* Ukrinform.

Appendix 6. Cross-case analysis answers to 1st RQ

1 st Research question	1 st question	2 nd question	3 rd question	4 th question	5 th question	6 th question	7 th question	8 th question
Male 22	I don't know what is objectification is	It's funny for me for first few seconds; but then understand it's not good to be advertised	It's neutral for me, but might hurt someone	Might hurt some women; women might feel like they are sexual objects	Offensive text - makes me smile; it's offensive, cannot be presented	Lack of departments to check ads;	Search on Google what to do; use services (app) to report the ad; report online	Make me uncomfortable; if person agreed – then OK
Male 26	Display (mostly) women's bodies in a sexy way	Even a bad advertisement is good in terms of marketing I think it's not correct	It has negative impact on society	Treat women as an object, eating disorders	Do not like it. Managed to catch attention; funny for someone	USSR; do not know about regulatory agencies	Complain online; contact the company/regulatory bodies, if exist	Depends if a person actually agreed to do that; I would say it's not a good thing; can affect society badly
Male 42	Use of a person to attract attention	Funny to me; do not think that it is unethical	Don't think it has global bad effect on society	The relationship of a man to a woman can deteriorate	Seems funny; inappropriate; used woman's body for attention	Not enough regulatory bodies	Contact the relevant services. Send a complaint	Don't want to see myself or someone ; offensive and disrespectful
Female 22	Anti-sexism; boundaries of	Feelings are sharply negative;	disturb the psyche of minors;	Damage girls' psyche and health;	Horrible, stupid, ridiculous;	Legacy from the Soviet Union;	I don't know what to do when this	Uncomfortable; degrades women,

	each person; feminism	stereotypes; Words inappropriate	false impression that it is normal to communicate in this way	Giving the impression that everyone should look like this	Never sell the service	'no sex' now people enjoy the freedom of expression	is outdoor advertising; Complain online	level of sexism is off the charts
Female 31	A person is treated like an object	I'm really shocked it's really offensive to the women	Women treat like sexual objects; bad image for all of the society	Thoughts that women with bare breasts have more chances to pass the exam or to get a job	It hurts my emotional well-being; really harmful and offensive I feel disgust	USSR; not enough creative companies for creating cool ads	Complain online, repost with negative comments write bad reviews, reach the owner	It's offensive reduces career opportunities for those, who fit the stereotypes
Female 37	Portray women's (mostly) almost naked bodies to attract attention	Feel quite offended it devalues woman	Very big problem raises level of abuse in society	Idea that women are only meant for sex; diminishes women's achievements; lower self esteem; physical abuse	I don't like this ad, again I feel quite offended	Because of our history; USSR;	Contact the company; write to complain to the governmental structure complain and report online	I feel very offended ; very uncomfortable;

Appendix 7. Cross-case analysis answers to 2nd RQ

2 nd Research question	1 st question	2 nd question	3 rd question	4 th question	5 th question
Male 22	It will not influence my purchase decision	Does not make me to buy a product more; it doesn't really matter that a certain company uses it; good job if caught the attention	I have not. But if they caught my attention and I need the product, then why not.	It is objectification, but the face is invisible, so it is not that offensive It looks very stupid and ridiculous;	The most vulgar one, it is too much, the worst one
Male 26	Depends on how fast I need the product and if they use this kind of advertisement constantly, not once – then no	If it's something urgent, then I wouldn't hesitate and I would probably go with it, but if I would have time to search for another one I do it	I haven't bought any, at least I don't know about it. those kinds of ads definitely won't make me buy something in the ads	I don't think it's ethical advertising; It objectifies women it's quite offensive for men; should be banned from using social media	This ad is the most evil one; this ad might lead someone to go to jail and basically waste their life
Male 42	Definitely does not affect the purchasing decision. I would buy a product if in my opinion objectification is not too offensive	Objectification will not affect my choice unless it's too visible/obvious	I have not as it does not affect at all my choice when buying something.	It is objectification, but has absolutely no impact on the interest in product or purchasing decision Also objectification,	This is too inappropriate, definitely rebels me from buying this product I would become a buyer if I saw a direct focus on the product itself

				repels me from buying	
Female 22	No, I want to support those who care about their customers	I will choose alternative for not supporting sexism	I might have, because I was young, but not because I enjoyed the ad	It is objectification: unethical and unacceptable for today's world. Objectification, but not so obvious; use of stereotypes	It makes me never want to buy this product
Female 31	Objectification affects my purchase decision in negative way. I will not become a customer, it only raises negative emotions	The presence of objectification will cut my relationships with the company as a customer, I would go with analogs	I have not. When I see a such ad, I do not even stop to look at it for a little bit more	It is objectification and I hate to see this, I feel ashamed It is offensive and it is objectification, but not so obvious, as with women	It's awful, I will not buy anything from them
Female 37	It influences my purchasing decision in negative way	I look for analogs, if see such ad	I stop to become a customer as soon as I see such ad	Do not want to buy from them; I feel offended, mad. It is objectification I do not want to buy it anymore (fav. product)	It is the worst one. It makes me want to go on a protest against objectification. I should find this ad and write the complaint

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