

## PROACTIVE VS. REACTIVE STRATEGIES: DESIGNING SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING TO MINIMIZE BRAND HATE RISK

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### Abstract

This study is aimed at investigating the relationship amid social media strategy advertising and brand hate, and it will dig deep to examine the mediation role of the moral outrage. A theoretical model of proactive and reactive advertising strategies as independent variables is tested with the issues according to a survey data of 234 social media users using the regression and mediation analysis. The findings indicate that proactive advertising techniques are effective in reducing both moral outrage and brand hate significantly and reactive responses to crisis indicate the positive relationship between these two factors with negative consequences. Moral outrage was a significant predictor of brand hate and a mediator that explained 38.2 and 40.4 percent of the total impact of proactive and reactive policies on brand hate respectively. The results prove the utmost importance of prevention strategies in advertisement design, and the implication is that preventative measures such as ethical screening and cultural sensitivity test could contribute to an extent in minimizing the risk of eliciting moral outrage and subsequent brand hate. Such lessons can be extremely useful to any marketer who is trying to navigate the obstacles of social media advertisement in a consumer world that is increasingly sensitive.

### INTRODUCTION

Within the hyper-saturated environment of modern business the voice of any brand is no longer simply created by the respective marketing departments but is forcefully contested, intensified and frequently manipulated within the dynamic and unforgiving space of the social media (Kazi, Shinde, Nerkar, Kazi & Kazi, 2025). The conventionally established marketing funnel has been replaced by an intricate ecosystem in which an individual advertisement can evolve beyond both an expensive promotional instrument to a

cultural lightning rod, which sparks the mass rejection of it by the general population. This basic quest of consumer attention does have a risk within it, which is active brand hate, which can be ignited. As opposed to a passive dislike or brand avoidance, brand hate is a strong, negative emotional consumer response that is defined by anger, contempt, and a need to retaliate (Mednini and Charfi Ben Hmida, 2025). This hatred is a giant that can destroy brand equity, destroy the customer loyalty and cause viral firestorms that

can cause permanent reputational and monetary harm (Noor et al., 2022).

It is a process that can be almost entirely enabled by design and sociological conditions of the social media platforms in transforming brand hate into a collective performance and a public grievance. In the case when a disgruntled customer previously had to switch the channel or tells a few people, now social media offers the framework of mobilizing in large numbers instantly (Smith, Licata and Rustagi, 2024). The comment box at the bottom of an advert serves not as a passive collection of responsiveness but as a dynamic communal space where personal dissatisfaction is quickly brought together in solidarity. Algorithms that favor such mobilization have effective acceleration, frequently increasing the content that generates high emotional response such as an outrage (Grewal et al., 2025). These digital firestorms, which entail quick and extensive bursts of adverse emotion, can be consummate within hours and have a more radically large impact than the ad itself. Within such a setting, an improperly constructed ad does not only fail as a conversion device but it is an active recruiting process to those who criticize the brand most of all (Başaran, 2025). This hatred is not only toward a product or service experience but towards the perceived values, morality and identity of a brand as promoted by its advertisement. These open displays of hate, which can be spotted by millions of people, produce strong normative forces that influence indifferent viewers and negatively affect brand image at an unprecedented level (Zhang et al., 2024).

Knowledge of the exact triggers of social media advertising that lead to brand hate gives invaluable ground to studying preventative measures. The available literature and various case studies have found that there are common areas of vulnerability which act as powerful catalysts. One of the most conspicuous triggers is associated with a sense of inauthenticity especially in influencer marketing and purpose-driven campaigns (Wang et al., 2022). Modern consumers, in particular younger age groups, are exceptionally sensitive to untrustworthy messages. When brands are trying to co-opt social movements or show the image of

authenticity with the use of paid influencers, who do not align with their values in the first place, the backlash is fast and brutal. These adverts are prone to be considered as the so-called woke-washing or exploitative advertisement, which evokes strong resentment against the perceived cynicism of the brand (Grewal et al., 2025). The second strategic weakness is advertisement intrusiveness and frequency. Even the instruments that allow strong social media advertising specific targeting and ruthless retargeting can become the means of irritating the consumers. When people are stalked by advertisements on various platforms or overwhelmed by unrelated messages, simple frustration has two chances to evolve into explicit hatred. A third strong stimulus is moral misfit, where advertisements that push the consumer values to a deep level can be found. Campaigns that continue negative stereotypical messages, portray unrealistic body images, or propagate controversial political behaviors are not seen as mere failures of taste and are viewed as representing the inappropriate moral behavior of a brand (Abbas et al., 2023). The resultant rage of anger usually goes beyond the commercial discontent to the ethical outrage.

