

THE IMPACT OF ACTOR AGE ON SENIORS ORIENTED ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

The senior population is growing and represents an important target for consumption. Executives, marketers and advertising specialists should take them into account and understand them better in order to serve them better. This paper then uses first theory to identify the behavior of seniors towards advertising in general and towards actors in particular, and then determines the factors that make seniors-oriented advertising effective. Second, the paper presents the theoretical background that informs the study's conceptual model. Third, it reports and discusses the results and presents managerial implications for managers, marketers and advertising agencies.

Keywords: Advertising, Actor, Senior, Age, Subjective Age, Similarity.

INTRODUCTION

Seniors, called in the literature the 'elders', represent an increasingly important segment of the population. They will be 2 billion by 2050 (CB news, 2019) out of an estimated population of 9.7 billion (world). Seniors are an attractive target because of their growing consumption behavior, yet companies fail to understand and identify them, a move deemed necessary to develop adequate marketing strategies Lacroix & Jolibert (2018). Older people are the subject of debate that aims to reintegrate them into a contemporary dynamic Agli & Brunet (2022). Today, Marketing researchers are interested in this age group, increasingly representative in the world Eisend (2022). People over 65 are the segment that spends the most on consumption in general and on food in particular. Some studies have focused on the factors and tools that allow for more effective advertising with seniors Chevalier et al. (2013); Schwab & Campisi (2019). Among these factors, the advertising actor plays Alaphilippe (2008) an important role in the effectiveness of the ad Boulbry (2006) Chevalier & Lichtlé (2012), Béquaert and De Barnier V 2014). Indeed, when the advertising actor has similar attributes or characteristics (such as gender, ethnicity, age...) with the receiver of the message, it could arouse in them a feeling of similarity allowing them to identify themselves with the actor and subsequently buy the advertised item. The choice of the actor is therefore crucial in seniors-oriented ads (Béquart and De Barnier V, 2014). The question that arises is: what is the impact of actor's age on the effectiveness of advertising to seniors?

Then, this study makes six main contributions. First, it reviews a rich literature on the different concepts, identification factors (perceived age similarity, attractiveness), overall perceived similarity, and advertising effectiveness factors (Attention to message, recall, attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the brand, and purchase intent). Second, we complement the literature by considering the entire process of advertising persuasion, presenting the effect of perceived similarity, induced by subjective age and attractiveness, on message attention, recall,

and attitude towards advertising. To our knowledge, no study has considered these factors. Third, our study takes into consideration both genders, males and females, unlike the literature, where only the female gender is considered. Fourth, we develop a theoretical background that represents first the effect of identification factors on overall perceived similarity and second the impact of overall perceived similarity on advertising effectiveness. Fifth, we develop a conceptual model that considers three new variables representing advertising effectiveness factors and estimates the impact of gender on all variables. Sixth, bearing on the results, the study presents recommendations for executives, marketers, and advertisers seeking to target senior consumers. The overall aim of this study is to help lay down the criteria that identify the best actor to make seniors-oriented advertising effective.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overall Perceived Similarity

According to the literature review, overall perceived similarity is defined by identification factors, namely subjective age similarity and actor attractiveness. In order for a receiver to feel positive about the advertising actor delivering the message, two conditions should be considered, similarity and attractiveness of the actor, referred to as the model (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014).

