

Louvain School of Management

PERCEPTION OF INTERGROUP HUMOR IN ADVERTISEMENT

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Foreword

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Table of content

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Humor in advertisement	3
2.1.	General introduction.....	3
2.2.	Advertising effectiveness	3
2.3.	Advertising and entertainment	4
2.3.1.	<i>How to use entertainment in advertising.....</i>	5
2.3.2.	<i>Advertainment</i>	6
2.4.	Humor in advertising.....	7
2.4.1.	<i>Benefits.....</i>	7
2.4.2.	<i>Risks</i>	8
2.4.3.	<i>Elements influencing effectiveness</i>	9
2.5.	Overall conclusion.....	12
3.	What is intergroup humor?.....	13
3.1.	Humor.....	13
3.1.1.	<i>Humor and emotions</i>	13
3.1.2.	<i>Humor process</i>	14
3.1.3.	<i>Universal, yet different</i>	15
3.2.	Social groups	15
3.3.	Stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination.....	16
3.4.	Cultural humor	17
3.5.	Ethnic humor	18
3.6.	Disparaging humor	19
3.7.	Intergroup humor.....	20
4.	Intergroup humor in advertising.....	21
4.1.	Culture and humor in advertising.....	21
4.1.1.	<i>Types of humor in advertising.....</i>	22
4.1.2.	<i>Hofstede cultural dimensions model</i>	23

4.1.2.a. <i>Uncertainty avoidance</i>	24
4.1.2.b. <i>Collectivism - individualism</i>	24
4.1.2.c. <i>Link with intergroup humor</i>	25
4.2. Intergroup humor in advertising.....	25
4.2.1. <i>Advantages</i>	26
4.2.2. <i>Disadvantages</i>	27
4.3. Example of cross-cultural humor in advertising	27
5. Perception of intergroup humor in advertising	29
5.1. What can influence perception.....	29
5.1.1. <i>Agent, subject of the joke, and audience in humoristic advertising</i>	29
5.1.2. <i>Social identification</i>	30
5.2. Presentation of the empirical study	31
5.2.1. <i>Purpose of the study</i>	31
5.2.2. <i>Social groups analyzed</i>	31
5.2.3. <i>Cultural characteristics of the groups analyzed</i>	32
5.2.3.a. <i>Approach to advertising</i>	32
5.2.3.b. <i>Approach to humor</i>	34
5.2.3.c. <i>Hofstede analysis</i>	34
5.2.4. <i>Relations between Belgium and France</i>	35
5.2.4.a. <i>Stereotypes they hold of each other</i>	35
6. Empirical study	37
6.1. OSF Pre-registration.....	37
6.2. Methodology	37
6.2.1. <i>Hypotheses</i>	37
6.2.2. <i>Data Collection</i>	38
6.2.2.a. <i>Advertisements used</i>	39
6.2.2.b. <i>The questionnaire</i>	39
6.2.2.c. <i>The sample</i>	40
6.2.3. <i>Data exportation</i>	41
6.2.4. <i>Data analysis</i>	41

6.3.	Results	43
6.3.1.	<i>Analysis of measurement scales</i>	43
6.3.1.a.	<i>In-group identification scale</i>	43
6.3.1.b.	<i>Attitude scale</i>	44
6.3.1.c.	<i>Perception of humor scale</i>	44
6.3.1.d.	<i>Brand Image scale</i>	45
6.3.1.e.	<i>Purchase Intention scale</i>	45
6.3.2.	<i>Regressions analysis</i>	46
6.3.2.a.	<i>Attitude</i>	46
6.3.2.b.	<i>Perception of Humor</i>	48
6.3.2.c.	<i>Purchase Intention</i>	49
6.3.2.d.	<i>Brand Image</i>	50
7.	Discussion	52
8.	Limits and future research.....	54
9.	Conclusion.....	56
10.	Bibliography.....	57
11.	Appendices	67

1. Introduction

Would you laugh at an advertisement that mocks a social group?

You may think that your answer will depend on the context, and you are right. This master's thesis will analyze the perception of advertisements using this type of humor, which we define as "intergroup humor". We will show that this is influenced by many factors, and we will demonstrate the potential consequences. In particular, we will analyze how perception can vary according to the origin of the advertised brand as well as its link with the group that is the victim of the humor.

Humor and intergroup relations are both part of everyone's life. Therefore, it is not surprising that a combination of these two concepts can be used in advertisements. Indeed, humor is the most popular form of entertainment in advertising (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 17; Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 57), for the many opportunities it offers. But this popularity means that advertisers might try to find a type of humor that sets them apart from the others. The integration of intergroup relations can be seen as an advantageous solution. But sometimes only the benefits are considered, ignoring the risks involved. The latter are of the utmost importance, however, given the delicacy of such humor and the increasingly public and shared nature of advertising.

We have chosen this topic in an attempt to explain the links between three subjects that are often studied in the literature, but rarely together: humor, intergroup relations, and advertising. To this end, our master's thesis is divided into two main parts: a theoretical part and an empirical part.

In the theoretical part, we will start by discussing the use of humor in advertisement. We will explain how it is used, its potential benefits and risks, and the factors that influence its effectiveness. Next, we will attempt to define the concept of intergroup humor. To do this, we will start by talking about humor in general, and then introduce the impact that cultural differences can have on this universal concept. We will then analyze the combination of these first two topics by discussing intergroup humor in advertising. We will see that the humor used by brands in their communications depends on the cultural characteristics and preferences of their target consumer group (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Hoffmann et al., 2014). We will

conclude this theoretical part with an introduction to the perception of intergroup humor in advertising. As little information can be found on this subject in the literature, we will concentrate mainly on an analysis of the elements that can influence such a perception.

Following this theoretical introduction to the perception of intergroup humor in advertisement, we will take a closer look at the subject through an empirical analysis. Based on our findings in the theoretical part, we formulated a few hypotheses. To test these, we conducted a study based on the relationship between two social groups: Belgium and France. We will present this study before discussing the results. Before concluding, we will identify the limits of our work and the research that could be carried out in the future on this subject.

2. Humor in advertisement

Before tackling the subject of intergroup humor in advertisement, we need to understand the two concepts it encompasses: humor in advertisement and intergroup humor. In this section, we will therefore begin our theoretical analysis by looking at the use of humor in advertisement.

2.1. General introduction

Hundreds of billions of dollars are spent in advertising worldwide every year (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 17). Advertising is an essential part of a company's marketing communications and can be defined as an "activity aimed at promoting a brand, encouraging the public to buy a product, use a service, etc.; all the means and techniques used for this purpose" (Larousse, n.d.). Companies use media such as television, radio, billboards, and magazines to convey information about the existence or the features of their products or services to the consumers they target (Bagwell, 2005, p. 1; Russel, 2007, p. 3). According to Kyle Bagwell (2005, p. 3), there are three views developed by economists to explain why consumers respond to advertisements. A first view supports that advertising is informative; it allows consumers to receive additional information about brands at a low cost, without having to look for it themselves (Bagwell, 2005, pp. 3, 4, 16). Another view stands that advertising is complementary; it enters the set of preferences of the consumers in a complementary manner to the consumption of the product (Bagwell, 2005, pp. 4, 20). Finally, the last view stipulates that advertising is persuasive; it modifies consumers' preferences by inducing product or brand differentiation (Bagwell, 2005, p. 3).

Focusing on the second part of the Larousse definition of advertising, one of the techniques used is entertainment. But before going any further on this topic, we need to discuss the term "advertising effectiveness", which will be useful for understanding the role of humor in advertising.

2.2. Advertising effectiveness

The term "advertising effectiveness can be defined as the extent to which advertising generates a certain desired effect" (Corvi & Bonera, 2010, p.2). Given that advertising requires high investments, assessing its effects is paramount (Corvi & Bonera, 2010, p.2). However,

measuring it is not an easy task, mainly because the advertising process is complex (Tellis, 2004, p. 5), and many factors influence it. Several metrics and models have been developed to suggest ways of evaluating advertising effectiveness. A first one is the dichotomous model, which isolates and evaluates separately the sales effect and the communication effect; the sales effect is about how advertising can impact the market share and/or the sales volume, and the communication effect is about how advertising can reach a wider audience with the right message (Corvi & Bonera, 2010, p. 3).

Another interesting model is the three-dimensional one, which can be used to prepare an advertising campaign and assess its effectiveness (Corvi & Bonera, 2010, p. 6). Of those three dimensions, the first is cognitive and is about understanding and storing the message, which can be done using different types of memory: stimulated recall, with presentation of evidence; spontaneous recall, without indication; recognition, i.e. identifying the advertising; related memory, i.e. describing at least one element; brand allocation, i.e. remembering the advertising and the advertised brand (Corvi & Bonera, 2010, p. 6). The two other dimensions are the affective one, which is linked to the perception and attitude towards the communication, and the behavioral one, which refers to changes in purchasing behavior (Corvi & Bonera, 2010, p. 6).

The ability to use these types of models and measure the effectiveness of advertising is one way of knowing whether the company's objectives have been achieved and whether a good return on investment has been obtained (Villegas, n. d.). It can also indicate to brands what type of advertisement works best for their products, so they can adapt it in the future.

With this in mind, we can develop the theme of entertainment in advertising.

2.3. Advertising and entertainment

In today's world, for the same category of needs, there are many different products on the market, each of which is advertised. The first issue it poses is that consumers are now exposed to a large quantity of advertisements. Moreover, consumers tend not to pay attention to advertising, and even have many ways of avoiding it (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013). Considering these, brands need to attract consumers' interest and stand out from their competitors to appear as the best choice. To this end, advertisers try to find ways of getting greater attention from

consumers. Entertainment is seen as a solution to this, which is why it is increasingly used in advertising (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 286). It can be described as “the extent to which [an advertisement] contains “entertaining, warm, and playful material that makes the commercial pleasant to watch”” (Woltman Elpers et al., 2003, as cited in Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 287). But according to Teixeira and Stipp (2013), it goes beyond pleasure, as these authors state that this technique, which increases consumers’ attention, interest, and the effectiveness of an advertisement, can also boost purchase intentions, but only if used properly.

2.3.1. How to use entertainment in advertising

In their study, Teixeira and Stipp (2013) analyzed the optimal amount of entertainment in advertising, to avoid the negative impacts it can have. Indeed, while this technique appears to create positive feelings and increase the persuasiveness of advertisements, not using it correctly can have a detrimental effect and diminish the effectiveness of advertising. Among these negative impacts is the possibility that entertainment may distract viewers from informative content and reduce comprehension (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 287). Teixeira et al. (2014) explained that three elements must be considered when designing entertaining advertisements:

- The location of the entertainment: to increase persuasion, and thus purchase intention, it is more effective to place it after the brand has appeared (or simultaneously) (Teixeira et al., 2014; Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 295).
- The stage in the purchase funnel: there should be more entertainment during the awareness stage, to increase interest, than in the stage when interest turns into purchase (Teixeira et al., 2014).
- The level of entertainment: it is necessary to find the optimum level of entertainment, one that increases interest without decreasing persuasiveness (Teixeira et al., 2014).

This last point was analyzed in the study carried out by Teixeira and Stipp (2013) in which, in the context of a single ad exposure, they examined the effects of different levels of entertainment in advertisements on purchase intention. Their results showed that the optimal level of entertainment depends mostly on consumers' involvement and knowledge of the product, and whether they have already been exposed to advertisements of the brand (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013). Regarding the first point, high-involvement and high-knowledge consumers are the ones advertisers should pay most attention to, as they generally have the highest purchase intention, especially at an optimal level of entertainment, but they also are the ones

who, if exposed to too much entertainment, show a considerable drop in purchase intention (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013). As for the second point, the results demonstrated that it is riskier to use entertainment with consumers who are familiar with the brand, too much entertainment leading to a significant loss of purchase intention, while it is safer and more beneficial to use it with unfamiliar consumers (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013). The authors also examined the importance of the product category but found no significant results. The main effect observed is that, for products such as alcoholic beverages, too much entertainment results in a major collapse in purchase intention, which was not the case for regular beverages and confectionery (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, pp. 291-292). In conclusion, if used thoughtfully, entertainment can be a powerful tool to increase advertising effectiveness, persuasion, and purchase intention, but “this does not mean, however, that the most entertaining or funniest advertisement is necessarily the most effective” (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p.286).

2.3.2. *Advertainment*

Sometimes, mixing advertising and entertainment is not about integrating entertainment in advertising, but rather integrating advertising in an entertainment. This is called advertainment and “refers to promotional practices that integrate brand communications within the content of entertainment products” (Russel, 2007, p.3). Cristel Russel (2007) explained how this is done through three different types of advertainment. The first one is product placement and consists of deliberately incorporating a brand into an entertainment; it has the lowest degree of integration (of the brand in the entertaining content) (Russel, 2007, pp. 4-5). The second one is product integration and is an enhanced type of product placement, since the product advertised plays a role in the entertainment plot; it has a middle level of integration (Russel, 2007, p. 5). The last one is branded entertainment, which is typically created by the brands, sometimes in collaboration with producers, to put their products or services at the center of the entertaining content; it has the highest degree of integration (Russel, 2007, pp. 4-8). These techniques can be very costly, and marketers do not have total control over them, but they can increase brand visibility and have a positive impact on the three dimensions that measure advertising effectiveness (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) (Russel, 2007, pp. 12-14). “A commercial appearing in a program inducing high arousal will generate greater recognition and recall than if the same commercial appeared in a program generating less arousal” (Singh, 1987, p.8).

2.4. Humor in advertising

Going back to entertainment in advertisements, this can take different forms. It might be a clever, creative, or humorous content for instance. The latter is the type of entertainment most often used in advertising (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 17; Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 57). As a matter of fact, in 2010, between 10% and 35% of the advertisements created every year were attempts at humor (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 17). However, this no longer seems to be true. Some claim that the use of humor in advertising has declined in recent years due the fear of using it in an inappropriate manner (Jones, 2022). Indeed, while it offers many advantages, it can also be dangerous for brands if they do not use it properly. That has always been the case, but with today's technologies and social media, it is harder than ever to avoid the backlash that comes from failed advertisement. Despite this, the use of humor in advertising remains a common practice for companies, that simply need to do the appropriate research and put together the elements that will make it effective, to reap all the benefits.

2.4.1. Benefits

Given the widespread use of humor in advertising, a lot of research has been carried out over the years. The main reason that always came out to explain this popularity is that humor not only attracts attention, like all entertainment, but also retains attention and increases awareness. And the rationale behind this is more elaborate than the simple fact that everyone likes to laugh.