Since the consequences of such triggers are harsh, the responses of common brands tend to be reactive in nature. Companies often struggle to handle crises when they are at the point of a mass furor going on (Hmeidi and Bruno, 2025). These defensive measures include public apologizing, removing offensive advertisements, removing negative feedback, or even entering into a fierce debate with the opponents. Although this kind of damage control is still needed, it has its inherent limitations of efficiency. Reactive strategy is activated when the society has already developed a conclusion about what is wrong, and the brands have to work hard to gain it back (Yang and Mundel, 2022). Removal of remarks such as the deletion of comments can be construed as censorship, just adding to the outrage. Apologies that do not appear to be sincere and are not backed by action are easily viewed as public relations exercises. The reactive paradigm suffers from a fundamental limitation by treating brand hate as an inevitable external force to be managed

upon arrival, rather than as a foreseeable outcome that can be designed against during a campaign's conceptual and strategic development (Dineva et al., 2025).

Within the overcrowded environment of modern business, the voice of a brand is no longer primarily determined by the marketing departments of the brand but is viciously competed against, boosted, and sometimes falsified in the ever-changing and unforgiving business sphere of social media (Kazi, Shinde et al., 2025). A sophisticated ecosystem has replaced the traditional marketing funnel where an individual advertisement can evolve into a paid promotion instrument and then into a cultural flash point driving a mass of people to denounce it. The inherent and significant danger of a fundamental consumer attention pursuit has been igniting active brand hate. In contrast to passive dislike or brand avoidance, brand hate is a very strong, negative emotional consumer relationship, which is associated with anger, contempt, and the need to take revenge (Mednini & Charfi Ben Hmida, 2025). This hatred is a powerful weapon that can destroy brand loyalty, customer loyalty, and lead to viral firestorms that can cause the reputational and financial harm that is difficult to undo (Noor et al., 2022).

It is a fact that the shift of the brand hate as a personal complaint to a communal, mass spectacle is an almost entirely architectural and sociological phenomenon, which is supported by the social media platforms. Whereas an unsatisfied customer previously would have just switched channels or told a small group of friends about it, the social media has now offered the platform of mass mobilization on an instant scale (Smith et al., 2024). The comment box below an advertisement does not act merely as storage of comments but it serves as a dynamic community forum where personal dissatisfaction quickly becomes a movement in one voice. The algorithms which put emphasis on engagement give such mobilization a potent boost, frequently increasing the content that generates a strong emotional response such as outrage (Grewal et al., 2025). These digital firestorms, which occur at fast and wide-spread bursts of negative feelings, can be made realized in

hours, and a thousand times more dramatic than the actual advertisement itself. In such a setting, an inappropriately designed ad does not only fail as a conversion tool but also works proactively as an advertiser to the loudest detractors of the brand (Başaran, 2025). The ensuing hatred is not only becoming crusaded towards a product or service experience, but towards the perceived values, ethics and identity of the brand as propagated through its advertising. Public expressions of hate, which can be seen by millions of people, create strong normative pressures and influence all those who do not take sides and harm the perception of themselves as a brand effect on a massive scale (Zhang et al., 2024).

The knowledge of the particular triggers in social media advertising that leads to brand hate is vital groundwork in analyzing prevention measures. According to the existing literature and the number of case studies, there are common weaknesses, which can be regarded as powerful drivers. One of the triggers becomes very noticeable regarding the perception of inauthenticity, especially in influencer marketing and purpose marketing (Wang et al., 2022). Modern consumers, in particular, young buyers are incredibly sensitive to untruthful messages. When the brands are trying to claim social movements or to show the appearance of authenticity by hiring the paid influencers whose ethical standards do not coincide with the genuine ones, the backlash is rapid and harsh. A second weakness vulnerability is the advertising intrusiveness and frequency. The same tools that provide the ability to conduct a strong social media advertisement with accurate targeting and continuous retargeting may turn into the instruments of irritation of consumers. Once people are harassed by advertisements on the sites or bombarded with meaningless messages, simple annoyance may develop into open hostility. Third is the powerful stimulus of moral misfit, which is when advertisements make a statement that questions beliefs of the consumer. Campaigns that continue to enforce negative stereotypes, advertise unrealistic body images, or endorse controversial political positions are not seen as mere failures of taste but an indication of a poor moral character

of a brand (Abbas et al., 2023). The nature of the resultant anger is usually beyond commercial dissatisfaction, another dimension of ethical outrage.