Identification Factors

Subjective age similarity. Similarity is defined as "*a type of behavior*" (Medin et al. 1993) that allows for "a relationship of proximity between two objects (Tversky, 1977). It involves a comparison between items of the same nature Bèzes & Mercanti-Guérin (2017). Several researchers have studied the different types of similarity between two individuals. Certain characteristics such as personality traits, first name, age, education, gender, and origin, among others, are necessary in order to create links between two or more people (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014). Such similarities allow for the creation of sympathy even between two strangers Montoya et al. (2008). In the world of advertising, actors that share resemblance with the target can generate "*a feeling of similarity*" with them and have a positive effect on the brand (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014). According to Chang (2008), this similarity has an impact on the consumer's attitude towards the advertising message. Indeed, thanks to this similarity, the receiver thinks that if the product suits the actor, who resembles them, therefore it suits them too (Bhatnagar and Wan, 2011). Similarity is upstream of the consumer decision process (Bèzes and Guerin, 2017). Thus, similarity between the actor and the target is paramount for identification to take place. Freud (1984) developed a psychological process based on self-defense mechanisms that aim at the protection of the individual by themselves. Most of the research that has studied the impact of actor on senior targets has reported on the identification process Morimoto & La Ferle (2008); Chevalier & Lichtlé (2012). A person may identify with the actor or model, so named in an ad, as their "*ideal self*" or as their own felt image (Park and Lessig, 1977). (Zinkhan and Hong, 1991) affirm that the presence of advertising actors sharing similar values to those of the target increases the effectiveness of the advertising message. Similarly, some studies have identified characteristics that facilitate the identification process for individuals, namely, gender (Kanugo and Pang, 1973), Ethnicity (Whittler and DiMeo, 1991), Age. When the age of the advertising actor is the same or closes to the age of the consumer, positive reactions can occur and make the message more effective (Greco and al. 1997; Chang (2008).

Attractiveness of the actor. Identification is successful, when the advertising actor and the

target share at least one similar characteristic and when the receiver considers this latter attractive (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014). Alternatively, source attractiveness can be viewed as one or more characteristics that are missing in the receiver and that the receiver desires to possess (Kelman, 1961). As an example, beauty, personality, or lifestyle are attributes that a person may judge as attractive (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014).

Among the factors of advertising effectiveness, like taking into account aging deficits, message content (Chevalier, 1999; Dayez (2014), there is also the choice of actor (Chevalier, 1999; chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012; Dayez (2014). Choosing the actor in an ad, called advertising model, plays a crucial role in influencing senior consumers. Authors like (Chevalier, 1999; Chevalier & Lichtlé (2012) have identified several variables that should be taken into consideration when choosing the most suitable actor and delivering a more effective advertising. These are age, beauty and lifestyle. In this study, we consider beauty as an attractiveness characteristic Bezes (2010).

1. Actor age is a significant variable that facilitates the target's identification with the model. Some researchers have focused on the presence of a model whose age is close to the chronological age of the senior. On the other hand, others have proven that actor age should be close to the senior's subjective age and not to his or her actual age. In addition, some believe that it is necessary to use actors from other age groups to keep seniors connected to other generations Dayez (2014). This is known as the generality phenomenon Konicheckis (2014); Gournelen and Guillenot, 2012; Giaccardi & Magatti (2016).
2. Attractiveness through beauty varies by age. The older the advertising actor is, the more their attractiveness decreases. This statement is valid with young people as it is with older people (Deusch, and al. 1986). However, "*senior female models are judged even more harshly than senior male models*" (Berman, and al. 1981; cited in Béquaert & De Barnier, 2014). Moreover, there is a difference between male beauty (a young man and a mature man) and female beauty (the beautiful young woman). Indeed, in the study of (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014), senior women rated the beauty and attractiveness of an older woman as not very credible.
3. Lifestyle. Seniors appreciate advertising when actors are portrayed in a positive way. Thus, it is in the brand's interest to alternate between the dynamism of senior actors and exaggeration of their appearance (Chevalier, 1999).

The Factors of Advertising Effectiveness

The objective of advertising is to catch the attention of an intended target in order to induce them into adopting a desired behavior. NGouabi (2017). Advertising effectiveness can be defined as the ability of a message to achieve its previously set objective, whether it is sales volume or brand awareness Georget (2004). Recall and attitude towards ads are indisputable variables to test advertising effectiveness. One of the most important criteria to assess advertising effectiveness is recalling Awizoba (2019).

In this study, our conceptual model bears on the two models of Thorson et al. (1992) and Béquaert and De Barnier, (2014), while it complements the latter with three variables of advertising effectiveness namely attention, recall and attitude towards advertising in general.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Effect of Identification Factors on Overall Perceived Similarity

As stated above, characteristics like gender, ethnicity, and age facilitate the identification process (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012). In this study, our identification factor is subjective age.