If the use of humor has a positive impact on advertising effectiveness, it is primarily because of the positive emotions it transmits to consumers. Medically, humor reduces stress, pain, and lowers blood pressure (Badli et Dzulkifli, 2013, p. 252; Point Park University, 2021). Psychologically, humor puts people in a good mood and, in the context of advertising, can induce a feeling of positive affection (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013). This process results in beneficial conditioning for the advertised brands; that positive affection for the humorous stimulus of the advertisement is an unconditioned reaction which is transmitted to the advertised brand, that is the conditioned stimulus (Prilluk and Till, 2004, as cited in Eisend, 2009, p. 195). This favors brands that want to be associated with that positive feeling, mainly because, afterwards, every time consumers will see the advertised product or brand, they will associate it with this positive affection (Sileaeva, 2010).

This creation of a positive emotion also reduces viewers' resistance to being persuaded by the advertisement and adhering to it, which reinforces the persuasive effect of humor (Miller, 2011). According to Mulkay (1988), when information is presented in a humorous context, it is less examined by the target of the humor (Mulkay, 1988, as cited in Miller, 2011, p. 36). Following this idea, if brands put the information they want to convey to their consumers in the form of a fun message, they will increase the persuasiveness of their advertisement.

This leads us to believe that, as entertainment, humor in advertising increases purchase intention, as we already discussed in connection with the study of Teixeira and Stipp (2013). In the same paper, the authors have shown that an optimal amount of humor increases purchase intention more than non-humorous entertainment (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 290). However, they also showed that humor is riskier, and that too much of it leads to a sharp decrease of purchase intention, which has not been proven for non-humorous entertainment (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 290). Humor can therefore be a more effective way of boosting sales, provided the right dose is used.

Humor can also make an advertising stand out from those of competitors, which can be a real asset given the large number of advertisements on the market today. It can do so by appearing more original, more involving, more expressive, or more distinctive (Jones, 2022). But another way humor makes a brand stand out is by showing a human side to consumers (Olenski, 2018). It demonstrates personality and humanizes the brand (Jones, 2022), making it seem more accessible to consumers, which can help establish a bond with them.

If we consider all these advantages and combine them with the growing importance of social media today, a successful use of humor in advertising can encourage people to share it with others (Jones, 2022). This creates greater visibility and awareness.

2.4.2. Risks

But the term "successful" is of great importance. Indeed, while several benefits can be found, if the attempt at humor fails, many disadvantages can appear. Instead of being perceived as funny, humor can be seen as boring or even offensive (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 287), which can prevent companies from achieving their marketing objectives (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010,

p. 19). It can also make a brand look unprofessional (Olenski, 2018) or create, in this scenario, negative feelings towards the advertisement and the brand (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013).

However, it is not only when humor is perceived negatively that risks can arise. The attempt at humor could succeed in being perceived as funny and create positive affection, but it can only improve advertising effectiveness if the optimum level of humor (in terms of intensity) is used. Too little or too much humor can have a negative impact on sales (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 289). As a matter of fact, in this situation, the advertisement and, ultimately, the brand could not be taken seriously by viewers (Olenski, 2018). This decrease in credibility (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 287) risks disrupting the persuasive effect of humor (Eisend, 2009) and therefore reducing purchase intention (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010).

Apart from the impact on credibility, the use of humor can also be detrimental to consumers' comprehension of the advertisement (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 287; Sileaeva, 2010). This can happen when attention is focused solely on the humorous part of the message, distracting viewers from the brand-related part (Eisend, 2009, p. 195).

2.4.3. Elements influencing effectiveness

Given all these potential risks, many authors have carried out studies to determine which elements increase the effectiveness of a humorous advertisement. The first point to emerge was that there must be a link between the humor and the brand (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013, p. 295), as this gives brands a better chance of being remembered as much as the fun part (Jones, 2022). If we return to the fact that humor creates a positive affection with which brands want to be associated, it will be easier if this link between the humor and the brand exists in the advertisement (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010).

Another point concerns the type of media chosen to broadcast the humorous advertisement (Eisend, 2009). Humor seems to be better suited to radio and especially television than to print advertisements (Hatzithomas et al., 2011), the reason being that there are fewer tools available to implement humor in print advertisements (Eisend, 2009, p. 193). Humor therefore seems to be used more often in TV commercials (Jones, 2022).

Then, a study carried out by Madden and Weinberger (1982) suggested that humor has a more positive effect on educated young men, but this idea no longer seems relevant today (Madden & Weinberger, 1982, as cited in Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 21-22), mainly regarding gender. However, more recently, Eisend (2009) pointed out that education is positively linked to the understanding of humor, as it requires cognitive abilities. According to this, people with a higher level of education would be a better target for humorous advertisements (Eisend, 2009, p. 193). Concerning demographic factors, Gulas and Weinberger (2010, p. 22) suggested that if the creator of the advertisement shared the same point of view as his target audience, effectiveness would be greater.

Some also argued that the humor should be linked and contribute to the message and objectives of the advertisement (Scott et al., 1990, p. 498), which ensures that attention is focused on both and that there are no distractions. We can relate this to the three-levels typology of humor outlined by Speck (1991), and explained by Spotts, Weinberger, and Parsons (1997), and which is about the relatedness of humor in an advertisement. The first level is “intentional relatedness” and refers to how humor relates to the type of message and its treatment (Spotts et al., 1997, pp. 18-20). There can be humor dominant advertisements, in which the humor process is superior to the message and the advertisement does not make sense without it, or there can be message dominant advertisements, in which the humor is subordinate to the message and the advertisement still makes sense without it (Spotts et al., 1997, pp. 18-20). The second level is “structural relatedness” and “represents the relationship between the humor and the message part contained within an ad” (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 20). In humor dominant advertisements it concerns the integration of the elements of the message within the humor, while in message dominant advertisements it is about the integration of the humor within the advertisement (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 20). The third and last level is “thematic relatedness” and is “the relationship between the humor and the message content” (Spotts et al., 1997, p.20). If an advertisement is thematically related then the humor will be related to the product, while if it is thematically unrelated the humor and the product will not be related (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 20). According to Janssens and De Pelsmacker (2005), “information-dominant emotional and humorous ads outperform rational information-dominant ads on measure of attitudes and purchase intention” (Janssens & De Pelsmacker, 2005, as cited in Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 64).

This seems important as humor-product relatedness might affect the effects of humor, as could the product type (Eisend, 2009). A study conducted by Spotts, Weinberger, and Parsons (1997) demonstrated that advertisers should consider the possible differences between products when they develop an advertisement. Their study was based on the Product Color Matrix, which recognizes four categories of goods and allows product analysis based on the decision-making process of consumers (Spotts et al., 1997, pp. 20-22):

- White goods: high risk and functional products that consumers need to compare mainly because these usually are expensive (e.g., refrigerator, insurance, washer, ...) (Spotts et al., 1997, pp. 20-21).
- Red goods: risky products that are not functional but rather a result of self-expression of consumers (e.g., clothes, jewelry, sports car, ...) (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 21).
- Blue goods: functional and low risk products (e.g., detergent, motor oil, mouthwash, ...) (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 21).
- Yellow goods: low risk and self-expression products, little treats that make people feel better (e.g., snacks, alcohol, cigarettes, ...) (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 21).

The results of the study by Spotts, Weinberger, and Parsons (1997) showed that humor should only be used for yellow and white goods, for which it seems to enhance attention and brand recall. For yellow goods, they require little involvement, so consumers do not need much information about them, and for white goods, humor seems to be effective, but only if complemented by sufficient information, as these products are risky and require high involvement from consumers (Spotts et al., 1997). For white goods, using humor might mostly be a way for brands to differentiate their advertising from those of competitors (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 29). However, humor seems to reduce the performance of advertisements for red and blue goods. Regarding red goods, humor does not seem to be a good choice due to their high involvement and the fact that they are related to the personality of the consumer; the use of humor could therefore be perceived as offensive (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 29). As for blue goods, because of their functionality but low involvement, consumers need to be informed quickly, otherwise they may not retain anything from the advertisement (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 29). This study provides interesting insights for advertisers, but it is quite old and has certain limitations, since it focuses on humor in magazine advertisements, whereas we have discussed the fact that humor is less suited to print advertisements.

2.5. Overall conclusion

From what we have just seen, “humor in advertising is a very complex process which depends on a humorous interpretation of numerous factors.” (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 31). But if advertisers use it in a way that considers all the elements that will make it effective, and if they manage to make it a success, many positive things can come out of it.

Apart from those we have already mentioned, humor can also be a way for marketers to establish an emotional bond with their consumers (Jones, 2022; Isaza, 2022), which could increase brand awareness. Moreover, humor is expected to be positively linked to memory (Badli & Dzulkifli, 2013) and, consequently, humorous advertisements should enhance product and brand recall by consumers (Olenski, 2018; Jones, 2022). A study conducted by Badli and Dzulkifli (2013, pp. 255-256) even demonstrated that this positive memory effect is produced not only for people in a good or neutral mood, but also for those in a dysphoric mood.

Even though advertising effectiveness does not depend solely on the humor part (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010), some brands see it as a valuable asset for boosting their marketing performance.

3. What is intergroup humor?

To answer this question, we first need to talk about humor in general. Everyone uses humor, which is universal and has always been part of our daily lives. But few of us think about what it represents, where it comes from and what influences it.

In this section, we will try to shed some light on the subject, so that we can then combine it with our analysis of humor in advertisement and tackle the main topic of this work: intergroup humor in advertisement.

3.1. Humor

A theoretical perspective defines humor as “the ability to be amused by something seen, heard, or thought about, sometimes causing you to smile or laugh, or the quality in something that causes such amusement” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). The term has been defined and described by many authors. Many follow the idea of Stern (1996) who refers to it as a stimulus that elicits or is intended to elicit funniness, amusement, laughs (Stern, 1996, as cited in Warren et al., 2018, pp. 529-531), which is in line with the theoretical view. For instance, there is comedy, which is intentional (stand up) or unintentional (bloopers), includes different behaviors (e.g., jokes, cartoons, soliloquies, ...) and can be communicated through different methods (e.g., face-to-face, social media, print media, ...) (Warren et al., 2018, pp. 529-531). Other authors, like Freud, would also see humor as a way to express hostile and aggressive feelings in a socially accepted manner (Miller, 2011, p. 33).

3.1.1. *Humor and emotions*

Humor is not considered as an emotion, but it induces one or several ones. The most interesting form of emotion it can arouse is exhilaration, which can occur in response to different types of stimuli and represents a temporary increase in joy which can be seen in physiology, behavior, and emotion (Ruch, 1993). Smiling or laughing at humor are two forms of exhilaration, with two distinct levels of intensity; laughter is a higher level of intensity than smiles and, as a result, is generally longer and created when humor is considered funnier (Ruch, 1993). Typically, the more intense the positive emotional response to humor, the more the humor is appreciated (Warren et al., 2018).

One author who has made an interesting analysis of the concept of laughter is Marcel Pagnol, in his book “Notes sur le rire” (Notes on laughter) (Miller, 2011). According to him, the laughter is in fact the source of comedy, and the laugh is an expression of momentary superiority of the laughter over the subject of humor (Pagnol, 1947, as cited in Miller, 2011, pp. 17-19). Pagnol (1947) identifies two types of laughs; the first one is positive, a true laugh resulting from a feeling of superiority, and the second one is negative, sad, and harsh since it is induced by the fact that the laugher considers the subject of the laughter to be inferior to him or her (Pagnol, 1947, as cited in Miller, 2011, pp. 17-19). In this negative laugh, the laughter is laughing at someone else (Miller, 2011). This will be an interesting idea for the rest of our research.

3.1.2. *Humor process*

Humor is a whole process. It begins with the implications of three types of individuals; firstly the agent, who is the creator of the humor, secondly the audience, who is the recipient of the humor, the people for whom it is created, and thirdly the subject, which can be a topic, a person or a group of people, and which is the target of the joke (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, pp. 17-18). If we apply this to the context of advertising, the agent would be the advertiser (the advertised brand), the subject would be the content of the advertisement, and the audience would be the target consumers. Humor then requires a mechanism, which can be grouped into three categories that are generally at the origin of humor: affective, interpersonal, and cognitive (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 18). The affective mechanism refers to humor as a healthy behavior, with “a release of energy, a safety valve for forbidden feelings” (Spotts et al., 1997, p.18). The interpersonal mechanism relates “to the social context in which humor occurs” (Spotts et al., 1997, p.18) (an example might be the feeling of superiority that can be associated with humor, as we saw earlier). And finally, the cognitive mechanism refers to the message structure (Spotts et al., 1997, p. 18).

The cognitive process of humor was studied by Carrell (1997), who illustrated the complexity of it by identifying the humor competence and the joke competence (Carrell, 1997, as cited in Bell, 2007, p. 369). The latter constitutes the necessary construct for an audience to recognize that a joke was intended (Bell, 2007, p. 369). The humor competence arrives after, when the audience must judge if the joke was amusing or not (Bell, 2007, p. 369). In a study, Nancy Bell (2007) indicated that Carrell's idea could be associated with Hay's, who suggested that humor process involves recognition, understanding, and appreciation. Recognition could correspond

to the joke competence phase, while appreciation and understanding would be part of the humor competence phase (Bell, 2007, p. 369). Hay (2001) also added an agreement stage, during which the audience agrees (or not) to the message transmitted in the humor (Hay, 2001, as cited in Bell, 2007, p. 369).

3.1.3. *Universal, yet different*

Humor can be described in several ways. However, everyone would agree that humor is universal. Yet, this does not mean that it is the same for everyone and may even be considered culturally different (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). As a matter of fact, humor is influenced by many elements that can be specific to cultures. To engage on this, we will start by talking a little about social groups.

3.2. Social groups

A social group is a distinct entity grouping together individuals who share specific characteristics, such as their origin, gender, age, etc. (Kieffer, 2013, pp. 9-10). Each person can belong to several social groups, social classification being an interpretation based on approximations. (Kieffer, 2013, p. 9). Social categorization leads to intergroup and intragroup interactions and, more specifically, the focus on the specific characteristics of each group creates intergroup differentiation and intragroup similarities (Kieffer, 2013).

According to Tajfel (1961), this social categorization is linked to social identity, which he defines as “an identity derived from our membership of a social group, and from the emotional and evaluative significance that results from this membership” (Tajfel, 1961, as cited in Kieffer, 2013, p.15). This is linked to the need to belong of the Pyramid of Maslow (Bathelot, 2015). With social identity, people feel the need to belong to a group that matches their characteristics and, more importantly, reflects a positive image of themselves and enhances their self-esteem (Kieffer, 2013, p. 15). Thus, each individual would be attached to social groups with which he or she shares characteristics and would place greater value on these social groups than on others.

As we have seen, these social categorizations can increase differentiation between groups, which can have negative effects, such as the creation of stereotypes and discrimination.