Such severe consequences of these triggers suggest that a common brand response will tend to take a reactive posture. It is often the case that organizations are scrambling to deal with crisis after the general public has made an outcry (Hmeidi and Bruno, 2025). Such reactive approaches include apology to the whole world, removing offensive ads, deleting negative reviews, and arguing with the critics. Such damage control as was required is always limited in its nature. A reactive strategy will not work until the definition of narrative has occurred, and the brands will have to fight an uphill battle to win confidence (Yang and Mundel, 2022). Removing comments, such as, commonly appears as censorship, which adds to the backlash even more. Apologies that do not feel sincere, do not take action are easily disregarded as maneuvers of the PR. A major limitation of the reactive paradigm is that it takes the view of brand hate as an unavoidable externality that must be addressed when it occurs, instead of an unavoidable outcome that can be mitigated during the conceptual and strategic design of a campaign (Dineva et al., 2025).

An even stronger solution will require a radical change of course towards proactive strategy design. Proactive approach in social media advertisement goes beyond traditional message testing and instead involves a holistic approach of instilling ethical, psychological and cultural intelligence within the DNA of a campaign (Schweiggart et al., 2025). This is aimed at developing inherent strength, which involves coming up with ads that are promotionally strong but at the same time resistant to the typical causes of brand hate. An active system would include strict pre-testing systems that would not only measure recall or buying intentions, but also the possibility of the moral outrage, the perception of authenticity and the emotional feeling in different groups of the audience (Hill Cummings et al., 2025). Moreover, proactive strategy requires profound and sustained cultural consciousness, in that brand messages will reflect a level of understanding of the social and

political swellings in which they will be consumed. The strategy is to create internal brand governance which takes into account a variety of views and systematic testing of campaigns on possible weaknesses (Mahoney and Tang, 2024). A proactive model, in a way, reformulates the essence of the development of the advertising solution, the simplistic will-it-sell.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Brand Hate

Brand hate is a deep and active negatively emotive reaction to a brand that is much more intense than dissatisfaction or brand avoidance (Aziz and Rahman, 2022). Researchers based on interpersonal relationship theory have conceptualized this construct in terms of anger experience, contempt experience, and disgust experience (Kumar et al., 2023). As opposed to transient complaints, brand hate is an enduring, motivational condition in which consumers build up an aversion to the brand and in many instances, an intention to start a negative word-of-mouth or even revenge behavior (Mushtaq et al., 2025). In the literature, a number of antecedents that lead to this strong response have been identified. These are bad past experiences, symbolic incongruity in which the brand identity contradicts the self concept of a consumer, moral violations in which the brand is violating the ethical expectation and ideological incongruities (Abbas et al., 2023).

Brand hate has increased significantly and become more visible due to the digital age and especially with the rise of social media. Platforms also offer an effective online community channel to express and spread negative emotion, to make individual complaints add up to anti-brand communities (Walter et al., 2023). This makes the personal distaste into the collective act and organization. In that context, advertising is a very powerful instigating factor. Campaigns seen as inauthentic, obtrusive or morally incongruent may be catalytic events, which trigger a moral outcry that drives brand hate (Abbas et al., 2024). As a result, brand hate is no longer a specialist issue but a core requirement of brand management as its implications such as reduced brand equity,

revenues, and reputational damage are not only serious but also more publicly visible (Yadav and Chakrabarti, 2022).

### 2.2 Proactive Advertising Strategy

An active marketing approach is a new marketing paradigm, shifting focus not only out of the previous promotional objectives but also into the preemptive minimization of risks and cultural awareness into the campaign structure (Kalayanamitra et al., 2023). In contrast to reactive strategies that work on the negative consumer reactions once they occur and do not succeed, proactive strategy concentrates on creating advertisements that would be resistant to backlash in the first place. It is based on the fact that the social media landscape enhances the voice of consumers and the ability of these platforms to quickly mutate the minor incidents into the significant crisis (Murphy and Castel, 2022).