Effect of Subjective Age Similarity on Overall Perceived Similarity

Age can be considered a sense of overall similarity if it is shared between the actor and the senior receiver. It can be an appreciative element between them allowing the creation of a sense of

similarity Chang (2008); Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012). On the other hand, subjective age similarity corresponds to the absolute value of the difference between the perceived age of the actor and the subjective age of the ad receiver. Indeed, it is an important criterion in promoting the identification process and, consequently, in Knight (2003) influencing overall perceived similarity (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014). Bearing on these proposals, our first hypothesis is formulated:

H₁ Subjective age similarity has a positive impact on overall perceived similarity for seniors

Effect of attractiveness on overall perceived similarity

A single similar characteristic between the message source and the receiver is not sufficient. A second condition is, necessary to create the feeling of similarity, namely the attractiveness of the message source. Such a proposal was put forward by (Kelman, 1961) and confirmed by (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014). The authors found a positive effect of attractiveness on the feeling of similarity between the actor and the target. Our second hypothesis runs as follows:

H₂ Actor attractiveness positively impacts the overall perceived similarity for seniors

Effect of overall perceived similarity on advertising effectiveness factors

(Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012) pointed to the positive impact of actor-target age similarity on beliefs, attitudes, and purchase intention towards the advertised product. Extending the work of (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012), Béquaert and De Barnier (2014) added actor attractiveness to subjective age similarity to form an overall perceived similarity. The latter has a positive effect on brand attitude as well as purchase behavior.

Effect of overall perceived similarity on attention and memorization

The purpose of advertising is to catch the attention of an intended target in order to induce them into adopting a desired behavior, namely the purchase of a product Ngouabi (2017). According to the literature, there is a positive effect of actor-target similarity on the variables of the advertising persuasion process (beliefs, attitudes, consideration and purchase intention). However, two variables, proposed by Thorson et al's (1992) hierarchy model of advertising effects, have been neglected by research, namely: the attention that the individual should pay to the ad and recall of the advertising message. We therefore assume that overall perceived similarity positively impacts these variables. Hence, the following two hypotheses are formulated:

H₃ Overall perceived similarity positively impacts seniors' attention to the advertising message.

H₄ Overall perceived similarity impacts recall of the advertising message.

For the relationship between subjective age similarity and the other three variables of the advertising persuasion process, they have been validated and tested by previous research Chang (2008); Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012; Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014). These studies lead us to formulate three additional hypotheses:

Effect of overall perceived similarity on attitude towards advertising

According to (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012), there is a positive effect between subjective age similarity and attitude towards the advertising. The results show that age similarity has a positive effect on the target's attitude towards the advertising. Hence the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅ The higher the overall perceived similarity between the actor and the target, the more positive the senior's attitude towards the advertising.

Effect of perceived similarity on attitude toward the brand

Chang (2008) showed the positive effect of subjective age similarity on the target's attitude towards the brand present in the ad. This relationship has been studied by (Chevalier and Lichtlé,

2012) and (Béquaert and De Barnier, 2014), who also showed that subjective age similarity between the source and the receiver of the message positively influences the attitude of the latter towards the brand. Hence, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H₆ The greater the overall perceived similarity between the actor and target, the more positive the senior's attitude toward the brand.

Effect of perceived similarity on purchase intention

According to (Greco, and al. 1997), there is no relationship between actor age and product purchase intention. (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012) challenged this finding and showed that age similarity between the source and the receiver of the message positively impacts the target's intention to purchase the product in question. This leads to the following sixth hypothesis:

