
GENDER REPRESENTATIONS AND ADVERTISING APPEALS IN GAMBLING BRANDS' COMMUNICATION

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Abstract: In recent years, the gambling industry has positioned itself at the forefront of digital innovation, leveraging internet technologies, gamification techniques, and influencer marketing to shape consumer behavior and foster brand loyalty. Existing research indicates that women's participation in gambling is rising, underscoring the importance of gender-sensitive approaches to understanding gambling-related harms. Evidence suggests that women are more likely to engage in gambling as a means of coping with emotional distress, such as stress or financial pressure. This study adopts an exploratory approach to examine how gambling advertisements targeted at women construct persuasive messages and gendered representations. Through a thematic analysis of $N = 20$ promotional videos produced by major gambling companies in Romania, the research identifies recurring discursive patterns and rhetorical strategies. The findings reveal that these advertisements consistently emphasize themes of success, empowerment, and personal comfort, often framed through idealized portrayals of feminine independence. At the same time, the risks associated with gambling are largely minimized or omitted. Such representations may be particularly persuasive for emotionally or financially vulnerable women, contributing to the normalization of gambling and potentially increasing the risk of harmful behaviors.

Keyword: *gambling advertising; brands communication; women and gambling; women and advertising; gendered appeals;*

Introduction

In recent years, the gambling industry has expanded rapidly across media platforms and the internet (Guillou-Landreat et al., 2021), a growth recognized as

a public health concern (Lancet, 2017; Palmer du Preez et al., 2021). Gambling is both a widespread social activity and a lucrative global industry regulated according to varying social and cultural norms (Fannin et al., 2024). As a pioneer in internet technology, the industry has evolved its strategies - through experiential marketing, gamification, influencer use - to foster consumer loyalty and expand its customer base, driven further by advertising, marketing, and deregulation (Hing et al., 2017).

This paper investigates how communication and advertising strategies in gambling influence women's perceptions, arguing that frequent exposure to gambling ads on social media increases women's acceptance of and participation in gambling by normalizing it and associating it with success and entertainment. It addresses RQ1: *What are the communication and advertising strategies used in gambling ads aimed at women?*

Literature review

The expansion of gambling, particularly casinos and electronic gaming machines, has significantly increased women's participation, drawing scholarly attention since the 1990s as researchers began examining women as a distinct segment of gambling populations (Palmeer du Preez et al., 2021). Wardle (2017) challenges the narrative that gambling has only recently become "feminized," arguing instead for a process of "re-feminization": a reconfiguration of how women's gambling is interpreted within social, familial, and institutional frameworks. This framing highlights the interconnected roles of the gambling industry, regulatory bodies, and social institutions in shaping women's engagement.

Gender structures both individual identity and social organization, with patriarchal norms often constraining women's autonomy and complicating the notion of 'choice' in gambling behavior (Kolandai-Matchett et al., 2017). Gambling may, in some cases, offer women a limited sense of independence within restrictive social structures (Palmeer du Preez et al., 2021). Women's gambling practices are shaped by diverse social, cultural, and economic conditions: among working-class women, gambling may function as a strategy for managing financial strain (Casey, 2016), while for older women it may serve as a coping mechanism for managing negative emotions (Lelonek-Kuleta, 2022).

Earlier research frequently treated gambling behavior as largely homogeneous across genders (Lelonek-Kuleta, 2022), but more recent scholarship emphasizes gender-sensitive approaches (Fannin et al., 2024; McCarthy et al., 2019; Palmeer du Preez et al., 2021). A key limitation has been treating gender as a simple demographic variable rather than a complex social construct, contributing to the marginalization of women in gambling policy even as evidence shows their participation, and exposure to harm is increasing across multiple countries (Castrén et al., 2018; McCarthy et al., 2019; Wardle & Laidler, 2023).

Women tend to develop gambling problems more rapidly than men, a phenomenon described as "telescoping" (Castrén et al., 2018; Fonseca et al., 2021).

Loneliness is a particularly significant factor: women gambling in response to social isolation are especially vulnerable to problematic patterns (Hing et al., 2017; Holdsworth et al., 2012). Gender differences in gambling are also emerging among younger populations, with the gap between adolescent men and women narrowing (Macía et al., 2023), and researchers emphasize that these differences are more closely linked to sociocultural context than to biological factors alone (Fonseca et al., 2021).

