

# Femvertising of Sportswear Brands: Semiotic Analysis of YouTube Campaigns

**Deniz KUTER**

Research Assistant  
Galatasaray University  
Department of Business Administration  
dkuter@gsu.edu.tr  
ORCID: 0000-0003-1384-6155

## Abstract

*Advertising that emphasizes female empowerment and challenges gender stereotypes is coined femvertising and is becoming more commonly employed. However, many femvertising campaigns are being criticized as “femwashing,” as in they are not authentic, and brands are merely capitalizing on this trend to promote their products. Therefore, not every advertisement portraying female empowerment themes can be considered femvertising. From an authenticity perspective, this research aims to evaluate the femvertising campaigns of major sportswear brands based on transparency, consistency, diversity, respect, and challenging stereotypes. Additionally, this research aims to identify common themes and differences among these advertisements. For the purposes of this research, a semiotic analysis is conducted on three advertising campaigns of three major brands, Nike, Adidas, and Puma, that are published on their global YouTube pages, dissecting the visual and textual elements to reveal how brands communicate their commitment to empowering women through sports. The study identifies three main themes across the campaigns: challenging gender norms by showcasing diverse representations of women, the prevalence of systematic barriers in sports and how women are determined to overcome them, and how the brands’ values are aligned with this social issue. The findings highlight the importance of authentic femvertising that aligns with brands’ corporate social responsibility goals, providing insights for marketers aiming to ethically leverage gender-focused advertising strategies.*

**keywords:** Femvertising, semiotics, sportswear brands, authenticity, gender equality

## Résumé

### Femvertising des Marques de Vêtements de Sport : Analyse Sémiotique des Campagnes YouTube

*Le femvertising, qui met l'accent sur l'autonomisation des femmes et remet en question les stéréotypes de genre, est de plus en plus utilisé. Cependant, de nombreuses campagnes sont critiquées comme étant du « femwashing », car elles ne sont pas authentiques et les marques profitent simplement de cette tendance pour promouvoir leurs produits. Dans une perspective d'authenticité, cette recherche vise à évaluer les campagnes de femvertising de grandes marques de vêtements de sport et à identifier les thèmes communs et les différences. Une analyse sémiotique est réalisée sur trois campagnes YouTube de trois grandes marques : Nike, Adidas et Puma. Trois thèmes principaux émergent : la remise en question des normes de genre en présentant des représentations diversifiées de femmes ; la prévalence des barrières systémiques dans le sport et la détermination des femmes à les surmonter ; et l'alignement des valeurs des marques avec cette question sociale. Les résultats soulignent l'importance du femvertising authentique qui s'aligne avec les objectifs de responsabilité sociale des entreprises des marques, fournissant des insights pour que les marketeurs exploitent éthiquement les stratégies de publicité axées sur le genre.*

**mots-clés:** Femvertising, sémiotique, marques de vêtements de sport, authenticité, égalité des genres

## Öz

### Spor Giyim Markalarının Kadın Odaklı Reklamları (Femvertising): YouTube Kampanyalarının Göstergibilimsel Analizi

*Kadın güçlenmesini vurgulayan ve cinsiyet kalıplarına meydan okuyan reklamcılığa femvertising adı verilir ve giderek daha yaygın olarak kullanılmaktadır. Ancak, birçok femvertising kampanyası, otantik olmadıkları ve markaların sadece bu eğilimi kullanarak ürünlerini tanıtmaya çalıştıkları için 'femwashing' olarak eleştirilmektedir. Bu nedenle, kadın güçlenme temalarını sergileyen her reklam femvertising olarak kabul edilemez. Bu araştırma, büyük spor giyim markalarının femvertising kampanyalarını şeffaflık, tutarlılık, çeşitlilik, saygı ve kalıplara meydan okuma açısından değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bu araştırma bu reklamlar arasında yaygın temaları ve farklılıkları belirlemeyi hedeflemektedir. Bu araştırma kapsamında, üç büyük marka olan Nike, Adidas ve*

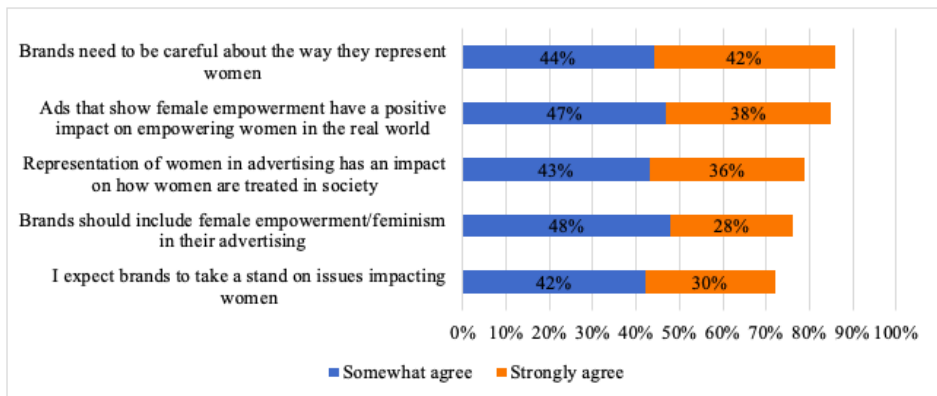
*Puma'nın küresel YouTube sayfalarında yayınlanan üç reklam kampanyası üzerinde göstergebilimsel analiz yapılarak, markaların spor yoluyla kadınları güçlendirme taahhütlerini nasıl ilettiklerini gösteren görsel ve metinsel unsurlar incelenmiştir. Çalışma, kampanyalar arasında üç ana tema belirlemiştir: çeşitli kadın temsilleri sergileyerek cinsiyet normlarına meydan okuma, sporlarda sistemik engellerin yaygınlığı ve kadınların bu engellerin üstesinden gelme kararlılığı ve markaların değerlerinin bu sosyal meseleyle uyumlu olması. Bulgular, markaların kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk hedefleriyle uyumlu olan otantik femvertising'in önemini vurgulamakta, cinsiyete odaklı reklam stratejilerini etik bir şekilde kullanmayı amaçlayan pazarlamacılar için içgörüler sağlamaktadır.*

**anahtar kelimeler:** Femvertising, kadın odaklı reklamcılık, göstergebilim, spor giyim markaları, özgünlük, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği

## Introduction

In traditional advertising, women were usually presented in a domestic environment and associated with domestic products more than men (Eisend, 2010). These types of stereotyping in media pave the way for misconceptions and misleading judgments that eventually create various disadvantages for women regarding their careers, social roles, and body image (Knoll et al., 2011). Thus, public policy has been concerned about avoiding gender stereotyping in marketing activities that create barriers to achieving gender equality (European Parliament, 2008; UN Women, 2017). Therefore, female empowerment-themed advertisements are considered to be important practices for achieving this social objective, considering the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015).