3.3. Stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination

To begin with, stereotypes can be described as a representation, most often unconscious, that individuals have of a specific social group, and which may be based on the behavior, intellectual characteristics, or traditions of these groups (Miller, 2011; Kieffer, 2013). Leyens (1983) defined stereotypes as “implicit personality theories shared by all members of a group about all members of another group and about their own group” (Leyens, 1983, as cited in Kieffer, 2013, p.9). Stereotypes are generally erroneous beliefs, but they help people create cognitive shortcuts, enabling them to generalize the characteristics of a group they do not know to each of its members (Miller, 2011; Kieffer, 2013, p. 9). Therefore, some authors have argued that stereotypes can be useful and positive, which explains why they are still part of everyday life (Miller, 2011, p. 35).

Nevertheless, stereotypes are generally considered negative, as they are based on false and sometimes racist representations and beliefs. These can have detrimental consequences, as they can lead to the creation of prejudices (Kieffer, 2013). According to the study of Devine (1989), this could be avoided by the idea that stereotypes and personal beliefs are two separate things, and that knowing about a stereotype does not necessarily mean you have to accept and adopt it (Devine, 1989, as cited in Miller, 2011, p. 12). As a result, stereotypes could be controlled and not lead to prejudice (Miller, 2011). But this rarely seems to be the case.

Prejudices are not beliefs like stereotypes but are rather linked to the affective side of the human mind and take the form of unfavorable behaviors towards members of a certain social group (Miller, 2011, p. 11). Allport (1954) defined prejudices as “negative attitude or predisposition to adopt negative behavior towards a group or its members, based on an erroneous and rigid generalization” (Allport, 1954, as cited in Kieffer, 2013, p.12).

Under certain circumstances, prejudices can lead to discrimination, which is defined by Dovidio and Gaertner (1986) as an “unjustified behavior directed at members of a target group” (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986, as cited in Kieffer, 2013, p.13). Since discrimination is linked to intergroup relations, we can speak more precisely of intergroup discrimination, which was described by Allport (1954) as “any behavior that denies individuals or groups the equal treatment they deserve” (Allport, 1954, as cited in Miller, 2011, p.12).

These three concepts are negative consequences of social categorization. In the case of discrimination, it can represent a threat to the fulfillment of the need to belong if it includes social rejection and exclusion (Kieffer, 2013).

Understanding this will be useful to examine the influence of these three concepts on the creation, perception, and appreciation of humor. We can establish a first link between humor process and social categorization. The perception of humor can easily change from funny to offensive, depending on the similarity or dissimilarity between the agent of the joke, the subject of the joke, and the recipient (Kieffer, 2013). The same joke may be perceived as funny by one person but as offensive by another, depending on the relationship (and connection) between the joke teller and the audience. The persuasive effect of humor may be stronger when the joke teller and the audience are from the same social group (Miller, 2011, p. 41).

3.4. Cultural humor

Every culture has its own habits, attitudes, and ways of thinking, which can be very different from those of other cultures. This can have an impact on many concepts, including humor. Every culture has a different approach to the use, perception, and appreciation of humor (Eisend, 2009, p. 201). The use of one type of humor may therefore be effective in one culture and a failure in another. This can also be true for different social groups within the same country, especially when they are built around belonging to a certain origin (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). Accordingly, different social groups will have different cultural backgrounds and therefore react differently to humor, making humor a non-translatable concept (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). The attempt to be funny may even be considered offensive by some groups.

Thus, depending on the audience's country of origin, the same type of humor can have very different effects. These differences in approach to humor also have an impact on the way each culture uses it. Jiang, Li, and Hou (2019) analyzed this in an article, by comparing Westerners (e.g., Canadians) to Easterners (e.g., Chinese). On one hand, they demonstrated that humor is used more frequently by Westerners, who see it as a positive and important common personality trait in their daily lives (Jiang et al., 2019). Easterners, on the other hand, do not consider humor to be important for everyone, but rather a special talent that belongs exclusively to experts, to professional humorists (Jiang et al., 2019).

If we consider the negative influences of cultural differences, humor can be seen as a form of intergroup discrimination, particularly when it involves disparaging or ethnic humor.

3.5. Ethnic humor

Stereotypes are present in many human relations and exchanges, including humor. In that case, stereotypes are communicated in the form of “ethnic humor”, which can be seen as a way of expressing stereotypes against a specific group in a socially accepted manner (Miller, 2011, p. 33). A function of humor that was expressed by authors like Freud, as mentioned above (in point 3.1.).

In ethnic humor, the agent uses his or her beliefs about a specific social group to try to create amusement by making fun of its members. Some authors, like Boskin and Dorison (1985), see ethnic humor as a mean to feel socially superior (Boskin & Dorison, 1985, as cited in Miller, 2011, p. 34), which can be linked to the positive laugh of Pagnol. By using negative stereotypes, the joke teller feels momentarily superior to the target social group. In that way, telling an ethnic joke might just be a way for the agents to feel better, especially since even if they tell the joke, they probably did not create it, but rather are repeating something they have heard (Miller, 2011). Nevertheless, ethnic humor remains for the most part a form of discrimination, which is why it is not considered funny by those targeted by the stereotypes (Miller, 2011).

Moreover, another negative aspect of ethnic humor is that it reinforces the stereotypes on which it is based. Those that are repeated and heard several times by the audience can, even unconsciously, make the latter further adhere to these negative stereotypes (Miller, 2011). Although some see the idea of turning stereotypes into humorous content as a way to avoid creating aggression towards a social group, it still has an impact on tolerance towards that group (Miller, 2011). In her study, Sarah Miller (2011) demonstrated that the more ethnic jokes are considered funny by the recipient, the more intolerant this audience will be towards the targeted social group. Conversely, if the ethnic joke is perceived as offensive, tolerance will be generated (Miller, 2011). However, most of the time, when ethnic humor is created, the agent shares common characteristics with his or her target audience, so there is a good chance that they will be amused, adhere to the message and hence, to the stereotypes.

Ethnic humor can be even more discriminating if it involves disparaging humor.

3.6. Disparaging humor

Disparagement humor is humor that focuses on a social group and is denigrating, slanderous or belittling (Ford & Ferguson, 2004, p. 79). This type of humor is based on remarks that denigrate a specific target in order to create amusement (Thomas et al., 2019). Even if some may see it as a light and therefore non-serious joke (Thomas et al., 2019), disparaging humor is highly disapproved due to its negative consequences. To begin with, it is thought to activate stereotypes about social groups or reinforce existing ones, perpetuating prejudice and hostility towards the target group (Ford & Ferguson, 2004; Thomas et al., 2019). Others also highlight that by belittling others, agents of disparaging humor establish a kind of superiority of their group over others (Hodson & MacInnis, 2016, p. 65).

Regarding disparaging humor, it was suggested by Festinger (1957) that there is a process of cognitive dissonance in which the joke-tellers try to convince themselves of the validity of the humorous and stereotypical message (Festinger, 1957, as cited in Miller, 2011, p. 37). Also, if the disparaging humor is repeated, that sense of validity and veracity of the message increases in the audience mind (Miller, 2011). We can link this phenomenon to another negative consequence of disparaging humor: it induces tolerance of discrimination (Ford & Ferguson, 2004; Miller, 2011; Thomas et al., 2019). If the audience of the humor finds it amusing and repeats it, they approve and support, on some level, the denigration of the targeted group. In other words, if people tolerate disparaging humor, they also tolerate discrimination against the social group that is the victim of the humor.

The perception of disparaging humor is influenced by various factors. We mentioned earlier that the perception of a joke may depend on the relationship between the agent and the audience (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). In the context of disparaging humor, Zillmann and Cantor (1976) argued that a joke will be appreciated more if the audience shares a negative view of the targeted group (Zillmann & Cantor, 1976, as cited in Miller, 2011, p. 34). In the same way, studies have suggested that people find disparaging humor funny if other members of their group are laughing, whereas if other members are not laughing, people regard the humor as offensive (Thomas et al., 2019). It is assumed that some people will find disparaging humor offending, especially members of the target group. However, even the offended audience may not say anything against the disparaging humor, because of the humorous and therefore ambiguous

context (Thomas et al., 2019). This would enhance the creation of a tolerance for discrimination.

In the wake of all this, we can see that humor, which is generally supposed to be used for the positive purpose of entertaining, can also be used prejudicially against specific groups. We conclude this theme with a quotation from Coluche: “As long as it's funny, it's a joke. As soon as it's not funny, it's insults” (Coluche, as cited in Miller, 2011, p.66).

3.7. Intergroup humor

Based on the concepts developed above, we can see that humor is part of intergroup communications, and not always in a positive way. As a result of social categorization, groups with specific characteristics and cultures are created. These have both a specific approach to humor and stereotypical ideas about other social groups. Those two elements combined can produce intergroup humor.

Intergroup humor can therefore be seen as the use of ethnic humor by one social group against another, whether simply by using beliefs based on stereotypes, or whether these are used to disparage. In the context of this paper, we will focus on social groups created around a common origin.

4. Intergroup humor in advertising

In this section, we will establish a link between the last two chapters, i.e., between humor in advertisement and intergroup humor. We will discuss how the use of humor in advertising differs depending on the group targeted by the advertisements, its cultural characteristics, and on intergroup relations.

To begin with, let's talk about the different uses of humor in advertising, based on the culture of the target consumers.

4.1. Culture and humor in advertising

We have seen that humor is the most widely used form of entertainment in advertising (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 17; Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 57), because of the many ways in which it can increase the effectiveness of advertising in today's clutter. However, we also discussed the fact that, although humor is a universal concept, its use, perception, and appreciation depend on the culture of each group (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Crawford & Gregory, 2014). This point is considered by advertisers when they create a humorous advertisement. As a matter of fact, the humor they choose to use must be adapted to their target consumers if they want it to be effective and meet their marketing objectives. If we consider social groups based on origin, the humor used by advertisers will differ according to the country targeted (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Hoffmann et al., 2014). In the case of international advertising campaigns, the use of humor is made all the more difficult by the need to adapt to a wide range of cultures and approaches to the concept (Hoffmann et al., 2014). Using humor in national campaigns is therefore easier, as there is less research and work to do to find the right kind of humor.

Hoffmann and al. (2014, p. 95) gave an example of this phenomenon, developed by Hall and Hall (1990), and that compares countries with high-context cultures (e.g., Spain) to countries with low-context cultures (e.g., Germany). Communication in low-context cultures is more explicit and deductive, while in high-context cultures it is more implicit and intuitive (Bansal, 2022). The first use emotional advertising less, as they place more importance on information, whereas the latter tend to interpret a message according to its surroundings, emotional advertisements are therefore better suited to them (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 95).

Thus, the use of humor in advertising depends on the cultural characteristics of the target consumer group (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Hoffmann et al., 2014), and both the type of humor and its degree of intensity will vary. But before we go any further in analyzing these cultural dimensions, we need to discuss the different types of humor that can be used in advertising.

4.1.1. Types of humor in advertising

We will start by remembering that there can be, as mentioned before (in point 2.4.3.), humor dominant (the advertisement context is constructed around the humor) or message dominant (the humor is an additional element) advertisements (Spotts et al., 1997). Then, we already talked about the three mechanisms that generate humor (affective, interpersonal, and cognitive) and that according to Speck (1990) are: arousal-safety; disparagement; incongruity-resolution (Speck, 1990, as cited in Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96). The latter is the most widely used method to generate humor in advertising (Hoffmann et al., 1997), it is a cognitive process that creates an effect of surprise and induces amusement when the incongruity is resolved (Eisend et al., 2014). Using one or a combination of these three mechanisms creates, according to Speck (1990), five types of humor (Speck, 1990, as cited in Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96):

- Comic wit: generated solely by incongruity-resolution (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96).
- Sentimental comedy: generated by a mix of incongruity-resolution and arousal-safety (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96).
- Satire: generated by a mix of incongruity-resolution and humorous disparagement (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96).
- Sentimental humor: generated solely by arousal-safety (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96).
- Full comedy: generated by a mix of the three mechanisms (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96).

Comic wit appears to be the simplest type of humor and therefore the most popular one (Hatzithomas et al., 2011), which follows the idea that incongruity-resolution is the preferred humor mechanism in advertising. It is mainly used in print advertising (Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 64). Sentimental humor is also considered an easy type of humor to use, since it relies on just one mechanism, arousal-safety (Hoffmann et al., 2014). These are warm, sentimental images or slogans based on the little things in life that everyone can relate to, and which create

a sense of empathy (Hoffmann et al., 2014, p. 96). With regard to the disparagement mechanism, aggressive humor can be cited as an example. It refers to amusement that can be created based on humiliation, the misfortune of others, or making a mockery of others (Gregory et al., 2019).

Brands choice between the different types of humor depends on if they intent to entertain or to inform their target consumers (Hatzithomas et al., 2011). In their study, Hatzithomas, Zotos, and Boutsouki (2009) illustrate the use of these different types of humor in advertising with the example of Greece and the United Kingdom (UK). On one hand, they demonstrated that in Greece, advertisers use sentimental comedy and comic wit when they want to provide information, and they use full comedy and satire when they intent to entertain consumers (Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 71). On the other hand, if advertisers from the UK wish to entertain consumers, they use full comedy, comic wit, sentimental comedy, and satire, whereas they use sentimental humor when they want to inform consumers (Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 71).

This basis being established, we can now develop how differences in cultural dimensions influence the use of humor in advertising. Various studies have demonstrated the best manner to apply humor based on the cultural characteristics of the group targeted by brands. In most cases, it is determined using the model of Hofstede.

4.1.2. Hofstede cultural dimensions model

The cultural dimensions model developed by Hofstede in the context of cross-cultural communication is the most used national culture framework (Soares et al., 2007). It examines cultural characteristics around six dimensions (Soares et al., 2007):

- Individualism - Collectivism: it describes the relationship of individuals within a culture; either they take care of themselves and their family (individualistic) or they take care of their group (collectivistic) (Soares et al., 2007, p. 280).
- Power distance: it reflects the relationship with authority; a high-power distance relates to a high hierarchy (Soares et al., 2007, p. 280).
- Uncertainty avoidance: it reflects the extent to which uncertainty represents a threat to individuals (Soares et al., 2007, p. 280).

- Long-term orientation: it indicates how the present and future relate to the past; it can be either a long-term vision or a short-term vision in which tradition is honored (Soares et al., 2007, p. 281; Nickerson, 2023).
- Masculinity - Femininity: masculine cultures are more focused on success and achievement, while feminine cultures value quality of life and care for others (Soares et al., 2007, p. 280).
- Indulgent - Restraint: it refers to the extent to which a society satisfies its desires (Nickerson, 2023).

Hofstede's model is widely used in marketing research when it comes to analyzing differences between cultures (Soares et al., 2007). It has been used, for example, in studies examining the influence of cultural characteristics in the context of advertising, including humorous advertisements (Soares et al., 2007; Hatzithomas et al., 2011). Some of the six dimensions appeared to be interesting in this context; it is the case of uncertainty avoidance and collectivism-individualism (Soares et al., 2007; Hatzithomas et al., 2011).