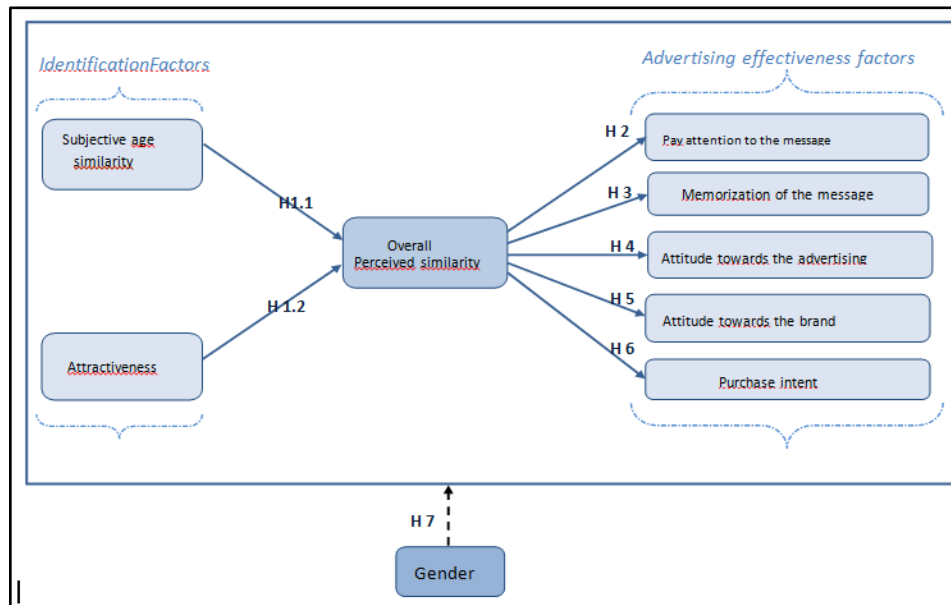
H₇ The stronger the overall perceived similarity between the actor and the target, the stronger the senior's intention to purchase the product.

Effect of Gender on the Overall Model

The literature show that most women tend not to accept their real age. They adopt an attitude towards their age that varies between acceptance, refusal or indifference (Tepper, 1994).

The contribution of this study is to take into consideration male gender and to check the effect of gender on identification factors, namely subjective age similarity and attractiveness, as well as on all the variables of our model. Hence, the following hypothesis is formulated Figure 1:

H₈: The relationships between variables differ by respondents' gender.



**FIGURE 1
THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

The study examines Tunisian seniors. The elderly occupy an increasingly important place in Tunisian society. The total population of seniors in Tunisia represents 11.4%, or about one million 250 thousand people (according to the general census of population and housing). This number is continuously increasing over the years. According to the projections of the National Institute of Statistics, around 2030, people aged 60 and over should represent the one fifth of the Tunisian population, a trend worth taking into consideration. The elderly spend more and more on food and their well-being. They watch more television than young people Dianoux et al. (2014).

Therefore, research question our study tries to answer is: What is the impact of the actor's perceived age on the effectiveness of seniors-oriented advertising?

This research question can be formulated in the following sub-questions:

1. What are the factors explaining the similarity between the advertising actor and the senior target?
2. How can overall perceived similarity, between the actor and the senior target affects advertising effectiveness factors?
3. Should the age of the senior target be close to the perceived age of the actor?
4. What is the impact of the actor's perceived age on advertising effectiveness factors?
5. What is the impact of the actor's attractiveness on advertising effectiveness factors?
6. What is the impact of the senior target's gender on their identification with the advertising actor?
7. Does perceived attractiveness of the senior actor varies with gender?
8. What is the effect of gender on advertising effectiveness relationships?

The aim is to determine, first, the most appropriate age that helps effectively reach the senior target. Second, to determine whether the choice of the actor's gender impacts advertising effectiveness.

Data Collection Method

The authors chose a quantitative research design to test the research hypotheses and measure the variables of the conceptual model. The study took place in two phases; the first one qualifies as a pre-test of the questionnaire in order to determine the quality and the structure of the measurement scales. The second phase consisted in administering the questionnaire to a sample of seniors in Tunisia. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions representing 28 items, and structured around two types of questions, open and closed questions. The authors carried out a one-week pre-test on a sample of 19 people, belonging to the target population, in line with Giannelloni and Vernet (1995). The pre-test was administered face-to-face. After polishing some items, the questionnaire was administered in a hybrid mode, online (on Google drive) and face-to-face for seniors who do not use the Internet. The online target included groups of retirees and seniors on Facebook: "*Happy retirees*" "*my second youth*" and the Tunisian Association of Seniors. For the offline target "*face to face*", they were approached in cafes, in the street and in the exits of the most visited supermarkets in the district of Tunis (the capital of Tunisia).