Proactive advertising is conceptually based on crisis management theory, especially on the theory of issue management and scenario planning. It entails pre-testing systems in place systematically which go beyond traditional measures such as recall and purchase intention to determine the possible emotional and moral responses in different audience groups. A study on brand authenticity conducted by (Abdelmalak and Benidris, 2022) highlights the need to match campaign messages with other verifiable brand actions so as not to create the impression that a brand engages in woke-washing or exploitation.

Some of the key aspects of the latter are full cultural surveillance to track new social sensitivities, heterogeneous internal review teams to detect blind spots, and ethical frameworks to assess the alignment of the message with consumer values (Chan et al., 2022). The approach is focused on true storytelling and not on coopted attention, and cultural assimilation instead of cultural appropriation. Integrating these factors into the creative process, proactive advertising aims to create consumer trust and at the same time reduce the chances of arousing moral outrage or a sense of in-authenticity, which often lead to brand hate in online platforms (Thompson et al., 2022).

### 2.3 Reactive Crisis Response

Reactive crisis response is the term that describes a range of actions and communications that a brand deploys once the negative publicity has become a reality, or once the consumer backlash has appeared, and is, therefore, a defensive, not a preventative form of brand management. This tactical intervention strategy is threefold in the case of social media advertising crisis and includes a variety of such tactical interventions as: public apology, retraction of ads, comment management, and reputation repair efforts. In contrast to proactive strategies which are part and parcel of the campaign creation, the reactive responses are subjected to a prominent limitation of trying to limit the damage once it has already been created in the form of the public discourse (Sun, 2025).

The situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) is extensively used as theoretical bases behind the situational crisis communication theory because it offers theoretical frameworks to align response strategies with the type of crisis and responsibility attribution (Saka et al., 2025). A study conducted by (Kähkönen and Patrucco, 2022) proves that timely effective reactive response is closely related to perceived sincerity, timeliness, and proper attribution of responsibility. Nonetheless, the literature also finds some basic limitations of reactive means in social media. Removal of bad reviews may strengthen the idea of censorship, whereas non-apologetic apologies do not always work with consumers who want to be dealt with in a sincere way (Ben-Ahmed and Bourgeault, 2023).

Practically, there is a continuum of reactive responses between defensive postures that can include justification or denial to accommodations, which can involve full apology and restitution. Contextual factors such as the reputation of the brand before the crisis, the severity of the crisis, and the speed of spreading social media have a heavy mediating role in the effectiveness of these responses (Wu and Overton, 2022). Although reactive strategies are needed as damage control tactics, their nature is based on the fact that they are implemented after the loss of consumer trust and moral outrage has been caused, leaving them necessarily limited in their potential to prevent the

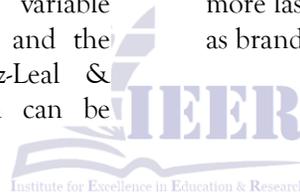
brand hate that other strategies typically drive such crises in the digital world (Power and Crosthwaite, 2022).

## 2.4 Moral Outrage

Moral outrage is a highly potent affective state, which manifests as anger, disgust, and resentment caused by the belief that something has disregarded the main ethical principles or social norms (Mihailov et al., 2023). It is an emotion that goes beyond dissatisfaction of products in consumer behavior, when the behaviour of a brand in this case its advertising is perceived as unfair, hypocritical or detrimental to the society. The theoretical principles of moral outrage lie in the field of social psychology and moral psychology, which is based on such notions as moral reasoning and symbolic threat, when a violation is perceived as an assault on the values or identity of a group (Coombs and Tachkova, 2024). In a social media advertising environment, moral outrage is an important mediating variable between the campaign by the brand and the occurrence of brand hate (Jiménez-Leal & Cortisoz-Mora, 2025). This emotion can be

inflamed by advertising campaigns in many ways, such as a perceived form of so-called woke-washing where social justice messages are used to commercially benefit, reinforcing negative stereotypes, or an apparent violation of a brand of its own professed values. Moral outrage is an experiential and not a cold or a thinking disapproval; it is a hot, visceral emotion that requires expression and social sharing (Ginther et al., 2022).

Ethical outrage is an active process driven by the structure of a social media platform and aggravated therein. Engagement as a rewarding content prioritization algorithm and the openness of comments sections as a promoter of collective validation and quick growth (Bigman et al., 2023). This makes an individual emotion a common social event, building online firestorms. It is this triggering role that transforms a particular advertisement into a sign of moral sin that makes moral outrage such an effective precursor to the more lasting and active hatred commonly defined as brand hate.