In line with this movement, many companies have started to integrate gender equality issues into their corporate social responsibility (CSR) campaigns (McCarthy, 2017). Furthermore, most successful brands show their commitment to social issues via promotional campaigns, where they underline their corporate activities concerning women's empowerment (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2019). This is also in parallel with consumer expectations, as there is an increased intolerance towards stereotyped gender role portrayals, especially among female and younger generations (Åkestam, 2018; Huhmann & Limbu, 2016). Attitudes towards female representation in advertising in the United States as of February 2022, as shown in Figure 1 below, confirm this shift in society's expectations (Statista, 2023b). Brands face critical backlash if their promotional activities seem out-of-touch with current social issues, and consumers even boycott the brand if they do not genuinely support the social issues that are important to them (Vollero et al., 2021). Thus, many brands are now incorporating brand activism messages into their communication strategies, such as femvertising (Varghese & Kumar, 2022).

**Figure 1. Attitudes to female representation in advertising**

Source: Statista (2023b)

## Literature Review

### *Female Empowerment in Advertising: Femvertising*

Femvertising is defined as “advertising that authentically aims to empower women and girls through the use of diverse, transparent, consistent, relatable, and respectful messages and imagery that challenges gender stereotypes” (Hainneville et al., 2023, p. 939). It is a type of advertising appeal that generates higher attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand in their female audience while it also promotes positive societal changes and challenging gender stereotypes often demonstrated in traditional advertisements (Åkestam et al., 2017). Femvertising focuses on challenging gender-related social taboos or portraying women in more powerful roles in society, depending on the target market’s culture (Amir et al., 2023; Kapoor & Munjal, 2019; Török et al., 2023).

Femvertising is especially preferred for advertisements disseminated over social media platforms, where non-luxury brands are increasingly include diversity and messages of inclusion (Michaelidou et al., 2022). These advertisements receive immense online engagement, such as Dove’s Real Beauty, Always’ Like a Girl, and Nike’s Dream with Us campaigns (Park et al., 2023; Yoon & Lee, 2023). When these advertisements create an emotional bond between the brand and the consumer, women and girls report feelings of empowerment, motivation, and inspiration (Lima & Casais, 2021; Varghese & Kumar, 2020). Tsai et al. (2021) studied empowerment-themed magazine ads and put forward five dimensions of empowerment: self-verification through discovery of one’s true self, self-enhancement through achieving one’s ideal self, self-validation through recognizing one’s worth, self-determination through taking control of one’s life, and self-indulgence through rewarding one’s self.

Female and male viewers were found to have different perceptions regarding women's empowerment advertising strategies depending on their level of involvement in gender equality issues (Bozbay et al., 2019; Negm, 2023). Female viewers who have positive attitudes regarding the feminist movement especially demonstrated a positive inclination toward femvertising (Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019). Associations between femvertising and CSR strategies of a brand have also been demonstrated to lead to higher purchase intentions, along with a positive attitude towards the ad and the brand (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2019; Teng et al., 2021). However, consumers who are less involved in female empowerment and gender equality issues are more skeptical towards femvertising and even form negative perceptions towards the brand (Park et al., 2023).

### ***Authentic Femvertising vs. "Femwashing"***

Contrasting views exist on the genuineness and authenticity of femvertising (Varghese & Kumar, 2022). Some brands are critiqued in the sense that they are merely capitalizing on the trend without demonstrating meaningful and impactful empowerment efforts, also referred to as "woke-washing" or "femwashing" (Hainneville et al., 2023; Sobande, 2019). If the positioning of the product or the brand contradicts the message in the femvertising, consumers are inclined to accuse the brand of inauthenticity in their activism campaigns and perceive the ad as femwashing (Hainneville et al., 2023; Lima & Casais, 2021). Consumers expect a "brand-cause fit," wherein brands should align themselves with social causes that are reflective of their brand values, as in, consumers expect a conceptual fit between them (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2019; Champlin et al., 2019).

Femvertising also receives criticism as it implicitly reinforces traditional notions of femininity and beauty while putting emphasis on women's empowerment through solely portraying anti-stereotypes rather than being inclusive and embracing diversity of women's roles in society and their body types (Hainneville et al., 2023; Tsai et al., 2021). If the message signaled in the femvertising is not reflective of brands' core values or if the brand is not truly offering products or services that reflect gender equality, then viewers tend to perceive these types of femvertising as merely promotion strategies and sometimes even manipulative of women's emotions (Bozbay et al., 2019; Kapoor & Munjal, 2019).

Therefore, there is no such thing as "authentic femvertising," as for an advertisement to be considered femvertising, it has to be inherently authentic. Hainneville et al. (2023) put forward six dimensions of femvertising to determine its authenticity: transparency of the brand, consistency with the brand values, consumers' self-identification with the ad, physical and identity diversity, the brand's respect toward women and women's respect for each other, and challenging role and ability stereotypes.

## Method

The current study aims to reveal the femvertising strategies employed by sportswear brands that have the most impact on the market. The sportswear industry has been estimated to generate about \$213bn in revenue in 2023 and projected to reach \$294bn by 2030 (Statista, 2023c). Åkestam et al. (2017) had also pointed out that femvertising would be beneficial for the sportswear category in terms of brand attitudes. As such, the main purpose of this research is to answer these research questions:

**RQ1.** Based on the dimensions put forward by Hainneville et al. (2023), can these femvertising campaigns be regarded as authentic?

**RQ2.** What are the main differences between sportswear brands' femvertising strategies?

**RQ3.** What common femvertising themes are employed by sportswear brands?

Among numerous sportswear brands, Nike, Adidas, and Puma were selected based on their Media Impact Value—\$2,60bn, \$2,15bn, and \$0,42bn, respectively (Statista, 2023a). This benchmark, created by Launchmetrics, evaluates the most influential brands in an industry based on the cumulative impact of their media placements (Launchmetrics, 2022). For each of these brands, one femvertising campaign published on their global YouTube accounts between 2020 and 2023 was chosen: Nike's "Lose Count," Adidas's "Let's Break Barriers," and Puma's "She Moves Us". These campaigns were selected as they are linked to the brands' broader social initiatives regarding female empowerment in sports. The integration of such initiatives with the brands' marketing strategies is a central aspect of assessing the authenticity of femvertising, which is the primary focus of this study.

In order to answer the research questions, the three femvertising campaign videos were examined by semiotic analysis, which is useful for unraveling the connotative meanings encoded in the message based on the signifier, the signified, and the sign (Barthes, 2023). Semiotic analysis aims to understand which signs refer to which cultural codes for the overall comprehension of the meanings behind the signs (Rifat, 2009). It is important to remember that it is the audience that actively brings their own set of values to the process of interpreting meanings out of the signs (Fiske, 2011).

For the purposes of this study, Barthes' (2011) model is followed, as it has been proven to be ideal for analyzing how the messages are meaningful not only through linguistic but also through visual and cultural elements. Barthes puts forward that analyzing the embedded codes within images aids the researcher to distinguish between their denotative and connotative aspects

(Barthes, 1977). Within this framework, the visual and linguistic elements of advertising campaigns are separated to examine both the denotative and the connotative meanings in their cultural and social contexts. The denotative meaning expresses the objective reality represented by the sign, while the connotative meaning reveals how this representation is linked to cultural codes (Bircan, 2015).