Palmer du Preez et al. (2021) identify three dominant representations of women who gamble: “risky women,” who are portrayed as irresponsible, reinforcing stigma and discouraging help-seeking (Holdsworth et al., 2012); “vulnerable women,” framed through emotional distress and maladaptive coping; and women shaped by broader sociocultural determinants. The latter, though less developed, highlights how cultural norms and institutional practices, such as bingo halls providing socialization while reinforcing gender norms (Svensson, 2017), shape gendered experiences and must be considered to avoid reductive stereotypes (Palmer du Preez et al., 2021).

Gambling advertising plays a critical role in normalizing participation, particularly among women. Gambling companies strategically deploy gendered messaging across product design, marketing, and corporate social responsibility initiatives (McCarthy et al., 2019; Wardle, 2017), embedding gambling in everyday life as a socially acceptable activity. While mere exposure to advertising may not directly change behavior, attention to and engagement with content do appear to influence gambling interest (Labrador et al., 2021), which is significant given increasing advertising expenditure (Torrance et al., 2021).

Social influence theory explains how advertising aligns gambling with prevailing social norms (McGrane et al., 2023), frequently presenting it as a routine, enjoyable activity associated with relaxation and financial opportunity (De Jans et al., 2023). Selective exposure theory further suggests that individuals engage with content matching their existing preferences, an effect amplified by algorithmic targeting on digital platforms (Fowler & Thomas, 2015). Techniques such as push notifications and remarketing create persistent engagement (Moodie et al., 2024). For women, these strategies can exploit specific vulnerabilities, like financial stress, caregiving burdens, and emotional distress, through messaging that emphasizes quick gains and limited-time offers (Hing et al., 2016) while downplaying risks and promoting an illusion of control (Binde, 2014).

Emotional appeals are central to gambling advertising: campaigns evoke excitement, hope, and fear of missing out (FOMO) (Guillou-Landreat et al., 2021), with time-limited promotions and representations of attainable success encouraging impulsive decision-making (Newall et al., 2019). By framing gambling as a source of emotional relief, advertising may reinforce problematic behaviors (Binde, 2014). Social media platforms are particularly effective, integrating advertising seamlessly into daily interactions and making gambling appear accessible and appealing (Fowler & Thomas, 2015; Torrance et al., 2021).

Influencers represent another powerful normalizing mechanism, establishing parasocial relationships that foster trust and credibility (Guillou-Landreat et al., 2021). Digital gambling advertising is pervasive among young adults (Hudders et al., 2021), and empirical evidence supports a positive relationship between exposure and gambling-related attitudes and behaviors (Newall et al., 2019). The effectiveness of specific strategies varies by gender; betting odds advertising was found to influence men more strongly than women (De Jans, 2023).

One of the most significant long-term effects of gambling advertising is the normalization of gambling as an everyday activity (Parke et al., 2014). Gender shapes advertising strategies distinctly: campaigns targeting men emphasize competition, risk-taking, and skill, while those aimed at women focus on relaxation, social connection, and emotional well-being, frequently highlighting “me time” and social support, reinforcing traditional gender norms while encouraging participation (De Jans et al., 2023; Hing et al., 2017; McGrane et al., 2023). Overall, gambling advertising not only promotes products but also shapes broader cultural narratives about gambling across gender groups.

Methodology

To answer the research question, this study employs multimodal analysis (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) on $N = 20$ commercials produced in Romania by the largest betting companies and targeting the female demographic. Due to its proven effectiveness in previous studies, content analysis is employed to explore advertising messages in relation to women’s perceptions and behaviors. This approach allows the identification of narrative patterns, visual symbols, and persuasive techniques used in advertisements to normalize gambling as an acceptable form of entertainment.

The materials analyzed are primary sources comprising $n = 12$ video advertisements (*Table 2*) from the following online casinos: Superbet, NetBet, Casa Pariurilor, Betano, Vlad Casino, and eFortuna (posted between August 2021 and February 2025). The analysis is complemented by insights from $n = 8$ promotional videos (*Table 2*) of Betano Romania from the *Lucky Ladies Mode ON!* Project, directly targeting women (posted between March - October 2024). The selection criteria for the corpus include having a Class 1 license from the Romanian National Gambling Office and a high number of YouTube subscribers at the time of this research.