## 2.5 Research Model

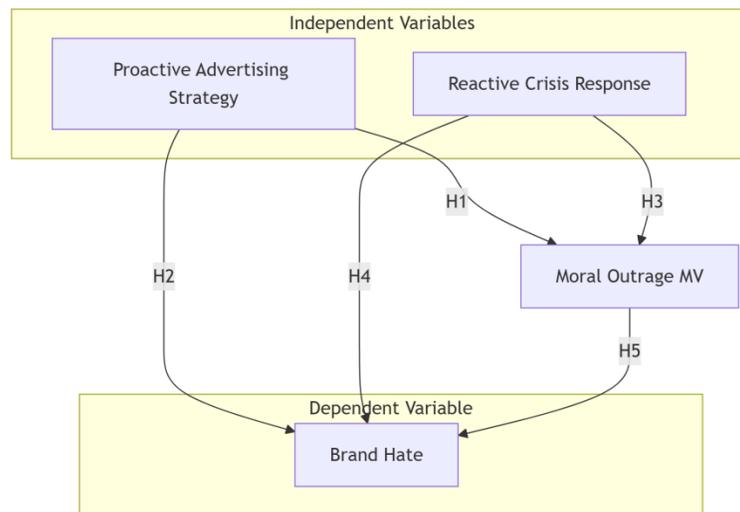


Fig. 01: Research Model

## 2.6 Research Hypothesis

H1: Proactive Advertising Strategy has a strong negative correlation with the Moral Outrage.

H2: There is significant negative correlation between Brand Hate and Proactive Advertising Strategy.

H3: Reactive Crisis Response is significantly positively connected with Moral Outrage.

H4: there is a significant positive correlation between Moral Outrage and Brand Hate.

H5: There is a mediating effect of the relationship between Proactive Advertising Strategy and Brand Hate through moral outrage.

## 3. Research Methods

### 3.1 Research Design

This paper used a quantitative research design that used a cross-sectional survey design. The choice of the methodology was due to the fact that it was necessary to investigate the correlation between advertising strategies, moral outrage, and brand hate using statistical techniques of analyzing numerical data. The design enabled testing of hypothesized relationships using mediation analysis that allowed exploring both direct and indirect effects of variables.

### 3.2 Population and Sample Size

The target population included the active users of the social media of ages between 18-55 years who frequently view the advertisement material on the social media platform including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. The purposive sampling method was used to select 300 respondents with whom the controversial advertisement campaigns were fresh. The sample size was calculated bearing in mind power analysis aspects of mediation analysis that would give sufficient statistical power of at least 0.80 power levels in order to detect a medium effect size.

### 3.3 Measurement Instruments

The research used standardized measures which were based on the existing literature and all of them were measured on 7-point Likert scale which started with Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (7). The instruments had high psychometric levels in the past research and were confirmed as valid in this case research.

Table 1: Measurement Instruments and Reliability Statistics

| Construct                      | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha | Adapted Source                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| Proactive Advertising Strategy | 8               | 0.89             | (Papadas, Avlonitis, & Carrigan, 2017)   |
| Reactive Crisis Response       | 6               | 0.87             | (Coombs, 2022)                           |
| Moral Outrage                  | 5               | 0.91             | (Haupt, 2023)                            |
| Brand Hate                     | 7               | 0.93             | (Mazzoli, Donvito, & Zarantonello, 2024) |

### 3.4 Data Collection

The collection of data took place in online survey that was carried out during a period of four weeks. The questionnaire was also disseminated using professional survey groups and social media and included the screening questions to ensure that the respondents qualified into the study by meeting the inclusion criteria that they had seen controversial brand advertising in the past three months. Integrity of the data was checked, therefore, the survey tool included attention check questions and the measure of consistency of the responses. Respondents were informed and gave their consent prior to completing the survey, and all the information was done anonymously to preserve privacy. The response rate was 78 with 234 filled questionnaires being retained to be analyzed after data cleaning processes.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Demographic Analysis

The demographic image of the 234 respondents that was analyzed in the final study is given in Table 4.1. There were 52 and 48 percent males

and females respectively. Regarding age, 25-34 years old had the highest percentage (38%), then the percentage of 18-24 years old (29%), 35-44 years (21%), and 45-55-old respondents (12%).