Furthermore, the sign involves the relationship between the signifier (the physical dimension of the sign) and the signified (the conceptual dimension of the sign) (Saussure, 1985). This relationship between the signifier and the signified is shaped by the unique structures of language and the cultural interpretations of the audience. Therefore, it is important to understand not only what the advertising messages say but also how it is said in regards to its communication with the audience.

## **Findings**

### ***Nike – Lose Count***

Nike’s Lose Count campaign’s video commercial was released by the company’s official global YouTube account on February 2, 2021 (Nike, 2021). Up until April 2024, the video had received over 3.7 million views. Nike announces that, in collaboration with the National Football League (NFL), they have committed to making girls flag football as a varsity sport in every high school in the United States of America (USA). In the caption, it writes:

Young girls should grow up in a world where playing football is as normal for them as it is for their brothers. The women of today are bearing the weight of being the first women in the room, so that the women of tomorrow don’t have to be.

### ***Denotation***

The commercial lasts for 1 minute and 1 second. It starts with a football stadium light turning on in cloudy weather, followed by the high school football band in position and an empty locker room. The scene changes with upbeat background music to a message on a black background and white font, saying, “A million more boys than girls get to play sports in high school.” Then, a sound resembling “Who is she?” is heard, and the commercial moves into a young girl holding a football under the stadium light, wearing a uniform with the Nike logo, looking ahead. The scene follows with a video recording of a child wearing a flag football uniform and running with a football. The scene cuts again with the message, “Because they have football.”

After this, for the rest of the commercial, a girl's voice is heard in the background, who says, "We are not a number, and we are definitely not a stack. We are not here to break barriers anymore. Today, we are here to put up numbers. We are here to make them say bravo. We are here to steal your trophy. We do not need empowering anthems anymore. We want fight songs. So go ahead, sing our praises, but do it for this: because we are tough, because we sacrifice just as much, because whether we are your teammate, your rep, your coach, or your boss, we are the hardest workers you have ever met. Do it, because we make football better. Period. So no, we are not here to be just another number. We are here to help you lose count."

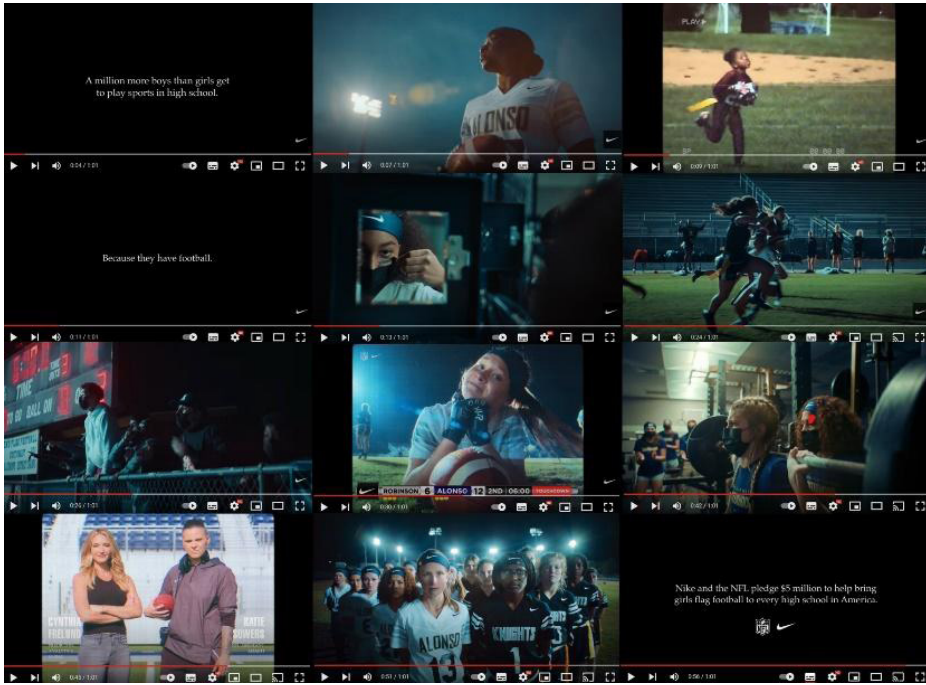
While this message plays in the background, the commercial shows girls getting ready for the match in their locker rooms. The commercial then shows three different young girls in weight, height, and race from each team. The referee flips a coin, which then turns into a football that a girl jumps and catches. The scene changes to a message that reads "Showtime," with a background male voice saying "Time for the show," and the match starts with girls playing flag football dynamically. We see some boys in the audience, cheering as the match goes on. Then a girl rolls into the camera with a smirk on her face, with match scores at the bottom. This scene follows the girls' training sessions. Then, several female employees in the field of football are shown: coaches, trainers, etc. Afterward, we see two teams standing together with serious looks on their faces, looking directly at the camera, all wearing headbands with the Nike logo on them. The commercial shows a few other scenes from the match, and finally, a girl looks directly at the camera. The commercial concludes with this message: "Nike and the NFL pledge \$5 million to help bring girls flag football to every high school in America," with both NFL and Nike logos on the bottom.

### ***Connotation***

In order to understand the connotative meanings behind the commercial, signs, signifiers, and signified in the scenes shown in Figure 2 have been investigated, as in Table 1 below.



**Figure 2. Nike- Lose Count Campaign Scene**



\*Screenshots of campaign visuals were taken by the author.

**Table 1. Connotation of Nike- Lose Count Campaign**

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Message	“A million more boys than girls get to play sports in high school.”	The disparity in participation in sports between young girls and boys.
Girl	A girl holding a football, wearing a Nike uniform, is looking away from the camera.	Confidence, determination, and a sense of responsibility.
Child	A young girl wearing a flag football uniform, running with a football, shot with an old camera	Girls participate in sports from a young age; they have dreams and aspirations.
Message	“Because they have football.”	Football has been regarded and accepted mainly as a “men’s” sport.
Girl	A girl wearing a Nike headband is in front of her locker’s mirror, drawing a black line under her eye.	She is determined, confident, and ready for the match, as if it were a battle.

Background female voice	"We are not a number, and we are definitely not a stack. We are not here to break barriers anymore. Today, we are here to put up numbers."	Girls playing flag football is not a first, and their numbers are increasing.
Boys	Boys outside the field during the match, cheering.	Society roles are interchangeable: while girls can play flag football, boys can cheer them too.
Girl	Girl with a smirk on her face and a football in front of her; match scores on the bottom.	Match scores on the bottom indicate that the girl scored a touchdown point; she is proud, confident, unapologetic, and playful.
Background female voice	"We do not need empowering anthems anymore. We want fight songs."	Girls are already empowered; they are fighters; they are already players in the field; they just need to be recognized as such.
Girls	A girl is lifting weights, another is helping her, and other girls are cheering her on.	There is a background to this sport. Girls work hard, they have a goal, and they support each other to achieve that goal.
Women	Two women, one holding a football, with their names and occupation written on the side.	There are already prominent female workers in this field. They have broken the barriers; they have been the first women in the field.
Girls	Girls from two teams standing in the field, wearing Nike headbands.	Girls that are different in race, height, and weight are on the same team, showing diversity and inclusion in the sport and the brand.
Background female voice	"So no, we are not here to be just another number. We are here to help you, lose count."	The number of girls playing will increase vastly.
Message	"Nike and the NFL pledge \$5 million to help bring girls flag football to every high school in America."	Nike is committed to the cause, and as a brand, they are supporting girls to become active participants in a male-dominated sport.