Choice of the brand. Our choice fell on the ad of the brand "Moulin d'Or". This brand has broadcast three commercials, during one month, which contain different models belonging to the selected age groups.

Pre-test. In order to determine the perceived age of each actor, we conducted a pre-test with the seniors.

Choice of actors. Different Tunisian ads featuring actors (men and women) who belong to the following age groups:

- Senior actors (over 60 years old)
- Actors of intermediate age (in their forties and/or fifties)
- Young actors (up to 35 years old)

Sampling method. The study opted for the non-probabilistic subjective method.

Sample. To obtain a representative estimate of our population, the authors used Jöreskog and Sörbom's method (1982) which consists in multiplying the number of items in the questionnaire by 10, which yields 280 responses. In our study, we have 293 respondents, 51% women (149) and 49% men (144). The age groups [60-64] and [65-69] represent 68% of our sample, i.e. 35% (60-64), 33% (65-69), 20% (70-74), 7% (75-79) and 5% (80 and over). More than half are retired (55%), 31% are still working, 6% are retired looking for a new opportunity and 8% have never worked. Similarly, most of the interviewed have a secondary education background with 35%, primary education with 33%, and higher education with 32%, which facilitated the questionnaire's administration phase Gourmelen & Guillemot (2012).

In order to validate the measurement scales and to test the relationships between the variables of our conceptual model, we used the following methods: univariate analysis, bivariate analysis, principal component analysis (PCA) and the internal reliability test during the exploratory phase. To this end, we used the SPSS software. Our confirmatory phase used structural equations processed by the PLS method with the XLSTAT software. However, the Multi-group PLS analyses were used to validate hypothesis 7.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

Seniors' attitudes toward media

After asking our sample about their media use, we noticed that most respondents (72%) use television, 14% use the internet, 7.5% use radio and only 6.1% use newspapers. Indeed, 45% of the seniors spend more than 4 hours a day watching television. 37% of our sample only listens to the radio for less than an hour a day. 67% do not use magazines and 16% use the internet for more than 4 hours a day. For the question of why seniors watch media, the results are as follows: television is the most media used by seniors to follow the news (33%), to follow trends (33%) as well as to be entertained (47.8%). The internet is the most medium used by seniors to search for information before buying a product (54.6%) and to learn about new products and services. In addition, most of the surveyed seniors prefer humorous ads as well as informative advertising.

Senior receivers' perception of actors' characteristics

However, perceived age of the young actress, which is supposed to be 33 years old, is 38 years. The overall perceived similarity score is slightly different when the actor is senior, mature or even young. The attractiveness level of the young actor is higher than that of the other types in both genders. There is a slight difference between senior and mature actors (5.1845 vs. 5.4267). For men, the senior actor is considered more attractive than the mature actor, while for women, the attractiveness scores of senior and mature actresses are almost equal. Moreover, the attractiveness of women is not significant. For the mean score of overall perceived similarity, it is slightly higher for senior and mature actresses (5.08 Vs 5.05) than that for men (4.67 Vs 4.75).

Relationship Between The Gender of The Senior Receiver and The Age of The Actor In The Ad

We cross-referenced the gender of the seniors with the actor to whom the respondents feel closer to in order to check whether there is a difference in identification between men and women.

According to the results, of the 293 seniors, 46.1% identified with the senior actor, 42% identified with the middle-aged actor (50-54), and only 11.9% identified with the young actor. On the other hand, referring to the 50.9% of men who responded, 57% felt closer to the senior model,

36.9% identified with the middle-aged actor, and 6% identified with the young actor. On the female side and referring to the 49.1% of the women who responded, 47.2% feel closer to the middle-aged actress, 34.7% feel closer to the senior actress and 18.1% identify with the young actress Bhatnager & Wan (2011).