4.1.2.a. Uncertainty avoidance

Regarding uncertainty avoidance, studies revealed that humor works best in cultures with low uncertainty avoidance (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Hatzithomas et al., 2011). As a matter of fact, people from these cultures are more inclined to take risks and are therefore more likely to be convinced by less serious, funnier advertisements (Hatzithomas et al., 2011). In these cultures, even offensive humor can be considered funny (Hatzithomas et al., 2011, p. 63). On the contrary, cultures that feel threatened by uncertainty will need advertisements whose results are safe or resolved (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 23). These cultures must receive useful information about the product or service being advertised (Hatzithomas et al., 2011). Therefore, information-dominant humorous advertisements are best suited to cultures that strongly avoid uncertainty, while humor-dominant advertisements can work with low uncertainty avoidance cultures (Hatzithomas et al., 2011).

4.1.2.b. Collectivism - individualism

Concerning collectivism or individualism, studies have shown that collectivistic cultures prefer advertisements using indirect communication (including both an informative and a creative

part) and in which the humor is based on the mechanism of arousal-safety, such as sentimental humor (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Hatzithomas et al., 2011). This is not surprising, given the emphasis these cultures place on social norms and values (Gregory et al., 2019). This also implies that humor that might be considered offensive should not be used in advertising aimed at collectivistic groups (Hatzithomas et al., 2011). As for individualistic cultures, these favor advertisements that directly demonstrate the benefits of the product or brand being advertised (Hatzithomas et al., 2011). For these groups, information-dominant advertising is favored to increase positive attitudes towards the advertisement, and thereby towards the brand (Hatzithomas et al., 2011). When humor is used in advertisements targeting individualistic cultures, it is recommended to use a humor that is built around the incongruity-resolution mechanism, i.e., mainly comic wit (Hoffmann et al., 2014).

4.1.2.c. Link with intergroup humor

To make the link with the context of intergroup humor that is the focus of this work, it is interesting to analyze humor based on disparagement mechanism, such as aggressive humor, which can be used to denigrate others. In relation to Hofstede's model, studies found that this type of humor is better suited to advertisements targeting individualistic cultures (Gregory et al., 2019). This is partly because these cultures are more likely to appreciate the sense of superiority that derogatory humor can induce (Gregory et al., 2019). Conversely, aggressive humor should not be used in advertisements aimed at collectivistic cultures because, as with offensive humor, it can arouse negative feelings and even anxiety, since it undermines the harmony to which they are attached (Gregory et al., 2019).

Now that we have laid the foundations for understanding the influence of cultural differences on the use of humor in advertising, we can focus on the subject of this paper: intergroup humor in advertising.

4.2. Intergroup humor in advertising

As an extension of the use of humor as a technique for increasing the effectiveness of advertising, brands sometimes go further than simple jokes by playing on the differences that exist between social groups. Once their segmentation has identified target consumers, advertisers can conduct research to discover the characteristics of the group to which they

belong, and in particular the type of humor that suits them. They can also look for differences that exist between this group and others to use as a strategy and, consequently, use intergroup humor.

As we discussed earlier, intergroup humor can refer to the use of ethnic humor, i.e., when one group attempts to create amusement based on stereotypes about another group. This type of humor is sometimes used in advertising, and not only in relation to origins, but also in relation to age or gender, for example (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). The latter is the most common example of intergroup humor in advertising; advertisers use sexist jokes against the opposite gender of their target consumers in the hope of increasing advertising effectiveness and, consequently, purchase intent. Male stereotypes are particularly used in humorous advertisements, based on the results of studies indicating that the use of stereotypes in advertising induces greater positive effects on female viewers (Eisend et al., 2014).

The humor mechanism most closely associated with stereotypical advertising is disparagement (or interpersonal mechanism). This is an intense and discriminatory form of intergroup humor that can be linked to the idea that the humor agent is seeking a sense of superiority (Hodson & MacInnis, 2016). Here, the agent, i.e., the advertised brand, may also want to share this feeling of superiority with their target consumers to amuse them, in the hope of arousing positive affection and increasing purchase intent.

It seems obvious that intergroup humor is used in advertising because it has its advantages. Nevertheless, it also has its disadvantages, just like ethnic or disparaging humor in general.

4.2.1. Advantages

The benefits that can be derived from the use of intergroup humor in advertising are mainly for brands if the desired effects are created. As a reminder, humor is used as a technique to improve the effectiveness of advertising and, consequently, increase purchase intention. Humor can achieve this by creating positive consumer affection for the advertisement and, hence, for the brand (Teixeira & Stipp, 2013). In the case of intergroup humor, if the brand succeeds in making its target consumer group laugh at the stereotypes they could have against another group, they might not only enjoy the advertisement but also the brand, because they will think they share the same characteristics and beliefs (Eisend et al., 2014). This would strengthen the bond

between the brand and its consumers. As a result, marketing objectives will be achieved, and purchase intent and brand loyalty will increase.

However, this can only happen if the brand does not fear losing other consumers who might perceive the advertisement as offensive, and we will see later that this perception depends on certain factors.

4.2.2. *Disadvantages*

As already mentioned, the use of ethnic humor can reinforce stereotypes (Miller, 2011). This impact is even greater when used in advertising, due to its high visibility. The stereotypes used by advertisers will reinforce those already present in the minds of target consumers and may even create new ones for viewers unfamiliar with the group stereotyped. In addition, stereotypes are generally misleading because, most of the time, they are based on false beliefs (Eisend et al., 2014). But if they are combined with humor, viewers will tend not to examine or question the validity of the stereotyped content, because the humorous part will distract and be the focus (Eisend et al., 2014; Gregory et al., 2019; Miller, 2011). Moreover, even if there is no direct, visible change in the viewers' attitude, the stereotypes will still be more accessible in their mind, since they will have to use their brain to process and try to understand the humor (Miller, 2011, p. 38).

4.3. Example of cross-cultural humor in advertising

In an article, Gulas and Weinberger (2010) gave an interesting example of an advertisement that had a positive impact in one country (the advertisement's target) but a negative impact in another. The advertisement was created by the brand "Absolute Vodka", which developed a marketing campaign around the idea of an "absolute world" where everything is better (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 24). In 2008, the brand created an advertisement featuring a map of North America in 1821¹. At that time, Mexico was a much larger territory, including some of the lands that are now part of the United States of America (these currently represent the following states: Arizona, Texas, California, New Mexico, and partly Colorado); Mexico had to cede those parts of its territory after a two-year war, which has always left a bitter taste in

¹ Appendix 1

the mouths of some Mexicans who consider that these lands were stolen from them (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, pp. 24-25). The advertisement featuring this map was released only in Mexico, the target country, with the intention of reminding people of a more ideal time (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, pp. 25-26). The campaign was a success with Mexican consumers, but even if it was not broadcast in the United States, Americans still saw it, because of today's technologies that allow information to circulate easily and quickly (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). Many Americans were offended by the advertisement and became angry at the brand, which had to issue a public apology to explain that its intention had never been to offend the United States (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010).

Therefore, this advertisement had the expected positive effects in the target country, but also unintended negative effects in another country. This brings us to the fact that the perception of advertising can vary considerably from one culture to another. We will now look at what affects the perception of intergroup humor.

5. Perception of intergroup humor in advertising

Now that we have analyzed how intergroup humor can be used in advertising, let's look at how it is perceived. In this section, we will begin by theoretically specify how perceptions of intergroup humor can differ. We will then present the empirical study that will enable us to put the hypotheses derived from the literature review to the test.

5.1. What can influence perception

What happened with the Absolute Vodka campaign is a good example of the fact that today, advertising travels (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010), and consumers other than those targeted can see it, even if they come from another country where it is not broadcast. As a matter of fact, we live in a globalized world, therefore, unlike a joke told in a private context, advertisements cross borders and reach non-targeted audiences (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). They will not only see the humorous advertisement, they will also interpret it. As they may have cultural differences with the advertisers' target audience, they may have a different sense of humor and perceive the advertisement as offensive rather than amusing (Eisend, 2009; Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). This could create negative feelings about the advertisement and, ultimately, the brand advertised, which could lead to boycott or backlashes against the brand. This is especially true when ethnic or disparaging humor is used. Chances are that the group targeted by the stereotypes will perceive the advertisement negatively (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010).

For brands to ensure the effectiveness of their advertising campaign, it is essential to do research not only to determine the best choice of humor, but also to anticipate the different ways in which it might be interpreted, by target consumers and other viewers. Intended humor and perceived humor being two distinct concepts (Crawford & Gregory, 2014). In the context of intergroup humor in advertisements, perception will depend, as with humor in general, on several factors. Among these, two that interest us in this study are the relationship between the three actors involved in the humor process, and the level of social identification.

5.1.1. *Agent, subject of the joke, and audience in humoristic advertising*

Within the framework of advertising, the agent of humor becomes the brand, the advertiser, and the recipient becomes the consumer. As for the subject, it becomes the content of the advertisement, i.e., the product or service advertised, the message, the characters, and the

humor. When advertisements use intergroup humor, and in particular disparaging humor, advertisers become not only agents of jokes, but also agents of discrimination, since their intention is to make people laugh by making fun of a certain group. However, consumers' understanding and appreciation of humor will depend on several factors.

Since everyone belongs to one or more social groups, this will be the case for every actor involved here, even the characters featured in the advertisement (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010). This means that there may be boundaries between them, which could be gender, age, origin, or religion, for instance (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010, p. 19). These specific characteristics will influence consumers' ability, on the one hand, to understand humor (they may not be sufficiently familiar with it) and, on the other hand, to interpret it as amusing or offensive (Gulas and Weinberger, 2010). Furthermore, we have seen that the perception of humor can vary according to the relationship and degree of similarity between the three actors involved in the process (Kieffer, 2013; Miller, 2011); this obviously applies in the context of advertising. We can give two examples that apply to advertisements using intergroup humor. In the first case, consumers belong to the same group as the brand, but have no characteristics in common with the group targeted by ethnic humor; we therefore expect the humor to be perceived as funny and the advertisement to be appreciated. In the second example, consumers belong to the group targeted by the humor and have no characteristics in common with the group to which the brand belongs; humor and the advertisement are expected to be perceived as offensive.

5.1.2. *Social identification*

We have already explained that belonging to a social group is linked to social identity. Being part of a social group not only satisfies the need to belong to a group made up of individuals with whom we share common characteristics, it also develops a level of social identification with that group. Members' level of social identification with their group varies, which can influence the perception of certain things, such as intergroup humor (Leach et al., 2008). According to a study carried out by Operario and Fiske (2001), within a group, members with a high level of identification perceive more discrimination (Operario & Fiske, 2001, as cited in Kieffer, 2013, p. 21). Therefore, members of the same group may perceive things, such as stereotypes about their group, differently depending on their own level of social identification.

The points developed above are all hypotheses that we will test in the empirical study.

5.2. Presentation of the empirical study

5.2.1. *Purpose of the study*

As we have discovered from the literature review, humor in advertising as well as cross-cultural comprehension of it have been studied many times. However, research generally focuses solely on understanding cultural differences and how to adapt advertising content to the target group. In the present study, we want to go a step further by examining how an advertisement using intergroup humor based on stereotypes is perceived by the stereotyped group depending on the origin of the advertised brand. The aim is to see what effects it will have on advertising effectiveness, in terms of purchase intention, attitude, brand image and perception of humor.

5.2.2. *Social groups analyzed*

To carry out this study, we decided to focus on social groups created around the country of origin. The choice fell on Belgium and France. This decision appeared to be relevant for several reasons.

These are neighboring countries which, although they each have their own specific characteristics, share certain common features. First, France and a part of Belgium speak the same language, i.e., French. Communication between these two groups is therefore easy, even if certain differences exist, such as the way numbers like "ninety" or "seventy" are pronounced. This common language enables the two countries to interact in a variety of ways. Among these, we can first note that many French people live in Belgium (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 2023), and many Belgians live in France (Service Public Général, 2021). Belgians regularly go on vacation to France; France was the number one destination for Belgians in 2022 (Statbel, 2023). Then, the same TV channels can be found in both countries. This is especially true for Belgium, which has fewer national channels and can find a wider choice of programs on French channels. Moreover, some supermarkets chains from both countries install themselves in the other country (e.g., Carrefour², Colruyt³...). Some Belgians also choose to do their weekly shopping in France, for reasons of price (Wuidart & Colinet, 2023).

² <https://magasins.carrefour.be/fr>

³ <https://www.colruyt.fr/fr/magasins>

Taking all these factors into account, we can conclude that the borders between the French-speaking part of Belgium and France can easily be crossed in several ways. As the same brands are sometimes available in both countries, if they create two different advertisements specific to each group, it is likely that consumers will end up seeing both versions. Either on TV, in a supermarket, or simply on the street. It is therefore important to analyze how the same advertisement will be perceived by both groups, to be able to predict its repercussions, and to know what risks are taken when using intergroup humor.

5.2.3. Cultural characteristics of the groups analyzed

Belgium and France share similarities due to their proximity and some common history. However, like each group, they also have their own characteristics.

5.2.3.a. Approach to advertising

France:

Economically, in 2022, advertising expenditure exceeded 16 billion euros in France (Dencheva, 2023, March 27). This comes as no surprise, considering that the French population has a diversified and high level of mass consumption (Lloyds Bank, 2023b). The majority of French people associate consumption with pleasure, and therefore attach importance to products and services linked to food, drink, travel, or culture, for example (Lloyds Bank, 2023b). The French expect two things from advertisements: to be informed about the product and its benefits, and to be entertained (Whitelock & Rey, 1998). The first implies that advertisements content will include relevant information, brand familiarization, arguments, and psychological appeals (Whitelock & Rey, 1998); the latter implies that these consumers like advertisements containing humor or even art, that will have them dreaming (Whitelock & Rey, 1998). A content that will also be effective with French consumers is what Whitelock and Rey (1998) characterize as egotistical advertising, i.e., the focus is put on demonstrating the luxury, classy aspects of the product, and the associated social benefits (Whitelock & Rey, 1998, pp. 272, 276).

Naturally, the content advertisers decide to include in their advertisements varies according to consumers preferences and expectations. Overall, the latest trend in French preferences places greater importance on sustainable and responsible products, as well as those made locally

(Lloyds Bank, 2023b). They will therefore value advertisements indicating that products have been made in France.

A 2021 survey indicated that half of the French consumers trust TV and magazine advertisements (Dencheva, 2023, January 5). These figures are not perfect, but they are consistent with the fact that today, many more factors influence consumers' opinion of a product. These include social media, which, mainly because of influencers, impact consumers decision-making (Lloyds Bank, 2023b).