Through this commercial, Nike demonstrates its commitment as a brand to the cause of empowering girls for active participation in usually men-dominated sports. The ad portrays high school girls as determined, fearless athletes who work hard to be where they are.

### ***Adidas – Let's Break Barriers***

On June 12, 2023, Adidas released the Let's Break Barriers campaign's video commercial on their official global YouTube account, which has received over 56.000 views as of April 2024 (Adidas, 2023). In the caption, it writes:

In sports, women and girls face systemic barriers. Every. Single. Day. From lack of access and representation, to cultural stigma and self-doubt, women and girls are too often left on the sidelines and off the

pitch. We're here to change that.

With this commercial, Adidas announces that it has launched the Breaking Barriers Project across Europe in support of women and girls in sports, which will entail working with nonprofit sports organizations, local leaders, coaches, etc., in order to bring down the systematic barriers.

### ***Denotation***

The commercial lasts for 41 seconds. It starts with a woman in a sports uniform sitting alone on a bench during an indoor korfbal game, fidgeting and watching the game. She is approached by someone who appears to be her male coach, wearing a green zip-up Adidas hoodie from Club Korfbal Baladona, who invites her to the game. At this point, we hear a female narrative voice saying, "What if we did not have to break barriers just to get to the court?" with slowly building background music. Shortly after, we see the woman scoring a point and cheering with her team members.

The scene changes to an indoor pool setting with dim lighting, suggesting its afterhours. We see a woman approaching the pool with the camera shooting from the back. She puts on her Adidas swimming goggles, and then the scene shows her in the pool, swimming. In the meantime, the narrative voice is heard saying, "What if we were met, lap after lap, with the support we deserve?" Next, we see an unidentified person helping the woman get out of the swimming pool by holding her hand in support.

The scene changes again to another woman sitting on her bed, who is wearing a hijab and putting on a white beanie with the black Adidas logo on it. As the background music gets more upbeat, she looks into the camera directly. The narrative voice continues, "Or if we were able to play, no matter where we come from," as the scene shows the woman doing tricks with a soccer ball outside.

The tone of the commercial changes as the background music becomes upbeat and we see a series of women participating in sports activities. First, we see a female American football match in the field in the evening, with the camera following the woman running with the ball from the back. Then, we see another group of females playing cheerfully in an urban area in daylight. We see the woman wearing the beanie on top of her hijab doing tricks with the soccer ball again, this time in front of several men, with some of them shooting her with their phones and some of them cheering, as the narrator continues, "What would the world look like then?" We continue to see these various shots of these women playing different sports up until the narrative voice is heard saying, "When everybody plays, (...)" as the woman wearing a beanie on her hijab is seen lifting her arms up.

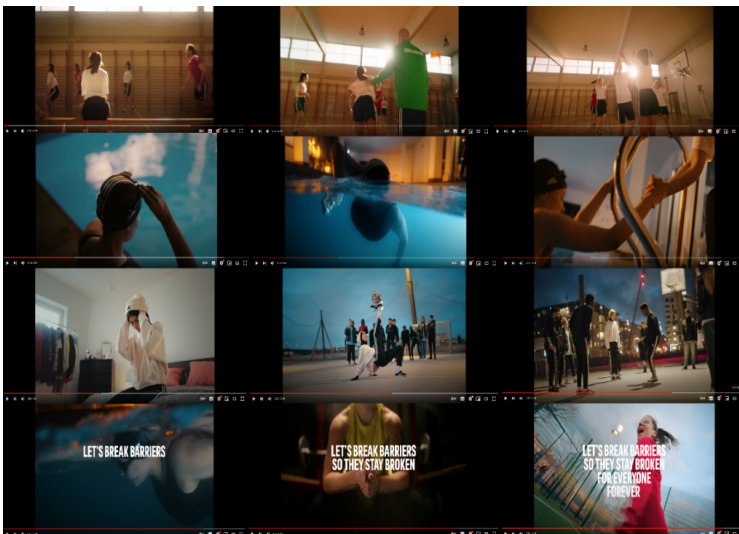
The narrator continues, “(...) everyone wins,” as the commercial continues to show women playing different sports. This time, the woman wearing a beanie on her hijab is shown watching a male do tricks with the soccer ball while others watch as well. The scene changes to another woman hitting a ball high, and as she hits the ball, the men behind her cheer for her. We then see a snapshot of a woman playing American football, throwing the football to someone else, and a man putting his arm over the woman with the beanie on her hijab as she friendly pushes him away. After these scenes, we see a woman with a spotlight on her face, wearing an Adidas shirt, stretching while looking upwards to the ceiling.

The background music stops, and the commercial finishes with the following written message: “Let’s break barriers, so they stay broken, for everyone, forever,” while a woman swimming, a woman sitting in front of weights rubbing her hands with chalk, and a woman playing soccer cheering right after scoring a goal are shown consecutively. The narrator also reads the message out loud. Lastly, the commercial concludes with the white Adidas logo on a black background.

### ***Connotation***

Figure 3 shows the scenes of the commercial, and Table 2 depicts the signs, signifiers, and signified in the scenes to unearth the connotative meanings.

**Figure 3. Adidas- Let’s Break Barriers Campaign Scenes**



\*Screenshots of campaign visuals were taken by the author.

**Table 2. Connotation of Adidas- Let's Break Barriers Campaign**

<b>Sign</b>	<b>Signifier</b>	<b>Signified</b>
Woman	A woman sitting on a bench watching her team play korfbal.	A woman is waiting anxiously to be included in the match, as women are sometimes excluded, sidelined in sports.
A woman and a man	A man placed his hand on the back of the woman.	The coach lets her play in the match alongside her team members, supporting her.
Team members	A woman cheers with her mixed-gender team members after scoring.	Women can achieve success in sports when they are supported.
Background female voice	"What if we did not have to break barriers just to get to the court?"	Women face systematic barriers when participating in sports.
Woman	Woman putting on her Adidas swimming goggles.	Adidas offers a variety of products for different kinds of sports. Women also participate in many forms of sports.
Woman	Woman swimming.	Women put in the hard work, determination, and training to achieve success in sports.
Woman holding a hand	Someone lends a hand to help the woman get out of the pool.	Giving support to women in sports should be the norm.
Background female voice	"What if we were met, lap after lap, with the support we deserve?"	Women deserve more support in sports than they receive currently.
Woman	A woman wears an Adidas beanie on top of her hijab.	Adidas supports women, no matter their cultural background.
Background female voice	"Or if we were able to play, no matter where we come from? What would the world look like then?"	There is a cultural stigma around sports that needs to be changed.
A woman and a crowd of men	The woman wearing the beanie on top of her hijab does tricks with a soccer ball, and in the background there is a group of men watching.	The roles are reversed, and the commercial shows a glimpse of a world where there is no cultural stigma.
Background female voice	"When everybody plays, everyone wins."	Stressing the importance of inclusion and diversity.
A woman and a crowd of men	The woman wearing the beanie on top of her hijab cheers, along with the crowd, a man doing tricks with the soccer ball.	Everybody should support everyone, no matter their gender, race, or cultural background.
Message	"Let's break barriers, so they stay broken, for everyone, forever."	The mission statement for this campaign. Adidas, aims to create a fundamental social change in sports.