The Chi-square test is significant at the 5% level; there is, therefore, a link between the gender of the senior respondents and their identification with the actor in the ad.

Principal Component Analysis PCA: Methods for Validating Measurement Instruments

Thus, the results of the PCA allowed us to eliminate two items from the variable "*Overall perceived similarity*" namely "*this person is similar to me in terms of personality*" and "*this person is similar to me in terms of appearance*" as well as three items from the variable "*Attitude towards advertising*" namely: "*this ad is rather "annoying", "irritating" and "disturbing"*". The results of the PCA show a KMO index between 0.500 and 0.864; this is a statistically acceptable value. The components represent the following variables: Recall (73.639%), Overall Perceived Similarity (72.658%), Attention (83.45%), Attitude towards the ad (79.606%), and Attitude towards the brand (88.783%). Moreover, referring to Cronbach's Alpha outputs, the reliability of the variables at the exploratory phase was confirmed. Indeed, the minimum threshold for this coefficient is set at 0.6; Chronbach's Alpha for our variables met this threshold and are all above 0.6. This coefficient is: 0.812 for the variable Recall, 0.809 for the variable Overall Perceived Similarity, 0.931 for the variable Attention, 0.87 for the variable Attitude towards Advertising and 0.956 for the variable Attitude towards the Brand.

CONFIRMATORY ANALYSIS - STRUCTURAL EQUATIONS

Validation of the Internal Model

Both the GOFs for the external model and the internal models are high; they indicate an acceptable overall goodness of fit Malhotra et al. (2004).

Validation of the Measurement Model

Our model consists of eight latent variables. Reliability measurement (Cronbach's alpha) and composite reliability are used to check the internal consistency between items (Chin, 1998). All Cronbach's alphas are above the minimum threshold set at 0.6 (Chin, 1998); the lowest is 0.6343. Moreover, the loadings, which measure the weight of the item on the variables, are all significant since they are higher than 0.7667, which is higher than the recommended threshold of 0.7. With these results, we can conclude that the latent variables are represented by the items.

Construct Validity

In the abovetable, the Fornelle and Larcker's (1981) standard was met. AVE of each variable is greater than 0.5. There is a good correlation between the items and their variables, suggesting a good level of convergent validation Bourcier-Béquaert & De Barnier (2014).

Discriminant Validity

All AVEs of the variables are greater than the squares of the corresponding correlations. Thus, discriminant validity is checked Table 1.

Validity of the External Model (Structural)

Latent Variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Overall perceived similarity	0,0493	0,0460
Attention	0,1379	0,1379
Recall	0,0016	0,0016
Attitude towards advertising	0,0468	0,0468
Attitude towards the brand	0,0221	0,0221
Purchase intention	0,0248	0,0248

This table shows that the variable “*attention to message*” is well explained since its R² is 0.1379. Overall perceived similarity and attitude towards the ad are significant (R²= 0.046). The other variables (recall, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention) are not significant Table 2 and Table 3.

Path Coefficient

H	pValue	Standard error	t	Pr > t
H1.1	0,1776	0,0576	3,0835	0,0022
H1.2	0,1541	0,0576	2,6751	0,0079
H2	0,3714	0,0544	6,8228	0,0000
H3	0,0401	0,0586	0,6848	0,4940
H4	0,2163	0,0572	3,7787	0,0002
H5	0,1488	0,0580	2,5673	0,0107
H6	-0,1576	0,0579	-2,7227	0,0069

Validity of the Global Model

	GoF	GoF (Bootstrap)	Standard error	Critical Ratio (CR)	Lower bound (95%)	Upper bound (95%)
Absolute	0,1930	0,1954	0,0105	18,4477	0,1671	0,2220
Relative	0,5598	0,5585	0,0244	22,9736	0,4941	0,6009
External Model	0,9865	0,9818	0,0175	56,3391	0,9364	1,0000
Internal Model	0,5675	0,5688	0,0230	24,6552	0,5121	0,6091

GOFs of the external and internal models are high indicating an acceptable overall goodness of fit.