Belgium:

Advertising in Belgium is not very different from that in France. In a similar way, Belgian consumers want to be both informed and entertained by advertising. Geuens and de Pelsmacker (1998) showed that both the cognitive and affective aspects of advertisements are important to Belgians, but the most important factor in shaping attitudes towards advertising and the brand is the affective side. The authors showed that emotional advertisements aroused more feelings (positive or negative) than non-emotional ones (Geuens & de Pelsmacker, 1998). In addition, Belgian consumers must also be provided with valuable information. For instance, price is an important factor influencing decision-making (Lloyds Bank, 2023a). If they do not receive the information they need, they can look for it on social media, which also influences their opinion (Lloyds Bank, 2023a). Advertisement content will vary according to the preferences of Belgians, who, as in France, are now focused on sustainability (Lloyds Bank, 2023a). Hence, they will be interested in information about these aspects of the products. However, while advertising can sometimes arouse positive affection for the advertised brand, for Belgians, brand loyalty is mainly based on experience, and the quality and price of products or services (Lloyds Bank, 2023a).

Moreover, a study carried out by Pieters and Baumgartner (1993) revealed that Belgian consumers appreciate the hedonic approach to advertising more than the utilitarian one. As a matter of fact, they see advertising as an art designed to entertain and cheer people up (Pieters & Baumgartner, 1993). Belgians tend not to believe the information provided by advertisements, which they rather see as misleading and manipulative (Pieters & Baumgartner, 1993).

5.2.3.b. *Approach to humor*

Both countries have a quite similar style of humor. In France, humor can be built around irony, or be cynical, at the expense of others, and caricatures are appreciated (De Saint Victor, 2019; Learnlight, 2022; Pastorelli, 2022). In Belgium, humor can be surreal or sometimes dark, but Belgians are mostly known for their self-mockery, which can be seen as the result of a willingness to make fun of oneself before someone else does (Pastorelli, 2022). Both France and Belgium also like humor based on puns. Moreover, each country likes to make fun of the other, mostly on the basis of stereotypes they hold.

Given the similarities in their approach to humor, and the fact that they share a common language, Belgians and French understand each other on this subject. This is also one of the reasons why many comedians from each country perform in the other and are generally appreciated by both (Pastorelli, 2022).

5.2.3.c. *Hofstede analysis*

Using Hofstede's model to analyze France and Belgium on the dimensions we have highlighted as interesting in the context of humor in advertising, we can see that the two countries are pretty much identical.

The first interesting dimension is collectivism-individualism. Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 being the most collectivist and 100 the most individualist. France has a score of 71 out of 100, while Belgium has a score of 75 out of 100 (Yoo & Lee, 2019, p.6). Both countries can therefore be considered quite individualistic.

The second dimension of interest is the level of uncertainty avoidance, which is also on a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 meaning low uncertainty avoidance and 100 meaning high uncertainty avoidance. Belgium has a score of 94 out of 100, and France 86 out of 100 (Yoo & Lee, 2019, p.6). We can therefore conclude that both countries tend to avoid uncertainty.

Based on the elements that we developed earlier, this analysis gives us an idea of the type of advertising best suited to Belgium and France. Firstly, advertisements should be direct, and present resolved or safe results. Secondly, useful information must be provided, such as product

and/or brand benefits. Humor can be used, especially if it is based on the incongruity-resolution mechanism (e.g., comic wit), but the humorous part should not be too large compared to the informative part. Information-dominant humorous advertisements are suggested as the best choice for these groups.

5.2.4. *Relations between Belgium and France*

We have already established many links between France and Belgium, but we can also compare them in terms of superiority and inferiority. There are a few points that lead us to assume that France is a superior group to Belgium. To name a few, France is about twenty times larger than Belgium (Diplomeo, 2021). Following on from this, the French population is also larger than in Belgium, by around 6 times (Diplomeo, 2021; Statbel, 2018). Moreover, in 2022, France's gross domestic product was almost five times higher than Belgium's⁴ (Statista Research Department, 2023). This idea of superiority will add an interesting dimension to our study.

5.2.4.a. *Stereotypes they hold of each other*

Another point that needs to be addressed before going further into our empirical study is the stereotypes that Belgium and France have of each other. Some are well known to all, while others are a little more discreet.

Starting with France, Belgians stereotypically perceive the French as, on a physical level, wearing a beret, a marinière, and with a baguette under their arm (Salmon, 2022; Tatiana, 2018). On a psychological level, they are sometimes described as pretentious, lazy, and rude (Salmon, 2022; Tatiana, 2018). As for Belgium, French people tend to describe Belgians as people with a funny accent, nice but a bit stupid, and who consume exclusively fries and beers (Femmes d'aujourd'hui, 2023; Hors frontières, n.d.).

France and Belgium sometimes agree on stereotypes, thus constructing meta-stereotypes. This is what Yzerbyt, Provost, and Corneille (2005) demonstrated in their study. The authors took the stereotype identifying French people as better practitioners of the French language than French-speaking Belgians and demonstrated that both French and Belgians believe this to be

⁴ See related table in Appendix 2.

true (Yzerbyt et al., 2005). They also showed that the Belgians thought the French would see them as less good at speaking French, and that the French thought the Belgians would see them as better at speaking French (Yzerbyt et al., 2005). This can support the idea of perceived superiority of the French compared to the Belgians, even in the realm of stereotypes.

6. Empirical study

Now that we have presented the theoretical elements of our empirical study, we can focus on its execution and analysis.

6.1. OSF Pre-registration

As this research was experimental, and in the interests of transparency and compliance with certain standards, OSF pre-registration was carried out before data analysis⁵. In that pre-registration, the hypotheses to be tested and the methodology to be applied were described. This allows us to declare that no manipulation was made that could have favored the findings of our research. This procedure testifies to the reliability and relevance we follow in this work.

6.2. Methodology

For this master's thesis, we have chosen to carry out a quantitative study. The aim of this study is to examine the perception of intergroup humor in advertisement, around social groups based on origin. We chose France and Belgium for the reasons described above (in point 5.2.2.). In this study, we will analyze Belgian participants' perceptions of an advertisement using humor based on stereotypes about Belgians. The element we are going to vary is the origin of the advertised brand, which will be either French or Belgian. This choice was made on the basis that perception is influenced by the relationship between the humor agent (here the advertiser) and the recipient (here the consumers) (Kieffer, 2013; Miller, 2011). Moreover, we chose to analyze the perception of Belgians because of the idea that this group is inferior to the French, and the fact that this may have a negative influence on perception (Driskell & Salas, 2005).

6.2.1. Hypotheses

We developed the hypotheses to be tested based on our reviews of previous studies, our objectives, and the elements we identified as having an influence on the perception of intergroup humor. Our hypotheses are therefore as follows:

⁵ <https://osf.io/h593d>

Hypothesis 1: Viewers' perception of an advertisement using humor about their group will vary depending on whether the advertised brand belongs to the same group or whether the advertised brand belongs to a group considered superior.

Hypothesis 1a: Belgian respondents exposed to the French brand will show a more negative attitude towards the advertisement than those exposed to the Belgian brand.

Hypothesis 1b: Belgian respondents exposed to the French brand will perceive humor more negatively than those exposed to the Belgian brand.

Hypothesis 1c: Belgian respondents exposed to the French brand will have a lower purchase intention than those exposed to the Belgian brand.

Hypothesis 1d: Belgian respondents exposed to the French brand will have a more negative image of the brand than those exposed to the Belgian brand.

Hypothesis 2: Viewers showing strong identification with their nation will have more negative perceptions of an advertisement using humor about their group if it is issued by a brand belonging to a group considered superior.

Hypothesis 2a: The more Belgian respondents identify with Belgium, the more negative their attitude towards the advertisement will be if the brand is French rather than Belgian.

Hypothesis 2b: The more Belgian respondents identify with Belgium, the more negative their perception of humor will be if the brand is French rather than Belgian.

Hypothesis 2c: The more Belgian respondents identify with Belgium, the lower their purchase intention will be if the brand is French rather than Belgian.

Hypothesis 2d: The more Belgian respondents identify with Belgium, the more negative their image of the brand will be if the brand is French rather than Belgian.

6.2.2. Data Collection

We chose to collect our data online, via a questionnaire. This allowed participants to respond in a familiar setting, adapted to their everyday life, in which they would normally be subjected to advertising. These participants were recruited mainly via social networks and word of mouth. All participants were invited to fill in a questionnaire (which was built on the Qualtrics website), containing a number of questions as well as the presentation of an advertisement. So, before describing the content of this questionnaire, let's start by describing the advertisements used.

6.2.2.a. Advertisements used

For this study, we created fictitious advertisements using intergroup humor, for a fictitious brand called “Vulie”⁶. We have chosen to present a beverage, as it falls into the yellow goods category, which we have previously identified as the most suitable for humorous advertising (Spotts et al., 1997). Two versions of the advertisements were created, one in which Vulie was a French brand, the other in which it was a Belgian brand⁷. In each version, the elements relating to the brand's origin have been modified accordingly, namely the flags (Belgium or France), the link to the website (Vulie.be or Vulie.fr) and the country where the product was made (Belgium or France). Apart from that, we kept all other elements identical in both versions, to ensure that only the origin of the brand could influence perception. More importantly, the joke used remained the same: a joke based on stereotypes about Belgians. The joke was as follows: “How do you get little Belgians to drink Vulie juice? By giving it the color of fries”. We added the term “Little Belgians”, to induce the idea of inferiority of that group.

In addition, when creating the advertisements, we considered the information gathered through the analysis of advertising trends in France and Belgium, as well as the analysis based on the Hofstede model. Given that these two groups expect to be both entertained and informed by advertisements, we included some information about the product.

6.2.2.b. The questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of five pages⁸. The first page gave information about the survey and asked respondents to accept or decline to participate. Participants had to agree to participate to access the rest of the questionnaire. If they did not accept, they were taken directly to the last page.

On the second page, participants were asked to answer questions about their social identification with Belgium. It consisted of twelve items taken from Leach and al. (2008) scale and measured on a seven-points Likert scale going from “strongly disagree” to “completely agree”. This made it possible to measure the degree to which each participant identified with

⁶ The advertisements were created on <https://www.canva.com>.

⁷ Appendix 3

⁸ Appendix 4

his or her group, i.e., Belgium. These twelve items were the same for all participants, but they were presented to each of them in a random order.

The third page was the presentation of one of the advertisements created. Indeed, this was a between-subjects variable, since each participant was randomly assigned to only one of the two versions (conditions) of the advertisement, either the one in which Vulie is a Belgian brand, or the one in which Vulie is a French brand. Participants were asked to analyze the advertisement carefully before moving on to the next page.

On the fourth page, participants were asked to answer a series of questions testing four categories of effects: attitude, humor perception, purchase intention, and brand image. Attitude was measured using five items from Gazley and al. (2015) scale and MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) scale. Humor perception was measured using four items from Cline and Kellaris (2007) scale. Purchase intention was measured using one item from Dam (2020a) scale. And brand image was measured using two items from Dam (2020b) scale. For all these items, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed, on a seven-points Likert scale going from “strongly disagree” to “completely agree”. All these items were the same for all participants, but they were presented to each of them in a random order.

On the fifth and final page, participants were asked to answer demographic questions about their gender and age. The questionnaire ended after that.

6.2.2.c. *The sample*

As specified, the sample consisted solely of Belgian participants. The target sample size was 200 respondents. Data collection stopped shortly after this number had been reached.

267 responses were collected in total. However, some had to be removed before analysis. 3 responses were removed because, on the first page, participants did not agree to participate and therefore could not fill in the rest of the questionnaire. 52 responses were removed because they did not finish to complete the questionnaire. Finally, 1 response was removed because of non-plausible answers to the demographic questions.

The final sample is composed of 211 participants. Among these are 152 women and 59 men. Participants' age varies from 18 to 77, the mean being of 42.14, and the median of 45. We can therefore say that our sample is quite diversified. 106 participants were presented with the Belgian condition, and 105 were presented with the French condition.

6.2.3. Data exportation

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS software, so we had to export the data from the Qualtrics site on which they had been collected. To this end, we first exported the dataset to an Excel file, in order to remove data from participants who did not answer the questionnaire correctly (as described in point 6.2.2.c.). The Excel file containing the data was then imported into SPSS for analysis.

6.2.4. Data analysis.

Before testing our hypotheses, we first had to analyze the consistency and reliability of certain variables. A Principal Component Analysis was performed for the variable "Identification" and Cronbach's alpha tests were performed for each of the following variables: Attitude, Perception of humor, Brand Image, and Identification.

Then, to test our hypotheses and analyze the topic of this paper, namely the perception of intergroup humor in advertisement, we ran linear regressions to examine the relationships between our dependent and independent variables. The dependent variables were attitude towards the advertisement, perception of humor, purchase intention, and brand image. The independent variables were Belgian participants' in-group identification (with Belgium) and the condition of the advertisement, either one in which Vulie is of Belgian origin or one in which it is of French origin. The regressions were as follows:

$$A = C_{B/F} + I + (C_{B/F} * I)$$

$$PH = C_{B/F} + I + (C_{B/F} * I)$$

$$PI = C_{B/F} + I + (C_{B/F} * I)$$

$$BI = C_{B/F} + I + (C_{B/F} * I)$$

Each abbreviation corresponds to the following variables:

I = Identification;

C_{B/F} = Condition of the advertisement (Brand of either Belgian or French origin);

A = Attitude;

PH = Perception of Humor;

PI = Purchase Intention;

BI = Brand Image.

6.3. Results

6.3.1. Analysis of measurement scales

6.3.1.a. In-group identification scale

To measure Belgian participants' in-group identification with Belgium, we used Leach and al (2008) scale. The twelve items composing that scale are categorized into four dimensions: Solidarity, Satisfaction, Centrality, and Individual self-stereotyping (Leach et al., 2008). In the context of this study, we were interested in grouping together the twelve items into one variable rather than separating them into those four dimensions. Therefore, we carried out a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to check that we could summarize all the items into one component, i.e., Identification. The PCA revealed that one component could be extracted⁹ and Figure 1 shows that all the items are positively correlated to the component. This meant that these twelve items can be grouped into one variable, Identification.

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Identification _1	,781
Identification _2	,750
Identification _3	,763
Identification _4	,795
Identification _5	,703
Identification _6	,742
Identification _7	,808
Identification _8	,667
Identification _9	,788
Identification _10	,786
Identification _11	,593
Identification _12	,595

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Figure 1 - Component Matrix

Moreover, we carried out a Cronbach's alpha test with the items. Figure 2 shows that the value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.920. Considering that the scale is validated when the value is higher than 0.7 (Christmann & Van Aelst, 2006), we can say that the scale is reliable, consistent, and can therefore be used in our analyses. Thanks to the CPA and the Cronbach's alpha test, we could create the variable "Identification", by calculating the mean of the twelve items.