Throughout the commercial, women are depicted participating in various sports activities. These women are portrayed as determined and hard-working, albeit facing systematic barriers. In the first scene, the audience sees an indoor game of Korfbal, a mixed-gender sport where men and women are equal team players. However, we see a woman, a team member, sitting alone on a bench, watching the game, when a man, the coach, approaches and lets her into the game. The coach is supportive of the woman, who then scores a point. This is a recurring theme throughout the commercial: If women receive support in sports, they will overcome the systematic barriers and succeed.

### ***Puma – She Moves Us***

Puma's She Moves Us campaign's video commercial was released on their official global YouTube account on March 8, 2022. As of April 2024, the video has received over 940.000 views (Puma, 2022b). The caption reads:

The only rule of the game: Keep moving forward. Keep that forward momentum going. Forward, into the future, with passion and purpose. And in the process, move some mountains. Move the world.

Initiated in March 2021, Puma launched a 'She Moves Us' themed platform where it connects its female brand ambassadors with its female consumers with the aim of creating a global network where women and girls can be empowered (Puma, 2021). Puma announced that it expands this brand platform globally with this new video commercial, and guided by the 'She Moves Us' theme, the company will feature additional content and products that target its female consumers (Brand Innovators, 2022).

### ***Denotation***

The one-minute-long commercial starts with Dua Lipa, a famous pop singer, fixing her lipstick with her fingers in front of a mirror. She then turns around and starts walking when she stops for a moment in front of the TV, where it shows a male news anchor saying, "Over and over, these women just continue to surprise." Dua Lipa smiles and hops out the door.

The scene immediately cuts into an athlete running in Puma's shoes on a running field. She jumps out of the screen, and the scene changes again to a woman lifting a ball in an indoor gym, while a voiceover is heard saying, "There is only one rule in this game: keep going." We see the smiling face of the woman working out with the message 'KEEP GOING' written next to her, and she throws the ball. The ball changes into a basketball, and a woman sitting on a sofa with a kitchen in the background catches it. She smiles as she spins the

basketball on her finger and as she holds the crib of a baby. The voiceover continues, "No stopping, no exceptions, no apologies." The message is also written out on the basketball, and the woman throws it away. The basketball turns into a soccer ball this time, and a female soccer player catches it. As she practices soccer tricks on a field, several comments pop up on the screen, such as "The women's game is sooo SLOW!!", written by a user named Grumpy Man. The woman looks at the comments with disgust; she jumps off the screen. Meanwhile, the female voiceover is heard: "You have got to keep moving forward. It does not matter what that looks like or who gets in your way."

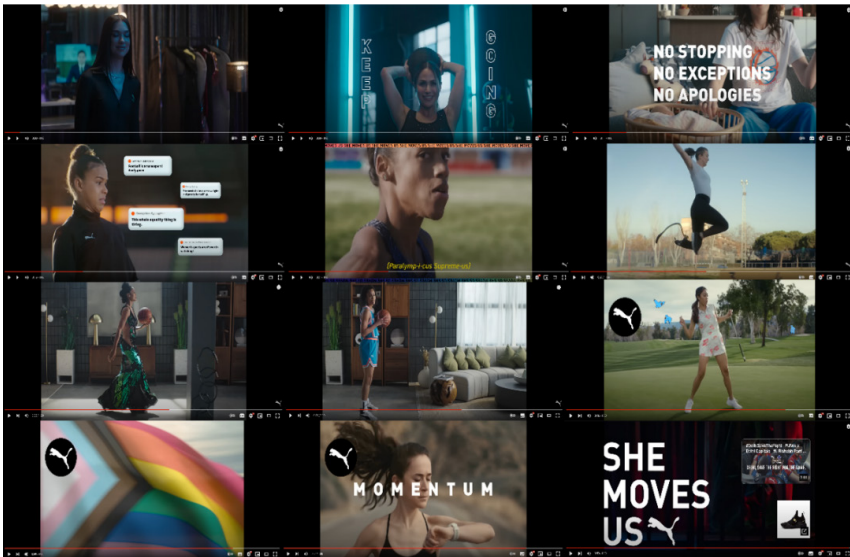
The scene cuts to a woman running very fast. The camera zooms into her face as she looks at the camera in slow motion. A message is written on the screen in paranthesis: "Paralyp-i-cus Supreme-us." The voiceover continues: "Show them your speed, (...)" and the woman starts to run faster, with the message "VROOM!" written on the screen. As she runs, the scene changes to a Formula 1 car with Puma's brand written on it. We see two women in racing uniforms walking, as the voiceover says, "(...) your power." The scene then cuts to a disabled woman, with an amputated leg and arm, doing a long jump, while the voiceover continues: "Show them what you are made of." As the woman lands on the sand, we see a soccer player intercept the soccer ball during a match. We see a woman scoring a point. While the voiceover says, "Do not stand still for anyone," we see the woman cheering.

The scene cuts into a dressed-up woman holding a basketball. While the voiceover continues, "No one can tell you which direction to go, because you are not one-sided," she is shown walking inside her room, and as she passes a column, she changes into her Puma-branded sportswear. She looks into the camera and says, "What?" while shrugging off and then throws the ball of the screen. The scene changes to a virtually gamified skateboard park, and we see a woman skating while the voiceover says, "You are full 3-D." Dua Lipa's 'Boys Will Be Boys' song is heard, with the lyrics "Boys will be boys, but girls will be women." The skateboarder gains a point on the screen, and the scene cuts into a golf ball rolling into a hole. A woman then appears dancing, as she is the golfer who hit the ball, while the voiceover says, "You have got a game day strut, so show it off." She puts up the LGBTQ+ Pride flag, and as the flag is seen waving, the voiceover continues, "It is not about the beginning or the end," while the scene changes to a woman jogging on the side of a road, with mountains in the background. The voiceover continues, "It is about the momentum," and the word 'MOMENTUM' appears on the screen as the jogger checks her watch and spins. While the voiceover says, "So make moves. Big ones," the spinning jogger turns into Dua Lipa, who climbs some stairs while the voiceover continues, "Move mountains if you have to. Just keep moving forward." The commercial concludes with the 'She Moves Us' message written on the screen, and Dua Lipa walks off the screen.

### Connotation

The scenes of the commercial are shown in Figure 4, and the signs, signifiers, and the signifieds in the scenes are examined in Table 3.