HYPOTHESES TESTING AND DISCUSSION

H₁: The effect of identification factors on overall perceived similarity.

The relationship between subjective age similarity and overall perceived similarity is positive ($b=0.1776$) and significant ($p=0.0022$). Moreover, the relationship between actor attractiveness and overall perceived similarity is positive ($b=0.154$) and significant ($p=0.0079$). Indeed, the results are consistent with the model proposed by (Béqueart and De Barnier, 2014). Therefore, it can be concluded that subjective age similarity positively influences overall perceived similarity and actor attractiveness positively influences overall perceived similarity.

H₂: The effect of overall perceived similarity on attention to message.

The relationship between overall perceived similarity and attention is positive and significant ($b=0.371$, $p=0.0000$). This leads us to validate hypothesis which states that attention is positively influenced by overall perceived similarity between the seniors and the advertising actor.

H₃: The effect of overall perceived similarity on recall.

The relationship between overall perceived similarity and recall is positive but not significant ($b=0.040$, $p=0.4940 > 0.1$). Indeed, recall does not improve when there is similarity between the actor and the target. This hypothesis is therefore rejected. We conclude that overall perceived similarity does not have a significant effect on recalling the advertising message by the seniors.

H₄: The effect of overall perceived similarity on attitude towards advertising.

The results show that overall perceived similarity between the actor and the target has a positive and a significant impact on the senior's attitude towards advertising ($b=0.216$, $p=0.0002$). This allows us to validate hypothesis 4 and to deduce that overall perceived similarity affects the senior's attitude towards advertising. This result replicates that of (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012).

H₅: The effect of overall perceived similarity on attitude towards the brand.

The results indicate that overall perceived similarity has a positive and a significant impact on the senior's attitude towards the brand ($b=0.148$, $p=0.0107$). Therefore, hypothesis 5 is well validated. This finding corroborates those of (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012), and (Béqueart and De Barnier, 2014).

H₆: The effect of overall perceived similarity on purchase intention.

The Path coefficient for purchase intention is negative but significant ($b=-0.157$, $p=0.0069$), indicating that similarity between actor and senior does not necessarily translate into a purchase intention. The seniors who identify with the actor are not ready to buy the advertised product. This finding contradicts the results of (Chevalier and Lichtlé, 2012). Then, hypothesis 6 is rejected and corroborates the results of (Nelson and Smith, 1988) and (Greco and al. (1997)). In our case, the advertised product is intended for the general public Figure 2.

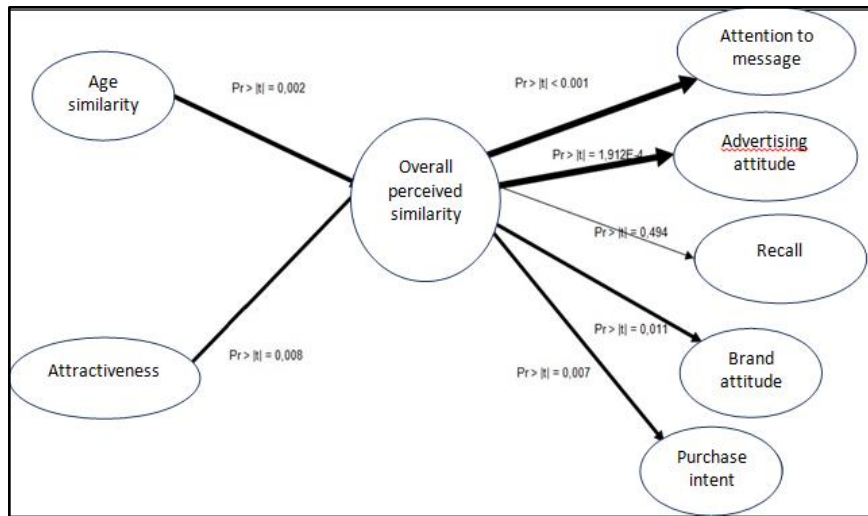


FIGURE 2
VALIDITY OF THE GLOBAL MODEL

Analysis of the Control Variable "Gender of Senior Respondents"

H₇: The relationship between the variables differs according to gender of the respondent

In order to highlight the impact of gender on the variables of our research model, we conducted a multi-group study that divided our population into two groups (women and men). This study allowed us to determine whether the links between the variables of the model can be influenced by the gender variable. This allowed us to test our hypothesis 7 Table 4.