⁹ Appendix 5

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,920	12

Figure 2 - Cronbach's alpha test for "Identification"

6.3.1.b. Attitude scale

To measure participant's attitude towards the advertisement, we used five items taken from Gazley and al. (2015) scale and MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) scale. To test the reliability of our scale, we carried out a Cronbach's alpha test. Figure 3 shows that we obtained a value of 0.940, allowing us to say that the scale is reliable, consistent, and can be used for our analyses. We then created the variable "Attitude" by calculating the mean of the five items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,940	5

Figure 3 - Cronbach's alpha test for "Attitude"

6.3.1.c. Perception of humor scale

To measure participants' perception of humor, we used four items from Cline and Kellaris (2007) scale. This scale contained a reversed item, namely "this advertisement was serious", which can be used to test the coherence of respondents' answers. Before analysis, we reversed that item. Then, we carried out a Cronbach's alpha test with the four items. Figure 4 shows that the value obtained was equal to 0.614, which is lower than the required threshold of 0.7 and indicates that our scale is not reliable enough. By making further analysis, we discovered that the reversed item was an issue. Indeed, as Figure 5 indicates, Cronbach's alpha would be of 0.938 without that item. We discussed with some participants who revealed that in that item they understood "serious" as "professional", making it deviate from the measurement of humor perception. We therefore removed that item from our analysis, to keep a reliable and consistent

scale. We then created the new variable “Perception of Humor”, by computing the mean of the three items left.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,614	4

Figure 4 - Cronbach's alpha test for “Perception of Humor”

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Perception humour_1	12,3981	8,926	,769	,213
Perception humour_2	12,5972	9,175	,742	,242
Recoded_PH3	11,5213	22,060	-,359	,938
Perception humour_4	12,2227	8,783	,770	,206

Figure 5 - Cronbach's alpha if item removed

6.3.1.d. Brand Image scale

To measure participants' image of the brand, we used two items from Dam (2020b) scale. We carried out a Cronbach's alpha test and obtained, as shown on Figure 6, a value of 0.892. This reveals the reliability of our scale, which can therefore be used in our analyses. We then created the variable “Brand Image” by computing the mean of the two items.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,892	2

Figure 6 - Cronbach's alpha test for “Brand Image”

6.3.1.e. Purchase Intention scale

The scale measuring Purchase Intention was composed of only one item from Dam (2020a) scale. No test for Cronbach's alpha was therefore conducted, and the values of the variable “Purchase Intention” were based on that item.

6.3.2. Regressions analysis

6.3.2.a. Attitude

The multiple linear regression we carried out with the dependent variable “Attitude” was designed to test our hypotheses 1a and 2a. Here (Figure 7) are the results we obtained. The "Condition" and "Identification" variables are significant, with p-values of 0.012 and 0.010 respectively, which are below the 0.05 threshold. However, the p-value for the interaction variable “ID_Condition” is greater than 0.05. By performing a simple linear regression of this variable with the “Attitude” variable, we were able to find a significant relationship, with a p-value of 0.042 (Figure 8). These results are also confirmed by the correlation matrix¹⁰, which revealed positive and significant correlations between the "Attitude" variable and each of the independent variables. We can see that the regression respects the conditions of homoscedasticity¹¹ and normal distribution of residuals¹² and does not suffer from multicollinearity. Our regression model is therefore valid, and the interpretation of our results is unbiased.

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,620	,113		31,975	<,001		
	Condition	,287	,113	,214	2,536	,012	,619	1,616
	Identification_Tot	,246	,094	,176	2,607	,010	,969	1,032
	ID_Condition	,039	,094	,035	,410	,682	,605	1,652

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude_Tot

Figure 7 - Multiple regression, “Attitude” and all the independent variables

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,806	,092		41,501	<,001		
	ID_Condition	,154	,076	,140	2,045	,042	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude

Figure 8 - Simple regression, “Attitude” and “ID_Condition”

¹⁰ Appendix 6

¹¹ Appendix 7 & 8

¹² Appendix 9

Given the significance of this interaction variable, we ran further simple regressions between the dependent variable "Attitude" and the independent variable "Identification", separately for each of the two conditions (Belgian brand and French brand). The results presented in Figures 9 and 10 show that identification is significant in the Belgian condition, with a p-value of 0.041.

Coefficients^{a,b}

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,907	,156		25,068	<,001		
	Identification	,284	,138	,199	2,066	,041	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude

b. Selecting only cases for which Condition = 1

Figure 9 - Simple regression, "Attitude" and "Identification" for Belgian Condition

Coefficients^{a,b}

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,333	,164		20,359	<,001		
	Identification	,207	,127	,159	1,635	,105	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude

b. Selecting only cases for which Condition = -1

Figure 10 - Simple regression, "Attitude" and "Identification" for French Condition

Given all these results, we can accept our hypothesis 1a; with the significant relationship and the positive coefficients, we demonstrated that participants exposed to the Belgian condition showed a more positive attitude towards the advertisement than those exposed to the French condition¹³. However, we can only partially accept our hypothesis 2a. As a matter of fact, we have shown that the "Identification" variable contributes significantly to the prediction of the "Attitude" variable. We have also shown that the interaction between the "Condition" and "Identification" variables has an influence on attitude. Given the positive coefficients, among participants who identify most with Belgium¹⁴, those exposed to the Belgian condition showed a more positive attitude than those exposed to the French condition. Nevertheless, this result

¹³ The Belgian condition had the value of "1", while the French condition had the value of "-1".

¹⁴ The values of the identification variable ranged from "-3" to "3"; -3 being the lowest level of in-group identification, and 3 being the highest level of identification.

was obtained by considering the two conditions together. When we analyzed the "Identification" variable for each of the conditions separately, this revealed significance only for the Belgian condition, and not for the French one.

6.3.2.b. Perception of Humor

The multiple linear regression we carried out with the dependent variable "Perception of humor" was designed to test our hypotheses 1b and 2b. The results (Figure 11) revealed that none of the independent variables was significant, with all p-values above the 0.05 threshold. We tried to find significance by removing the interaction variable (i.e., ID_Condition) to improve the model, but the results did not show any significance either. These results were confirmed by analysis of the correlation matrix¹⁵. We can see that the regression respects the conditions of homoscedasticity¹⁶ and normal distribution of residuals¹⁷ and does not suffer from multicollinearity. Our regression model is therefore valid, and the interpretation of our results is unbiased.

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	3,684	,136	27,076	<,001			
	Condition	,137	,136	,088	1,010	,313	,619	1,616
	Identification_Tot	,210	,113	,129	1,854	,065	,969	1,032
	ID_Condition	,045	,113	,035	,397	,692	,605	1,652

a. Dependent Variable: HumorPerception_Tot

Figure 11 - Multiple regression, "Perception of Humor" and all the independent variables

Based on these results, we must reject our hypotheses 1b and 2b. We did not demonstrate that the condition of the advertisement or the participants' level of identification with Belgium had any influence on their perception of humor.

¹⁵ Appendix 10

¹⁶ Appendix 11 & 12

¹⁷ Appendix 13

6.3.2.c. *Purchase Intention*

The multiple linear regression we carried out with the dependent variable "purchase intention" was designed to test our hypotheses 1c and 2c. The results (Figure 12) reveal the significance of the "Condition" and "Identification" variables, with p-values of less than 0.001 and 0.031 respectively, which are below the 0.05 threshold. Nevertheless, it also revealed that the interaction variable (i.e., ID_Condition) is not significant, with a p-value of 0.902. We therefore performed a simple linear regression between this variable and the dependent variable "purchase intention". This result is significant, with a p-value of 0.016 (Figure 13). These results were confirmed by analysis of the correlation matrix¹⁸, which revealed significant, positive correlations between Purchase Intention and each of the independent variables. However, the regression suffers from a heteroscedastic bias¹⁹, our model is therefore invalid, and the interpretation of our results is biased. Thereby, we cannot use this model to test our hypotheses 1c and 2c, which were to demonstrate that the condition of the advertisement and the level of identification of participants with Belgium would have an influence on their purchase intention.

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
1		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	3,392	,137		24,720	<,001		
	Condition	,475	,137	,289	3,464	<,001	,619	1,616
	Identification_Tot	,247	,114	,145	2,166	,031	,969	1,032
	ID_Condition	,014	,114	,010	,123	,902	,605	1,652

a. Dependent Variable: Intention d'achat_1

Figure 12 - Multiple regression, "Purchase Intention" and all the independent variables

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
1		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	3,582	,112		31,962	<,001		
	ID_Condition	,225	,092	,166	2,434	,016	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: Intention d'achat_1

Figure 13 - Simple regression, "Purchase Intention" and "ID_Condition"

¹⁸ Appendix 14

¹⁹ Appendix 15 & 16

6.3.2.d. Brand Image

The multiple linear regression we carried out with the dependent variable "Brand image" was designed to test our hypotheses 1d and 2d. Here are the results we obtained (Figure 14). The "Identification" variable is significant, with a p-value of 0.019, below the 0.05 threshold. However, as the "Condition" variable and the interaction variable (i.e., ID_Condition) were not significant, we attempted new regressions. To try to find significance in the "condition" variable, we ran the same multiple regression, but removed the interaction variable, which finally revealed significance in the "condition" variable, with a p-value of 0.013 (Figure 15). In an attempt to find significance in the interaction variable, we ran a simple linear regression between it and the "Brand Image" variable, but no significance was found (Figure 16). These results were confirmed by analysis of the correlation matrix²⁰. We can see that the regression respects the conditions of homoscedasticity²¹ and normal distribution of residuals²² and does not suffer from multicollinearity. Our regression model is therefore valid, and the interpretation of our results is unbiased.

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,586	,113		31,837	<,001		
	Condition	,196	,113	,150	1,744	,083	,619	1,616
	Identification_Tot	,221	,094	,162	2,355	,019	,969	1,032
	ID_Condition	,033	,094	,031	,357	,722	,605	1,652

a. Dependent Variable: BrandImage_Tot

Figure 14 - Multiple regression, "Brand Image" and all the independent variables

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,590	,112		32,068	<,001		
	Condition	,221	,088	,169	2,501	,013	1,000	1,000
	Identification_Tot	,215	,092	,158	2,333	,021	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: BrandImage_Tot

Figure 15 - Multiple regression, "Brand Image", "Condition" and "Identification"

²⁰ Appendix 18

²¹ Appendix 19 & 20

²² Appendix 21

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3,753	,090		41,611	<,001		
	ID_Condition	,106	,074	,099	1,433	,153	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: BrandImage

Figure 16 - Simple regression, “Brand Image” and “ID_Condition”

In view of these results, we can accept our hypothesis 1d; with the significant relationship and the positive coefficients, we have shown that participants exposed to the Belgian condition had a more positive image of the brand than those exposed to the French condition²³. However, even if the “Identification” variable is significant, we must reject hypothesis 2d, as it is based on the interaction variable, which is not significant.

²³ As a reminder, the Belgian condition had the value of “1”, while the French condition had the value of “-1”.

7. Discussion

The aim of this study was to test hypotheses concerning the perception of intergroup humor in advertisement. What we observed was Belgian participants' perception of an advertisement using humor based on stereotypes about Belgians. We analyzed whether responses differed according to whether the brand was of Belgian origin, and therefore intra-group, or of French origin, and therefore of another group considered superior. This follows on from research information highlighting that the link between the agent of the joke (in this case the brand), the subject of the joke, and the audience (in this case the consumers) has an impact on the understanding and appreciation of advertising (Gulas & Weinberger, 2010; Miller, 2011). In our study, the audience remained the same as the subject of the stereotyped joke, i.e., Belgians.

Our results show that brand origin has an impact on consumers' attitudes towards the advertisement and on their image of the brand. In the case of the Belgian and therefore intra-group brand, ethnic humor was apparently not perceived as offensive, since it induced a more positive attitude and a more positive image of the brand. In the context in which the brand was French and therefore from a superior out-of-group, the attitude and brand image were more negative. We could link this to a conditioning process, as explained by Eisend (2009); in the French brand condition, a less positive affection and attitude towards the humorous advertisement led to a less positive brand image. Our results are therefore consistent with the works of Eisend (2009), Gulas and Weinberger (2010), Miller (2011), and Teixeira and Stipp (2013).

We also discovered that the more Belgian consumers identify with Belgium, the more positive their attitude and image of the brand. As far as the image of the brand is concerned, it is apparently not influenced by the brand's origin. However, our study reveals that the interaction between the level of group identification and the origin of the advertised brand influences Belgian consumers' attitudes towards the advertisement. A high level of group identification leads to a more positive attitude towards advertising if the brand advertised is also of Belgian origin. Our deeper analysis has shown that the level of in-group identification of the Belgian consumers has a particular impact on attitude in the context of a Belgian brand. But in the context of the French brand, the level of identification of Belgian consumers does not contribute significantly to the formation of their attitude towards the advertisement. We can therefore assume that, when faced with a brand belonging to a group considered superior and which uses

humor based on stereotypes about Belgians in its advertising, the more negative attitude of Belgian consumers is mainly influenced by the origin of this brand.

Our study did not reveal any significant differences in the perception of humor. The origin of the brand and the relationship of superiority that might exist between it and Belgian consumers, as well as the level of identification with the Belgian group, did not affect their perception of the humor. In the context of the study and given that brand origin still had an impact on other dimensions, it seems that humor perception is primarily a question of joke competence (Carrell, 1997, as cited in Bell, 2007, p. 369), or of recognition and understanding of humor, as expressed by Hay (Hay, 2001, as cited in Bell, 2007, p. 369). We assume that Belgian respondents could recognize the stereotypical joke as humorous and understand it even if they were exposed to the French brand, and that the perception of humor was not a matter of liking or disliking the joke.

With regard to the heteroscedasticity problem that we faced when analyzing the impact of brand origin on purchase intention, we assume that such a decision is influenced by too many other factors, mainly the personal tastes and dietary habits of the participants. Therefore, even though our results revealed that purchase intention was higher for participants exposed to the Belgian brand, we cannot link this impact solely to the context of our study.

Overall, our results suggest that, in an intergroup relationship, if a brand from a group considered superior creates a humorous advertisement based on stereotypes about an inferior group, the attitude and brand image of consumers from this group will be negatively affected. Even if these people are not the target consumers of the advertised brand, we have seen that borders can easily be crossed and, in the case of neighboring countries, there are several contexts that make them current or potential consumers.

8. Limits and future research

Our study has certain limitations. First, we chose to collect our data via an online questionnaire, for the practical opportunities this offers. However, this does not allow any control over the involvement of participants. As a result, we cannot say with certainty that they all answered honestly and reliably.

