

Television Advertisements: A Reception Study

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Abstract

This paper focuses on an analysis of advertising reception and explores how audiences interpret advertisements. The study attempted to answer how female and male participants interpret advertisements with symbolic expressions and advertisements with direct messages. The main purpose is to define differences in interpretation of advertisements based on gender. In this process, a two-stage approach is employed in order to examine the audience reception in the context of television advertising. In this study, we first identified the characteristic features of the advertisements, later we intended to explore the reception of advertisements. The first stage of the study evaluated the contribution of 21 participants in Antalya, Turkey determined by snowball sample with male and female participants within the age range 21-55 years. The participants articulated written reactions to two advertisements instantly displayed on computer screen. Participants were subject to viewing those advertisements and responding ready-made questions on paper. In the second stage, considering Höijer (1990)'s study, a focus group discussion was conducted in order to reveal more detailed information as a second stage of the research. This group consisted of 10 participants of the first stage. A semi-structured focus group discussion was employed for our study which allowed group interaction. Our findings revealed a difference in interpretation based on the gender of the participant. This reception study is one of the few researches done in the field in Turkey. It is also expected to make a contribution to gender studies.

Keywords: *Reception; television advertisements; gender*