It was found through education background analysis that 45% of the participants had bachelor degrees and 28% had postgraduate degrees. The rest 27% possessed college diplomas or high school. Concerning the patterns of social media use, 65 percent stated that they spend over 2 hours

a day on social media platforms, with Instagram (42) and Facebook (31) being the most common social media platforms whereby they view brand ads.

Income distribution was revealed that 44 percent of the respondents earn between \$30,000-50,000 per annum and 32 percent of the respondents earn above 50,000 per annum. The geographic distribution reflected a variety of regional representation with 58 per cent in urban areas, 29 per cent in suburban regions and 13 per cent in rural areas.

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N=234)

| Demographic Characteristic | Category    | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender                     | Male        | 122       | 52%        |
|                            | Female      | 112       | 48%        |
| Age                        | 18-24 years | 68        | 29%        |

| Demographic Characteristic | Category    | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
|                            | 25-34 years | 89        | 38%        |
|                            | 35-44 years | 49        | 21%        |
|                            | 45-55 years | 28        | 12%        |

|                          |              |     |     |
|--------------------------|--------------|-----|-----|
| Education                | High School  | 18  | 8%  |
|                          | College      | 45  | 19% |
|                          | Bachelor's   | 105 | 45% |
|                          | Postgraduate | 66  | 28% |
| Social Media Usage       | <1 hour      | 23  | 10% |
|                          | 1-2 hours    | 59  | 25% |
|                          | 2-4 hours    | 98  | 42% |
|                          | >4 hours     | 54  | 23% |
| Primary Platform for Ads | Facebook     | 73  | 31% |
|                          | Instagram    | 98  | 42% |
|                          | Twitter      | 35  | 15% |
|                          | YouTube      | 28  | 12% |

4

.2 Descriptive Analysis

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics (N=234)

| Variable                       | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Proactive Advertising Strategy | 4.82 | 1.24               |
| Reactive Crisis Response       | 5.36 | 1.15               |
| Moral Outrage                  | 4.91 | 1.38               |
| Brand Hate                     | 4.63 | 1.42               |

Reactive Crisis Response showed the highest mean score (M=5.36), followed by Moral Outrage (M=4.91), Proactive Advertising Strategy (M=4.82), and Brand Hate (M=4.63). All variables demonstrated adequate variability with standard deviations ranging from 1.15 to 1.42.

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3: Correlation Matrix (N=234)

| Variable                          | 1      | 2     | 3     | 4 |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|---|
| 1. Proactive Advertising Strategy | 1      |       |       |   |
| 2. Reactive Crisis Response       | -.42** | 1     |       |   |
| 3. Moral Outrage                  | -.58** | .51** | 1     |   |
| 4. Brand Hate                     | -.61** | .47** | .72** | 1 |

\*Note: \*p < .01

There were significant correlations at p<.01 in all the variables. Proactive Strategy has a negative correlation with Moral Outrage (-.58) and a Brand Hate (-.61). Reactive Response had a positive relationship with Moral Outrage (.51) and Brand Hate (.47). Moral outrage and Brand Hate were the most linked (.72).

Regression Analysis

Table 4.4: Regression Analysis for Direct Effects on Moral Outrage

| Predictor                      | $\beta$ | SE   | t     | p     |
|--------------------------------|---------|------|-------|-------|
| Constant                       | 2.15    | 0.31 | 6.94  | 0.000 |
| Proactive Advertising Strategy | -0.49   | 0.06 | -8.72 | 0.000 |
| Reactive Crisis Response       | 0.38    | 0.05 | 6.91  | 0.000 |

R<sup>2</sup> = 0.42, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.41, F = 84.35, p = 0.000

Table 4.5: Regression Analysis for Direct Effects on Brand Hate

| Predictor                      | B     | SE   | t     | p     |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| Constant                       | 1.82  | 0.28 | 6.50  | 0.000 |
| Proactive Advertising Strategy | -0.42 | 0.06 | -7.45 | 0.000 |
| Reactive Crisis Response       | 0.31  | 0.05 | 5.63  | 0.000 |
| Moral Outrage                  | 0.58  | 0.06 | 10.27 | 0.000 |

R<sup>2</sup> = 0.47, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.46, F = 102.63, p = 0.000

The regression model illustrates that the two models are significant predictors. The model in Table 4.4 demonstrates 42 percent of the variance in Moral Outrage (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.42, F = 84.35, p < 0.001) with both Proactive Advertising Strategy (  $\beta$  = -0.49, p = 0.001) and Reactive Crisis Response (  $\beta$  = 0.38, p = 0.001) being significant predictors.