Then, in our questionnaire, we used a print advertisements. This choice was made in particular to ensure that respondents could analyze each piece of information, and especially those related to the brand's origin. However, we saw in our literature review that humor is used more often in TV commercials (Eisend, 2009; Hatzithomas, 2011; Jones, 2022). In future research, it might therefore be interesting to conduct the same type of study, but using other advertising channels, to see if perception remains constant.

Moreover, and still regarding the advertisements we used, we created them based on information we gathered from the literature. Therefore, even if it was based on scientific research carried out in the past, we could have performed tests prior to our study, in order to examine the suitability of our advertisements.

Another limitation of our study is that it did not take into account the respondents' personal characteristics and product preferences. As we saw, this posed problems in the analysis of participants' purchase intention. In our opinion, future research should include personal characteristics in addition to group characteristics to provide more relevant and realistic analyses and results. Given that our results suggested a higher purchase intention in the condition where the brand was intra-group (Belgian), we believe that this could be confirmed through more reliable analyses, i.e., considering participants' personal preferences.

Our research focused on examining the perception of the group targeted by the stereotyped joke, i.e., not the target consumers, in order to confirm or not the potential consequences that the use of intergroup humor in advertisement could induce. Our results confirmed that it has a negative impact on this group's attitude and brand image, which represents unintended consequences for brands. Future research should examine whether the use of intergroup humor meets the desired objectives of increasing advertising effectiveness with target consumers. To this end, and applied to the context of our study, it would be interesting to analyze French

consumers' perception of advertisements using stereotypical humor about Belgians, to see whether this induces more positive attitudes, brand image, and increases purchase intention, and thus meets the brand's intended objectives.

Another idea for future research would be to analyze a group's perception of an advertisement using humor based on stereotypes about them, but this time created by a brand from a group that is not considered superior. In our study, we based the superiority relationship between France and Belgium on facts; we did not question participants on the subject. Therefore, we cannot certify that superiority was an important influence on perception. It would be interesting to analyze whether these advertisements would be less negatively perceived in the absence of a superiority relationship.

Finally, as our study only focused on perception, future research could examine what actions consumers offended by advertisements using intergroup humor might take against the brand being advertised. This could give a better idea of the precise risks that brands might incur.

9. Conclusion

The aim of this master's thesis was to shed light on the perception of a type of humor that is rarely analyzed in the context of advertising, namely intergroup humor. Our literature review revealed that this type of humor can be described as based on ethnic differences and stereotypes. Some brands may decide to use this technique in their advertisements to increase effectiveness with their target consumers. We conducted a study to examine the effects this might have on the group that is the victim of the humor. Even if they are not the target of brands, we live in a world where technology makes everything travel. This means that advertisements are not seen only by targeted consumers. More specifically, we analyzed how such advertisements can be perceived differently depending on the brand's origin.

The main findings of our work are that intergroup humor could be used efficiently if the brand is itself part of the group being mocked in the advertisement. In this context, humor does not seem to be perceived as an attack, but rather, in our opinion, as self-mockery. But if the brand does not belong to the group the advertisement is making fun of, this can have negative consequences for that group's attitude and image of the brand. Even if they are not the target consumers of the advertisement, they may be current or potential consumers whom the brand risks losing or offending. Moreover, if public actions are taken against the brand, this could damage its overall image.

In our opinion, when using humor in advertising, it is important to remember its main benefit, which is to convey positive emotions, not just to target consumers, but to everyone. We therefore believe that in intergroup relations it is favorable for brands to use non-ethnic humor or other forms of entertainment, in order to reduce the risk of negative consequences.

We can conclude by saying that, when it comes to advertisement using intergroup humor, the origin of the brand advertised, as well as its link with the group that is the victim of the humor, can influence perception in terms of attitude and brand image. However, we would like to emphasize the exploratory nature of our study. It therefore provides some interesting insights into the subject, but this needs to be studied further to provide a complete picture and draw generalizable conclusions about the perception of intergroup humor in advertisement.

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11. Appendices

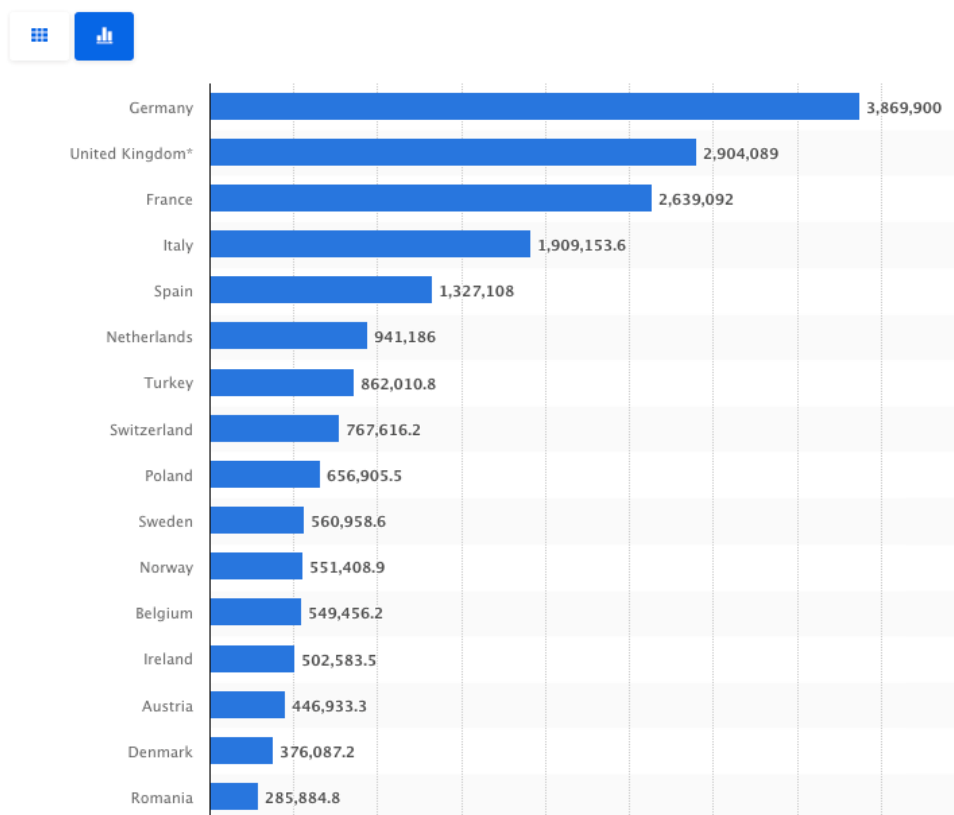
*Appendix 1: The Absolute Vodka Ad*²⁴



²⁴ Taken from: Gulas, C. S., & Weinberger, M. G. (2010). That's Not Funny Here: Humorous Advertising across Boundaries. In Chiaro, D. (Eds), *Translation, Humour and the Media* (pp. 17-33). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Appendix 2: Gross Domestic Products in Europe in 2022²⁵

Gross domestic product at current market prices of selected European countries in 2022
(in million euros)



²⁵ Taken from: Statista Research Department. (2023). Gross domestic product at current market prices of selected European countries in 2022. *Statista*. En ligne <https://www.statista.com/statistics/685925/gdp-of-european-countries/>

Appendix 3: Advertisements used



Comment faire boire un jus *Vulie* aux
petits belges ?



En lui donnant la couleur des frites !

✓ *Produit en France* ✓ *Riche en vitamines* ✓ *100% naturel*

VULIE.FR



Comment faire boire un jus *Vulie* aux
petits belges ?



En lui donnant la couleur des frites !

✓ *Produit en Belgique* ✓ *Riche en vitamines* ✓ *100% naturel*

VULIE.BE

Appendix 4: Questionnaire Qualtrics

Cette étude vise à examiner la perception spontanée de la publicité. Il vous sera simplement demandé de répondre à quelques questions en mentionnant dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec les affirmations qui vous seront présentées.

Répondre au questionnaire vous prendra moins de 5 minutes. Seul votre ressenti importe. Toutes les réponses collectées seront traitées de manière anonyme et utilisées uniquement dans le cadre de cette étude.

Je souhaite participer

Je ne souhaite pas participer



Veuillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec ces affirmations.

	Pas du tout d'accord	Pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni en désaccord	Plutôt d'accord	D'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
Je suis heureux/heureuse d'être belge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je suis solidaire avec les belges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai beaucoup de points communs avec la plupart des belges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je pense que les Belges ont de quoi être fiers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je me sens engagé(e) envers les belges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je suis semblable à la plupart des belges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je pense souvent au fait que je suis belge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Être belge est un élément important de l'image que j'ai de moi-même.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Être belge est une partie importante de mon identité.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je me sens lié(e) aux belges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C'est agréable d'être belge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Le fait d'être belge me procure un bon sentiment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Veuillez prendre le temps d'analyser cette publicité.

Une fois la publicité analysée, cliquez dessus avant de passer à la question suivante.



Comment faire boire un jus *Vulie* aux petits belges ?

En lui donnant la couleur des frites !

☒ Produit en France
 ☒ Riche en vitamines
 ☒ 100% naturel

VULIE.FR



Veillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec ces affirmations, celles-ci étant liées à la publicité que vous venez de voir.

	Pas du tout d'accord	Pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni en désaccord	Plutôt d'accord	D'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
J'ai trouvé la publicité drôle.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai trouvé la publicité sérieuse.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai trouvé la publicité amusante.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai trouvé la publicité humoristique.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Veillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec ces affirmations, celles-ci étant liées à la publicité que vous venez de voir.

Pour rappel, "Vulie" est la marque de boisson présentée dans la publicité.

	Pas du tout d'accord	Pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni en désaccord	Plutôt d'accord	D'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
Je pourrais avoir l'intention de consommer la boisson Vulie dans le futur.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Veillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec ces affirmations, celles-ci étant liées à la publicité que vous venez de voir.

	Pas du tout d'accord	Pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni en désaccord	Plutôt d'accord	D'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
Cette marque de boisson est attirante.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cette marque de boisson est plaisante.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Veillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec ces affirmations, celles-ci étant liées à la publicité que vous venez de voir.

Pour rappel, "Vulie" est la marque de boisson présentée dans la publicité.

	Pas du tout d'accord	Pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni en désaccord	Plutôt d'accord	D'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
Je pourrais avoir l'intention de consommer la boisson Vulie dans le futur.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Vous êtes :

Une femme

Un homme

Autre

Quel âge avez-vous ? (Veuillez n'indiquer que le chiffre)



Appendix 5: Principal Component Analysis for the variable “Identification”

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6,474	53,949	53,949	6,474	53,949	53,949
2	1,081	9,009	62,957			
3	,791	6,588	69,546			
4	,650	5,417	74,963			
5	,523	4,360	79,322			
6	,505	4,211	83,533			
7	,422	3,516	87,049			
8	,379	3,159	90,208			
9	,351	2,923	93,131			
10	,316	2,632	95,763			
11	,298	2,486	98,250			
12	,210	1,750	100,000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Appendix 6: Correlation matrix “Attitude”

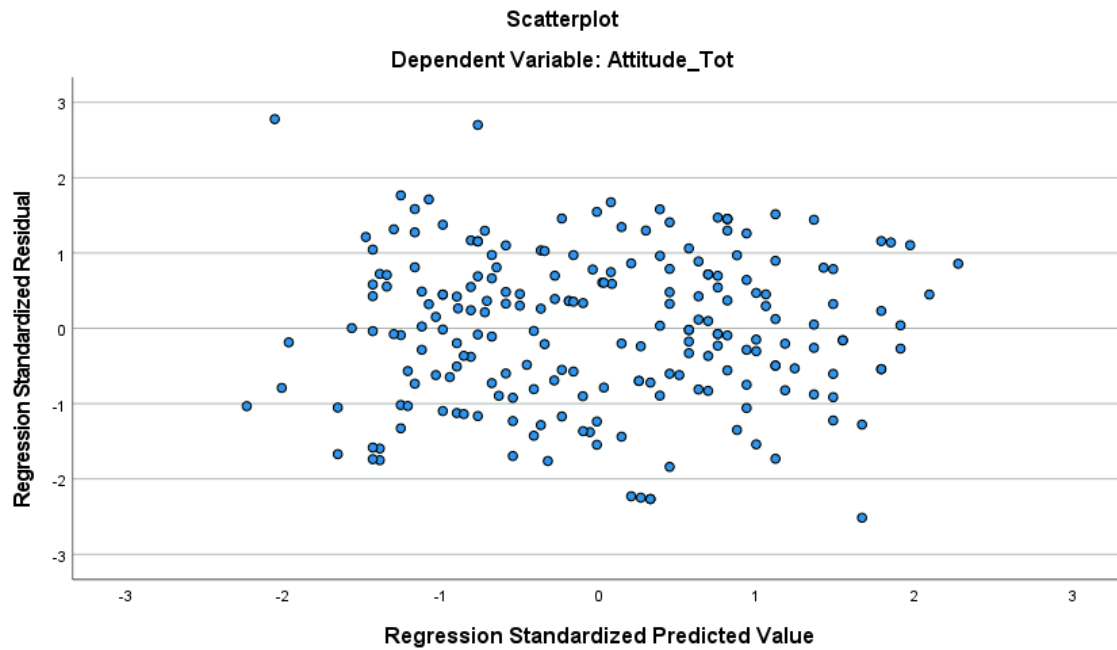
Correlations

		Condition	Attitude	Identification	ID_Condition
Condition	Pearson Correlation	1	,232**	-,021	,613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001	,758	<,001
	N	211	211	211	211
Attitude	Pearson Correlation	,232**	1	,166*	,140*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001		,016	,042
	N	211	211	211	211
Identification	Pearson Correlation	-,021	,166*	1	-,150*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,758	,016		,029
	N	211	211	211	211
ID_Condition	Pearson Correlation	,613**	,140*	-,150*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	,042	,029	
	N	211	211	211	211

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 7: Homoscedasticity test “Attitude”



Appendix 8: Homoscedasticity test “Attitude”

Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity^{a,b,c}

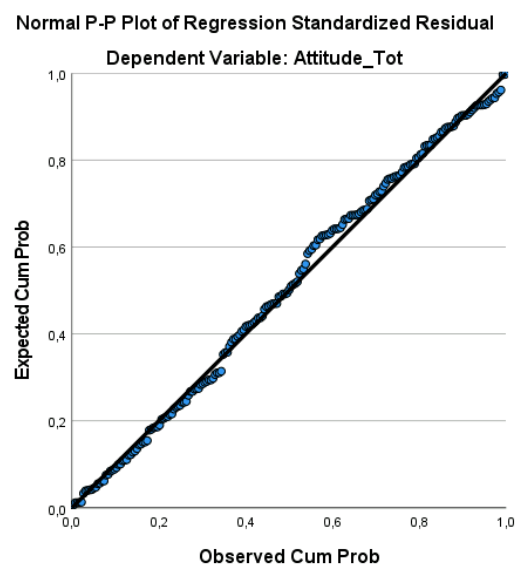
Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1,423	1	,233

a. Dependent variable: Attitude_Tot

b. Tests the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors does not depend on the values of the independent variables.