**Figure 4. Puma – She Moves Us Campaign Scenes**



\*Screenshots of campaign visuals were taken by the author.

**Table 3. Connotation of Puma - She Moves Us Campaign**

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Dua Lipa	Dua Lipa smiles at the TV screen as the anchorman says, "Over and over, these women just continue to surprise."	Women are capable of many things that may surprise some men, but women know their worth.
Background female voice	"There is only one rule in this game. Keep going. No stopping. No exceptions. No apologies."	No matter the challenges and barriers women face in sports, they have to keep pursuing what they want.
A woman and a baby	A woman is spinning a basketball with one hand and holding the baby's crib with another.	Women can be both mothers and good at sports. They can do everything.
A woman and several comments on screen	The woman playing soccer looks at the sexist comments with disgust.	The comments the soccer player faced are common sexist perspectives women in sports face every day. The soccer player is disgusted by them but laughs them off.



Background female voice	"You have got to keep moving forward. It does not matter what that looks like or who gets in your way."	Women can succeed in many ways, and while they may face many obstacles, they should not give up.
Message	"Paralymp-i-cus Supreme-us"	Paralympic women athletes also face additional challenges, but they overcome them and win supreme achievements.
Background female voice	"Show them your speed, your power; show them what you are made of."	Women should demonstrate their abilities unapologetically.
A woman	The woman has a prosthetic leg and arm, and she does a long jump.	No matter the obstacle, women can jump over it.
Background female voice	"Do not stand still for anyone. No one can tell you which direction to go because you are not one-sided. You are full 3-D."	Women are capable of choosing their own paths, and they pursue as many paths as they like. They can become anything they aim to be.
A woman	A dressed-up woman holding a basketball	Women can do both.
A woman	A woman dancing after she hits the golf ball into the hole	Women should be proud of their achievements, and they should not hide them; they should celebrate them.
A colorful flag	The LGBTQ+ Pride Flag	Puma supports LGBTQ women in sports.
Background female voice	"It is not about the beginning or the end. It is about momentum. So, make moves. Big ones. Move mountains if you have to. Just keep moving forward."	No matter where they come from or where they are going, if they keep working and keep moving forward despite the obstacles, they will gain momentum and achieve greatness.

Similar to the Adidas commercial, this one also depicts various women engaging in various sports. The recurring theme of this commercial is that women can find the empowerment they need within. The commercial acknowledges various challenges women face in sports, from sexism to disabilities, and depicts women overcoming obstacles by focusing on their path and keeping moving forward toward their goals. Through this message, Puma shows its product diversity, from sweatshirts to smartwatches, from formula racewear to running shoes, and signals the brand's commitment to empower and support women in a vast category of sports.

## Conclusion

The current study analyzes and compares sportswear brands' YouTube commercials through semiotics; a common method applied in advertising studies (Fiske, 2011). The main purpose of the study was to assess whether the advertisements shared by the most impactful sportswear brands in the media, Nike, Adidas, and Puma, respectively (Statista, 2023a), could be considered as femvertisements based on Hainneville et al.'s (2023) authenticity dimensions

(RQ1). In addition, this study aims to uncover the similarities and differences between these advertisements (RQ2) and unearth trend themes amongst them (RQ3).

In terms of authenticity dimensions, Nike's advertisement is transparent because it clearly reflects the brand's purpose for the campaign and is also consistent with the brand's values. There is physical and identity diversity in terms of race, weight, and height, and Nike also portrayed a girl football player with glasses as if she were the team captain. The brand showed respect for women while showing successful women in the industry. The campaign also depicted girls cheering on one another and working together as a team, showing their respect for one another. Lastly, the campaign challenges stereotypes by showing girls playing flag football dynamically and boys cheering them on in the audience. As the campaign demonstrates five authenticity dimensions of Hainneville et al. (2023), it can be regarded as an authentic femvertising campaign, answering RQ1 for Nike's Lose Count campaign.

Adidas's advertisement is also consistent with the brand's values, as Adidas has committed to fostering a gender-equitable sports industry with its 'Breaking Barriers' campaign; however, the ad is not transparent about the brand's goals and objectives with this campaign. Without the information provided in the caption, the audience would not be able to understand whether this was the launch of a regional CSR campaign or a product ad. This is because while the ad depicts various women participating in various sports activities, it also places different Adidas products with a visible logo, suitable for every sport. By portraying various women with different cultural backgrounds, the femvertising underscores the diversity of identities in sports; however, it lacks physical diversity. The ad shows respect toward women, primarily through the gaze of men, as we see various men supporting, cheering, and playing with women. Women's respect for each other is not particularly depicted. The brand challenges stereotypes and cultural stigma, for example, by depicting a woman with a hijab as a freestyle footballer. In terms of Hainneville et al.'s (2023) authenticity dimensions, while the advertisement succeeds in demonstrating consistency, identity diversity, the brand's respect toward women, and challenging role and ability stereotypes, it fails in demonstrating transparency, physical diversity, and women's respect toward each other. Therefore, to answer RQ1 for Adidas's Let's Break Barriers campaign, future investigation is required to determine whether the advertisement could be considered an authentic femvertising.

Lastly, following Hainneville et al.'s (2023) authenticity dimensions, Puma's advertisement can be considered consistent with Puma's values, as they had already initiated the 'She Moves Us' platform a year before the commercial. With the initiative, Puma aims to host a series of interviews led by Dua Lipa with its female sports ambassadors, who have taken a role in the commercial as well (Puma, 2022a). However, based on the commercial alone, it is unclear

what Puma intends to do with the campaign; therefore, it cannot be considered transparent. Puma also fails to mention its partnership with Women Win, a global initiative whose mission is to endorse gender equality through sports. Puma is, however, very successful in acknowledging diversity in sports, as it depicts various women with different racial backgrounds. In addition to that, Puma also depicts a paralympic athlete and the LGBTQ+ Pride flag. The femvertisement is also successful in demonstrating respect between women, as we see all of them passing the ball to each other in a seamless manner. By showing a mother with a baby and a basketball and a series of sexist comments that a female soccer player dismisses, the ad challenges stereotypes and cultural stigma. As the campaign only fails to demonstrate transparency, it can be regarded as an authentic femvertising campaign, answering RQ1 for Puma's She Moves Us.

Another aim of this study was to determine the main differences between sportswear brands' femvertising strategies (RQ2). From a transparency perspective, Nike's Lose Count campaign stood out from the others. Nike's commercial clearly communicated the brand's goal of bringing girl's flag football to every high school in America. In comparison, the goals of Adidas and Puma are not clear in the advertisements. While Nike communicates in a simple manner how they will achieve their goal, Adidas' and Puma's strategies are ambiguous. All three brands' advertisements can be considered consistent with their brand values, as they all pursue CSR activities aimed at empowering women and girls in sports, as communicated in their campaigns. In terms of diversity, Puma's She Moves Us campaign takes the lead, as it is the only campaign that features both physical and identity diversity by depicting a paralympic athlete, the LGBTQ+ Pride flag, and a mother. It should also be noted that, in terms of diversity, Adidas's Let's Break Barriers campaign was the only campaign that featured a woman wearing a hijab. All three brands demonstrated their respect toward women, such as Nike featuring successful women in the industry, but the respect women showed toward themselves was more apparent in Puma's commercial because all women seemed to pass the ball to each other. Lastly, all three advertisements challenged stereotypes by depicting women engaging in typically male-dominated sports.