Table 4.5 indicates that the composite model contributes to the variance of Brand Hate by 47 (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.47, F = 102.63, p < 0.001). The three predictors indicate their significant effects, which include Proactive Advertising Strategy ( -0.42, p = 0.000), Reactive Crisis Response (  $\beta$  = 0.31, p = 0.000), and Moral Outrage (  $\beta$  = 0.58, p = 0.000). The proactive strategy displays negative coefficient

which implies that it acts as protective against brand hate, whereas the coefficients of reactive response and moral outrage are positive and show

that they contribute to the intensification of negative brand perceptions.

#### 4.5 Hypothesis Summary

**Table 4.6:** Hypothesis Testing Results

| Hypothesis | Relationship                                   | Result                     | Support   |
|------------|--|----------------------------|-----------|
| H1         | Proactive Advertising Strategy → Moral Outrage | $\beta = -0.49, p < 0.001$ | Supported |
| H2         | Proactive Advertising Strategy → Brand Hate    | $\beta = -0.42, p < 0.001$ | Supported |
| H3         | Reactive Crisis Response → Moral Outrage       | $\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$  | Supported |
| H4         | Reactive Crisis Response → Brand Hate          | $\beta = 0.31, p < 0.001$  | Supported |
| H5         | Moral Outrage → Brand Hate                     | $\beta = 0.58, p < 0.001$  | Supported |

#### 5. Conclusion

This paper provides solid reasons why proactive advertisement is needed to combat the issue of brand hate through lessening of moral outrage. The findings confirm that in-depth pre-testing, cultural sensitivity, and moral alignment are all proactive measures that can significantly mitigate moral outrage and the resulting hate to the brand. However, the reactive crisis responses, though the response is required after the realization of the problems, indicate positive relations between reactive crisis response and both negative consumer responses. It is the high mediation value of the moral outrage that causes the psychological process of how the advertising strategy will eventually influence the brand hate, which gives us the reason as to why certain campaigns will result in high negative responses and not others. The latter results emphasize the paradigm shift that marketing philosophy must experience: the new marketing philosophy must be aimed at avoiding risks as opposed to alleviating the impact of the risks. With the current hyper sensitive social media environment where the reaction of the customer might easily go out of hand, the findings emphasise that the indicators of preventative action within the advertising design might not only be advantageous, but an important aspect in safeguarding the brand. The demonstrated relationships indicate that moral outrage is one of

the red flags that can explode into brand hate unless thought over properly via the strategic planning.

#### 5.1 Practical and Managerial Implications

The findings give some of the most significant implication to the marketing practitioners. Firstly, there should be the establishment of institutionalized proactive advertisement screening practices in terms of moral and ethical assessment and the traditional marketing metrics. This will be accompanied by establishment of different review teams and pre-testing at large scale on different groups of people and conducting cultural sensitivity tests. Second, marketing budgets should be categorized under new category in which priority should be given to initial risk prevention than use of crisis management funds. Third, moral outrage has a high mediating power, which means that brands would need to develop more complex tools to monitor the initial signs of consumer moral violations which can be achieved by resorting to high-tech social listening tools focusing on the emotional tone rather than volume of interaction. Fourth, marketing education needs to emphasize both the moral psychology and ethics and the innovative and tactical skills. Finally, the negative relationship between proactive strategies and brand hate

demonstrates that investment into advertising safety can be highly paid in the form of brand equity protection and retention of customers.

### 5.2 Limitations and Future Research.

These are some of the limitations that should be taken into account. With the cross-sectional design, it is not possible to establish causal relationships and this means that longitudinal or experimental studies have to be carried out. The sample is adequate though it may not be representative of all consumer groups under different cultural contexts. The self-reported information may lead to common method bias, and the statistical analysis revealed that it did not become a major issue. The industry specific differences between these relationships must be studied further; in particular, there should be an occasion to compare between product and service industries. Other intervening variables such as brand reputation, consumer attachment and cultural dimensions should be addressed. The other possible direction is the contribution of different social media resources in increasing or decreasing such effects. Additionally, the qualitative approach may provide a deeper insight into the components of advertising as the specific aspects of advertising that cause the moral outrage. Finally, research that centers on the economic implication of both the active and passive approaches will provide more credence on the business argument that organizational investment in advertising risk prevention is a viable investment.

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