c. Predicted values from design: Intercept + Condition + Identification + ID_Condition

Appendix 9: Graph normal distribution “Attitude”



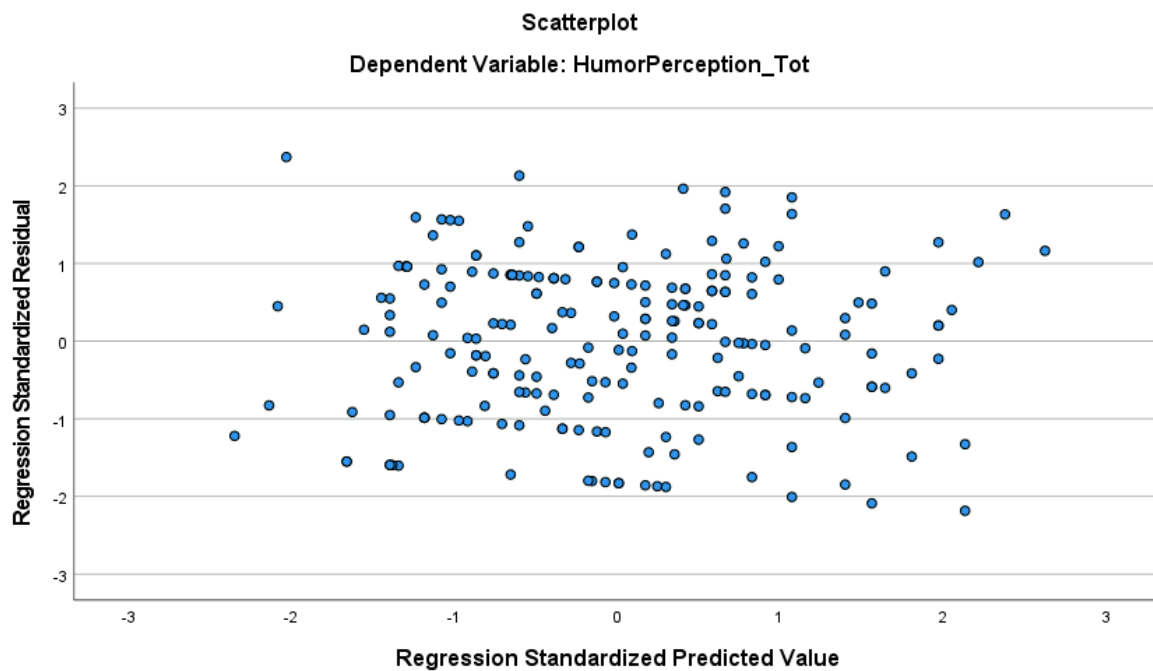
Appendix 10: Correlation matrix “Perception of Humor”

Correlations					
		Condition	HumorPercepti on	Identification	ID_Condition
Condition	Pearson Correlation	1	,107	-,021	,613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,122	,758	<,001
	N	211	211	211	211
HumorPerception	Pearson Correlation	,107	1	,122	,070
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,122		,077	,315
	N	211	211	211	211
Identification	Pearson Correlation	-,021	,122	1	-,150*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,758	,077		,029
	N	211	211	211	211
ID_Condition	Pearson Correlation	,613**	,070	-,150*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	,315	,029	
	N	211	211	211	211

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 11: Homoscedasticity test “Perception of Humor”



Appendix 12: Homoscedasticity test “Perception of Humor”

Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity^{a,b,c}

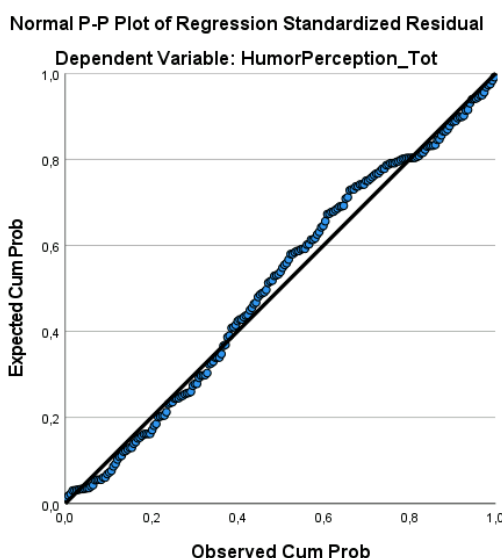
Chi-Square	df	Sig.
,000	1	,999

a. Dependent variable: HumorPerception_Tot

b. Tests the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors does not depend on the values of the independent variables.

c. Predicted values from design: Intercept + Condition + Identification + ID_Condition

Appendix 13: Graph normal distribution “Perception of Humor”



Appendix 14: Correlation matrix “Purchase Intention”

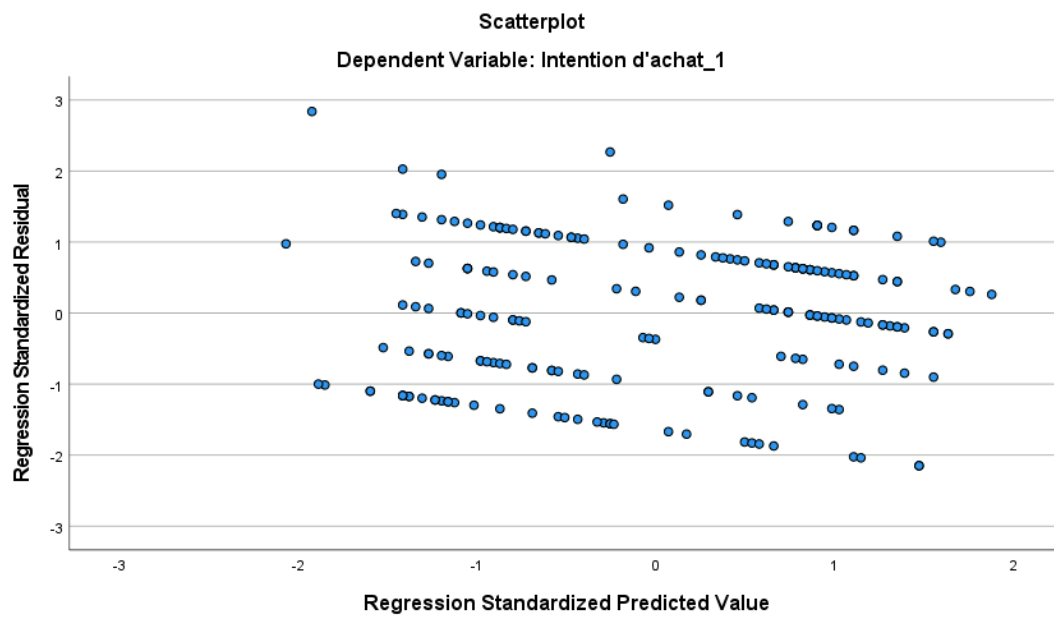
Correlations

		Condition	Intention d'achat_1	Identification	ID_Condition
Condition	Pearson Correlation	1	,293**	-,021	,613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001	,758	<,001
	N	211	211	211	211
Intention d'achat_1	Pearson Correlation	,293**	1	,137*	,166*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001		,047	,016
	N	211	211	211	211
Identification	Pearson Correlation	-,021	,137*	1	-,150*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,758	,047		,029
	N	211	211	211	211
ID_Condition	Pearson Correlation	,613**	,166*	-,150*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	,016	,029	
	N	211	211	211	211

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 15: Homoscedasticity test “Purchase Intention”



Appendix 16: Homoscedasticity test “Purchase Intention”

**Breusch-Pagan Test for
Heteroskedasticity^{a,b,c}**

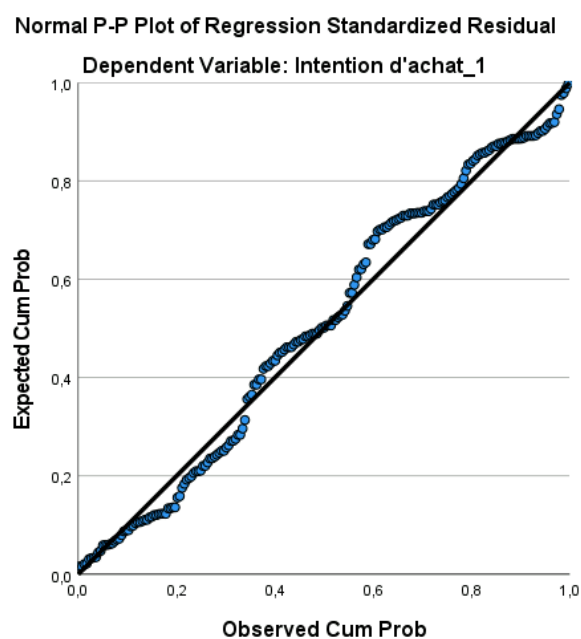
Chi-Square	df	Sig.
4,417	1	,036

a. Dependent variable: Intention d'achat_1

b. Tests the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors does not depend on the values of the independent variables.

c. Predicted values from design: Intercept + Condition + Identification + ID_Condition

Appendix 17: Graph normal distribution “Purchase Intention”



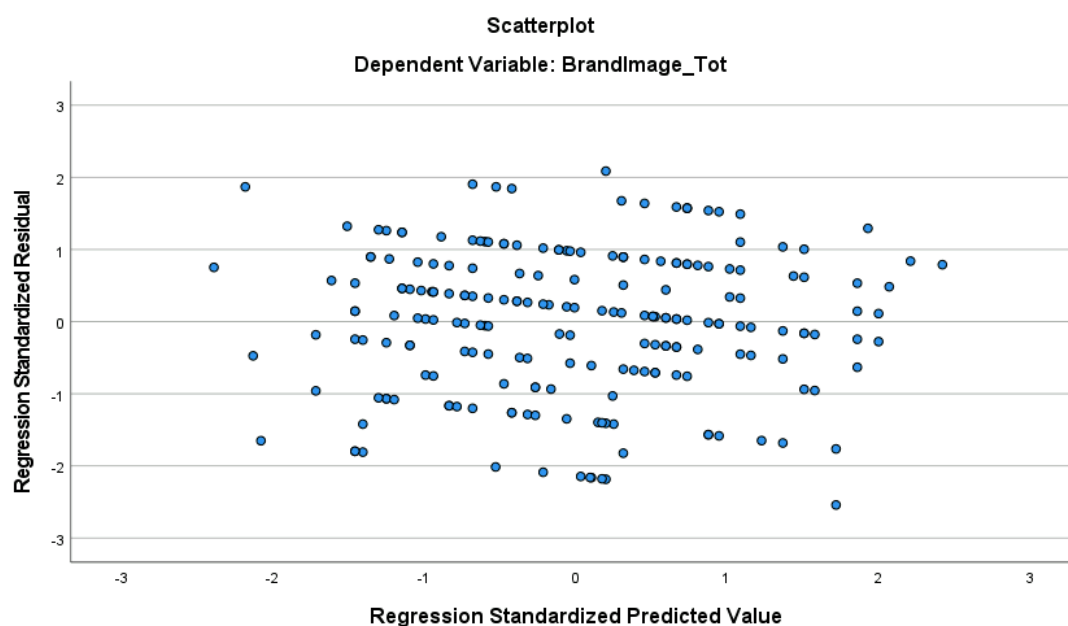
Appendix 18: Correlation matrix “Brand Image”

		Correlations			
		Condition	BrandImage	Identification	ID_Condition
Condition	Pearson Correlation	1	,165*	-,021	,613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,016	,758	<,001
	N	211	211	211	211
BrandImage	Pearson Correlation	,165*	1	,154*	,099
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,016		,025	,153
	N	211	211	211	211
Identification	Pearson Correlation	-,021	,154*	1	-,150*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,758	,025		,029
	N	211	211	211	211
ID_Condition	Pearson Correlation	,613**	,099	-,150*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	,153	,029	
	N	211	211	211	211

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Appendix 19: Homoscedasticity test “Brand Image”



Appendix 20: Homoscedasticity test “Brand Image”

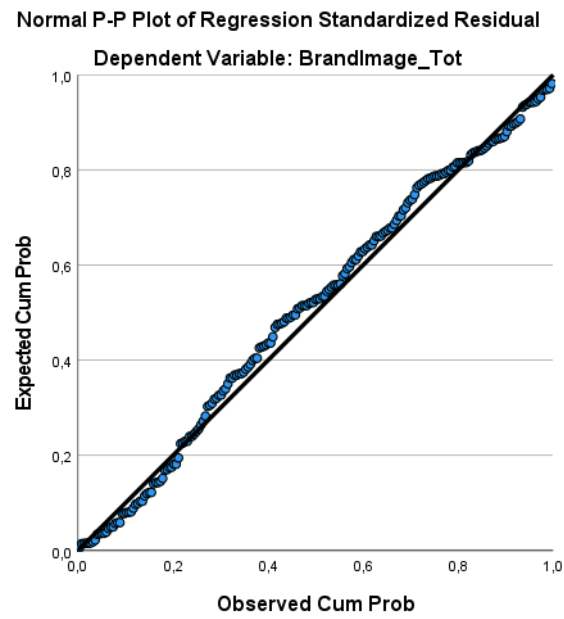
Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity^{a,b,c}		
Chi-Square	df	Sig.
,041	1	,839

a. Dependent variable: BrandImage_Tot

b. Tests the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors does not depend on the values of the independent variables.

c. Predicted values from design: Intercept + Condition + Identification + ID_Condition

Appendix 21: Graph normal distribution “Brand Image”



Abstract:

In this master's thesis entitled "Perception of intergroup humor in advertisement", we analyze how an advertisement making fun of a social group can be perceived according to the origin of the advertised brand. As humor, intergroup relations, and advertising are three concepts that are present in everyone's life, they are often studied in the literature, but rarely together. Therefore, through an exploratory study, we attempt to introduce some perspectives on the subject.

After describing intergroup humor as being based on cultural differences and stereotypes, we discuss its use in the context of advertising. We then analyze the perception of a sample of Belgians towards an advertisement using humor based on stereotypes about Belgians, varying the origin of the brand, which is either Belgian or French. These two groups are chosen for their numerous interactions and for the superiority/inferiority relationship that may exist between them. Our results reveal a more negative attitude towards the advertisement and a more negative brand image on the part of participants exposed to the French condition. We finish by discussing the implications of these results for brands.

In this master's thesis, we therefore show that the perception of intergroup humor in advertisement can be influenced by the origin of the brand and its link with the group that is the victim of the humor.

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