Overall, Nike's campaign was about clearly communicating the brand's goal of making flag football in every high school. Adidas featured themes of gender equality by showing men supporting women and by showing a game of korfbal where the teams are made up of men and women as equal team members. Puma's campaign featured themes of women's empowerment and that women can do anything if they want. They can both be mothers and engage in sports; they can both dress up and be sportive at the same time. All three campaigns featured common themes of female empowerment, the systematic barriers women face in sports, and how, with determination, women can overcome them. Adidas and Puma depicted a variety of sports women were engaged in, and they also featured their vast diversity of products in the commercials.

Nike focused on one single sport, in line with its overall CSR objectives. All three advertisements included upbeat music, empowering the audience. This signifies that there are common trends in sportswear femvertising, with more similarities than differences, answering RQ3.

This study contributes to the femvertising and gender studies literature in numerous ways. While there is existing literature analyzing popular femvertising campaigns across different sectors (Adalı Aydın & Aydın, 2021; Alkan, 2016; Dinç Kırılı & Tan Çakır, 2021; Yoon & Lee, 2023), there is none that focuses solely on the sportswear industry. Alkan (2016) used semiotics to analyze advertisements by Always, CoverGirl, and Gillette and put forward that strong female representations in these advertisements encouraged consumerism, which differs from the findings of this study. This was also underlined in the literature, as brands were merely using female empowerment themes in their advertisements to promote their products (Sobande, 2019). However, as customers expect authenticity from the brands regarding their activist claims in regards to gender equality, many brands have increasingly incorporated these types of messages in their advertisements and demonstrated their support in CSR campaigns (Åkestam et al., 2018; McCarthy, 2017).

This shift was underlined in more recent studies. Dinç Kırılı & Tan Çakır (2021) compare advertisements by Nike, Molped, and Elidor using semiotics and determine that the femvertising trend promotes the adoption of new ideals in terms of gender stereotypes through the representation of strong female figures. Similarly, Çilgöl & Öymen (2022) employed semiotics for Beymen Club's, Sabancı Foundation's, Opet's, and Gratis's International Women's Day commercials and emphasizes how brands are now claiming an activist attitude toward gender equality authentically. In parallel with these findings, the literature states that as consumers expect brands to commit to social issues, brands incorporate activism messages in their advertisements (Varghese & Kumar, 2022). The current study also confirms this social shift, as the three most impactful brands in the sportswear industry are supporting female empowerment in sports by various CSR campaigns and showcasing them via advertisements.

This study also demonstrates the common themes and differences between femvertising strategies in a single sector, the sportswear sector. The findings indicate that as consumers expect brands to be genuinely socially conscious, these types of CSR campaigns have also become a source of competitive advantage (Pankiw et al., 2021). Future research should delve deeper into how these femvertising messages and CSR claims provide a competitive advantage in a particular sector.

This study has certain limitations that lead to future research avenues. In terms of the identification dimension of authentic femvertising, where the audience identifies with the message (Hainneville et al., 2023), the current study

could not assess the advertisements as it did not involve the effect of the messages in the advertisements on the audience. Therefore, comments made by the viewers should be analyzed to determine whether the advertisements enabled the audience to identify with the message, which would provide further information regarding brands' authenticity. Further research could also investigate consumer attitudes toward the brands and their products after viewing the commercials and how the femvertising efforts of these brands provide a competitive advantage in their industry. The current study is also limited in generalization of findings as it analyzes in total three advertisements. Although this number of advertisements are common in semiotic analysis studies (e.g., Alkan, 2016; Dinç Kırılı & Tan Çakır, 2021), future research could compare more advertisements to provide a richer discussion, could compare one brand's numerous femVERTISEMENTS for better assessment of authenticity, and could focus on other sectors than the sportswear sector where female empowerment themes are prominent, such as the luxury sector or the female hygiene sector (Pankiw et al., 2021; Yoon & Lee, 2023).

This article has been scanned by plagiarism detection softwares. No plagiarism detected.

**Ethics Committee Permission**

Ethics committee permission is not required for this study.

**Author Contribution Statement**

The study was conducted by a single author.

**Funding**

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

**Acknowledgments**

The author would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Caner Dincer for his valuable support and contribution to the study.

**Declaration of Conflicting Interest**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## References

- Abitbol, A., & Sternadori, M. (2019). Championing Women's Empowerment as a Catalyst for Purchase Intentions: Testing the Mediating Roles of OPRs and Brand Loyalty in the Context of Femvertising. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(1), 22–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2018.1552963>
- Adalı Aydın, G., & Aydın, Ş. (2021). 8 Mart Dünya Emekçi Kadınlar Günü Temalı Reklamlarda Femvertising Stratejisinin Kullanımı Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Connectist: Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences*, 61, 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.26650/CONNECTIST2021-931232>
- Adidas. (2023, June 12). Let's Break Barriers—Adidas. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_R9uWNf7j6c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_R9uWNf7j6c)
- Åkestam, N. (2018). Caring for her: The influence of presumed influence on female consumers' attitudes towards advertising featuring gender-stereotyped portrayals. *International Journal of Advertising*, 37(6), 871–892. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1384198>
- Åkestam, N., Rosengren, S., & Dahlen, M. (2017). Advertising "like a girl": Toward a better understanding of "femvertising" and its effects. *Psychology and Marketing*, 34(8), 795–806. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21023>
- Alkan, N. (2016). New Trends in The Representation of Women in Contemporary Media Culture: A Critical Analysis of Three Women Empowering Advertising Campaigns. *Galatasaray Üniversitesi İleti-ş-İm Dergisi*, 24, 119–119. <https://doi.org/10.16878/gsuilet.258974>
- Amir, A., Roca, D., Sadaf, L., & Obaid, A. (2023). How does femvertising work in a patriarchal context? An unwavering consumer perspective. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-03-2023-0040>
- Barthes, R. (1977). *Image-Music-Text* (S. Heath, Trans.). Hill and Wang.
- Barthes, R. (2011). *Çağdaş Söylenler* (T. Yücel, Trans.). Metis Yayınları.
- Barthes, R. (2023). *Göstergebilimsel Serüven* (M. Rifat & S. Rifat, Trans.; 11th ed.). Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Bircan, U. (2015). Roland Barthes ve Göstergebilim. *Sosyal Bilimler Araştırma Dergisi*, 13(26), 17-41.
- Bozbay, Z., Gürşen, A. E., Akpınar, H. M., & Komitoğlu Yaman, Ö. (2019). Tüketicilerin Kadın Temalı Reklamcılık (Femvertising) Uygulamalarına İlişkin Değerlendirmeleri: Kalitatif Bir Araştırma. *Galatasaray Üniversitesi İleti-ş-İm Dergisi*, 31, 169–190. <https://doi.org/10.16878/gsuilet.509226>