Table 4 RESULTS OF THE PERMUTATION TESTS (WOMEN VS. MEN)			
Latent Variables	Difference	P	Significant
Subjective age similarity -> Overall Perceived similarity	0,5401	0,0099	Yes
Attractiveness -> Overall perceived similarity	0,3660	0,0099	Yes
Overall perceived similarity -> Attention to message	0,0525	0,3960	No
Global perceived similarity -> Recall	0,3196	0,0297	Yes
Overall perceived similarity -> Attitude to Advertising	0,0548	0,3762	No
Overall perceived similarity -> Attitude towards the Brand	0,3313	0,0792	No
Overall perceived similarity -> Purchase intention	0,2035	0,0396	Yes

According to the results, there is a significant difference between females and males in the relationships of subjective age similarity and overall perceived similarity, actor attractiveness and overall perceived similarity, the effect of overall perceived similarity on recall, and purchase intention. The difference between the other three relationships is not significant. This allows us to partially validate our hypothesis 7 and to deduce that the existing links between the variables differ according to the gender of the respondent.

This finding can be formulated into three statements:

- The existing links between identification factors and overall perceived similarity are

stronger when it comes to women.

- The link between overall perceived similarity and recall is stronger for women.
- The relationship between overall perceived similarity and purchase intention is stronger for women.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at determining the impact of the actor's perceived age, in an advertisement, on the components of advertising effectiveness while focusing on the role of similarity between the actor and the seniors. The study assumes that the feeling of similarity is influenced by two identification factors, namely subjective age similarity (between the senior and the actor) and actor attractiveness. Second, this perceived similarity influences the different advertising effectiveness variables. According to the results, for seniors, the age that an advertising actor should have for a better advertising effectiveness is important. Our results also pointed to significant differences between men and women in some links of our conceptual model.

Theoretical and Managerial Contributions

Theory-wise, our review of the different relevant research streams allowed us to better clarify some concepts and to position the important role of seniors in the field of marketing in general and in advertising in particular. Moreover, two factors of perceived similarity were taken into consideration: subjective age similarity (the difference in absolute value between the subjective age of the senior and the perceived age of the actor) and the attractiveness of the advertising actor. We considered these concepts as factors that positively influence overall perceived similarity. We then studied the impact of the latter on the components of advertising effectiveness. First, our study introduced three new advertising effectiveness variables taken from Thorson et al's (1992) hierarchy of advertising effects model, namely attention, attitude towards advertising in general, and message recall. Second, unlike previous studies which focused on commercials as a type of advertising, our study focused on TV advertising.

Key Findings and Managerial Implications

This study could be a support tool for executives, marketers, and advertisers seeking to target senior consumers.

1. Seniors prefer TV to other media. Television should be considered when targeting senior consumers.
2. Age and beauty of actors in an ad are important to influence seniors to purchase the product when it is dedicated to them.
3. Overall perceived similarity between the senior and the actor guarantees their attitude towards the ad and towards the brand.
4. Seniors are willing to purchase the product only if it is dedicated to them.
5. Age and beauty are more important for female seniors than for male seniors.
6. Women recall the advertising message better than men when there is an overall perceived similarity.

Future Research Leads

A qualitative study with business experts could lead us to understand how companies view the senior target and what their objectives are when they include senior actors in advertising.

Research Leads

- Lead 1- Choose other products from different sectors and compare the results
- Lead 2- Consider two brands, known and unknown, and compare results
- Lead 3- Test other identification factors such as lifestyle and ethnicity.

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