Brand Innovators. (2022, March 18). Puma Pushes 'She Moves Us' Campaign Forward. Brand Innovators. <https://www.brand-innovators.com/news/puma-pushes-she-moves-us-campaign-forward/>

Champlin, S., Sterbenk, Y., Windels, K., & Poteet, M. (2019). How brand-cause fit shapes real world advertising messages: A qualitative exploration of 'femvertising.' *International Journal of Advertising*, 38(8), 1240–1263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1615294>

Diñç Kırılı, E. S., & Tan Çakır, N. (2021). Postfeminist Bir Pazarlama Stratejisi Olarak Femvertising: Nike, Molped ve Elidor Reklamları Örneği. *Türkiye İletişim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 38, 364–385. <https://doi.org/10.17829/turcom.932211>

Eisend, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(4), 418–440. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-009-0181-x>

European Parliament. (2008). Report on how marketing and advertising affect equality between women and men. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-6-2008-0199\\_EN.html?redirect](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-6-2008-0199_EN.html?redirect)

Fiske, J. (2011). *Introduction to Communication Studies*. Routledge.

Hainneville, V., Guèvremont, A., & Robinot, É. (2023). Femvertising or femwashing? Women's perceptions of authenticity. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 22(4), 933–941. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.2020>

Huhmann, B. A., & Limbu, Y. B. (2016). Influence of gender stereotypes on advertising offensiveness and attitude toward advertising in general. *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(5), 846–863. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2016.1157912>

Kapoor, D., & Munjal, A. (2019). Self-consciousness and emotions driving femvertising: A path analysis of women's attitude towards femvertising, forwarding intention and purchase intention. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 25(2), 137–157. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2017.1338611>

Knoll, S., Eisend, M., & Steinhagen, J. (2011). Gender roles in advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(5), 867–888. <https://doi.org/10.2501/ija-30-5-867-888>

Launchmetrics. (2022). What is Media Impact Value™ or MIV®? Launchmetrics. <https://www.launchmetrics.com/resources/blog/what-is-miv>

Lima, A. M., & Casais, B. (2021). Consumer reactions towards femvertising: A netnographic study. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 26(3), 605–621. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-02-2021-0018>

McCarthy, L. (2017). Empowering Women Through Corporate Social Responsibility: A Feminist Foucauldian Critique. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 27(4), 603–631. <https://doi.org/10.1017/beq.2017.28>

- Michaelidou, N., Siamagka, N. T., Hatzithomas, L., & Chaput, L. (2022). Femvertising practices on social media: A comparison of luxury and non-luxury brands. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 31(8), 1285–1300. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2020-3074>
- Negm, E. M. (2023). Femvertising social marketing: A focus on perceived authenticity and perceived congruence of the advertising and consumers' attitudes toward female portrayal. *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*, 5(5), 435–449. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHASS-05-2023-0053>
- Nike. (2021, February 2). Lose Count—Stronger Than One—Nike. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHIGiSYxJC0>
- Öymen, G., & Çiligül, B. (2022). Dijital Marka Aktivizminde Hashtag Feminizmi Kavramı: 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü Femvertising Stratejileri Üzerine Göstergibilimsel Bir Analiz. *İstanbul Arel Üniversitesi İletişim Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 10(22), 341-367.
- Pankiw, S. A., Phillips, B. J., & Williams, D. E. (2021). Luxury brands' use of CSR and femvertising: the case of jewelry advertising. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 24(3), 302-325.
- Park, M., Koo, J., & Kim, D. Y. (2023). Femvertising of luxury brands: Message concreteness, authenticity, and involvement. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 14(3), 243–262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2023.2176902>
- Puma. (2021, March 1). She Moves Us. Puma. <https://about.puma.com/en/newsroom/news/she-moves-us-dua-lipa-and-puma-brand-ambassadors-celebrate-women-who-move-world>
- Puma. (2022a, March 8). "She Moves Forward"—Puma celebrates women who move the world of sports. <https://about.puma.com/en/newsroom/news/she-moves-forward-puma-celebrates-women-who-move-world-sports>
- Puma. (2022b, March 8). She Moves Us—Puma. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g33Cde7j04c>
- Rifat, M. (2009). Göstergibilimin ABC'si. Say Yayınları.
- Saussure, F. (1985). Genel Dilbilim Dersleri. Birey ve Toplum Yayınları.
- Sobande, F. (2019). Woke-washing: "Intersectional" femvertising and branding "woke" bravery. *European Journal of Marketing*, 54(11), 2723–2745. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-02-2019-0134>
- Statista. (2023a, June 8). Media Impact Value TM of the most powerful brands in sportswear worldwide in 2022. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1389671/powerful-brands-in-sportswear-worldwide/>
- Statista. (2023b, July 6). Attitudes towards female representation in advertising in the United States as of February 2022. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1309208/attitudes-female-representation-advertising-usa/>



- Statista. (2023c, September 5). Total revenue of the global sports apparel market 2023-2030. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/254489/total-revenue-of-the-global-sports-apparel-market/>
- Sternadori, M., & Abitbol, A. (2019). Support for women's rights and feminist self-identification as antecedents of attitude toward femvertising. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 36(6), 740–750. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-05-2018-2661>
- Teng, F., Hu, J., Chen, Z., Poon, K.-T., & Bai, Y. (2021). Sexism and the Effectiveness of Femvertising in China: A Corporate Social Responsibility Perspective. *Sex Roles*, 84(5–6), 253–270. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-020-01164-8>
- Török, A., Gomez-Borquez, C. L., Centeno-Velázquez, E., & Malota, E. (2023). Empowerment through femvertising—Evidence from Mexico and Hungary. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2023.2268854>
- Tsai, W.-H. S., Shata, A., & Tian, S. (2021). En-Gendering Power and Empowerment in Advertising: A Content Analysis. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 42(1), 19–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2019.1687057>
- UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. New York. [https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5#targets\\_and\\_indicators](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5#targets_and_indicators)
- UN Women. (2017). Press Release: In Cannes, UN Women Executive Director calls on members of global industry to eliminate gender stereotypes in advertising. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/6/press-release-in-cannes-un-women-ed-calls-to-eliminate-gender-stereotypes-in-advertising>
- Varghese, N., & Kumar, N. (2020). Femvertising as a media strategy to increase self-esteem of adolescents: An experiment in India. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 113, 104965. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.104965>
- Varghese, N., & Kumar, N. (2022). Feminism in advertising: Irony or revolution? A critical review of femvertising. *Feminist Media Studies*, 22(2), 441–459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2020.1825510>
- Vollero, A., Palazzo, M., Siano, A., & Foroudi, P. (2021). From CSR to CSI. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 24(2), 143–160. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QMR-12-2017-0184>
- Yoon, H. J., & Lee, M. (2023). A femvertising campaign always #LikeAGirl: Video responses and audience interactions on YouTube. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 32(5), 415–426. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2021.2012135>