Table 1.
Advertisement Data Presentation

Code	Casino name	Gambling type	No. of subscribers	Campaign name	No. of views
A1	Superbet	fixed-odds betting bingo casino	62,9k	SUPERBET - PA- RIAZĂ PE SUPER- PASIUNEA TA	3.430.234
A2				Joacă, Super- Distrează-te și Câștigă la Jocurile tale prefe- rate în cazinoul online Superbet	51.670
A3	NetBet	fixed-odds betting casino	3,04k	Viața după Nuntă	7.571.024
A4				La nuntă	9.578.848
A5	Casa Pariurilor	fixed-odds betting casino	33,6k	Aici joacă experții	1.485.732
A6				Funcția Playmaker la Casa Pariurilor	8.939
A7	Betano	fixed-odds betting casino	36,7k	3 sloturi Exclusive EGT Digital te aş- teaptă cu Surprize în fiecare zi	1.091.998
A8				Intră în □□□□□ □□□□□	686
A9	Vlad Cazino	fixed-odds betting bingo casino	7,69k	Arata-mi Vladul din tine!	909.626
A10				Smecher printre toti cu o casa pe roti!	2.829.167
A11	eFortuna	fixed-odds betting casino	17,8k	Norocul vine la Untold!	4.638.569
A12				Cazinoul online Fortuna	1.178.758

Table 2.
Promotional Videos Data Presentation

Code	Name of YouTube video	No. of views
V1	Lucky Ladies Mode ON! 12 întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Giulia Anghelescu	24k
V2	Lucky Ladies Mode ON! 17 întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Rux și Opulență	23k
V3	Lucky Ladies Mode ON! 19 întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & AMNA	21k
V4	Lucky Ladies Mode ON! 10 întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Diana Stejereanu	1,3k
V5	Lucky Ladies Mode ON! 10 întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Roxana Nemeș	1,1k
V6	Lucky Ladies Mode: ON! 24 de întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Diana Munteanu	2,8k
V7	Lucky Ladies Mode: ON! 22 de întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Elena Ionescu	1,9k
V8	Lucky Ladies Mode: ON! 21 de întrebări cu Ramona Olaru & Nicoleta Nucă	2,2k

The analytical framework is built around three core categories reflecting the main mechanisms through which gambling advertisements influence women's perceptions: actors in the ads, graphic/visual elements, and the promoted message (*unique selling proposition*). These categories are grounded in recent studies on digital marketing and consumer psychology.

The first category, **actors in advertisements**, examines the presence and representation of characters in terms of gender and social roles. Through the presence of female actors, we analyze how women are represented - as main characters or active participants - to assess whether they are granted autonomy, control, or social validation. 'Moderate' representations of femininity are common in gambling advertising, contributing to the legitimization of women's involvement in this type of activity (Svensson & Romild, 2014). Through the association with public figures or influencers, we examine how such characters directly or indirectly endorse gambling participation - a strategy that particularly impacts young women by encouraging them to imitate and aspire to the lifestyle portrayed (McCarthy et al., 2026).

Graphic/visual elements focus on visual and aesthetic components of ads that construct an idealized image of gambling. The use of vibrant colors and symbols of luxury or relaxation refers to how color palettes, modern graphics, and visual elements create an aspirational atmosphere, cultivating an illusion of emotional control and rewards (Lopez-Gonzalez et al., 2018). Through positive social contexts, we analyze whether ads depict friendly social scenes - groups of people having fun or winning together - contributing to the normalization of gambling as a collective and acceptable activity (Pitt et al., 2017).

The **message (USP)** aims to identify the core appeal and persuasive techniques used to promote gambling participation. A key element is the promotion of quick wins and life-changing outcomes: gambling ads are often built around the idea of significant financial rewards in a short time, stimulating impulsive behaviors (Hing et al., 2014). Another central variable is the use of emotional tactics appealing to desires for pampering, relaxation, and well-deserved rewards, emphasizing that gambling offers a break from daily stress and a sense of fulfilment (Hanss et al., 2015).

Findings

Representation of female characters. Among the advertisements analyzed, a balanced gender distribution emerges in terms of central presence: in half, the main characters are men, and in the others, women occupy central positions.

Although the female characters vary in appearance, they are often modeled around well-defined archetypes. The mysterious and seductive femme fatale frequently appears in casino settings, evoking the idea of unpredictable luck and dangerous allure. For example, Antonia takes center stage, presented as a desirable figure, surrounded by lights and glamorous effects: "*cherries, oranges – you could call it a jackpot – the crowns on the slots in the 24/7 casino. The best online opera-*

tor offers you Betano Club, the newest rewards program” (A8). Other ads promote the image of the energetic and playful teenager, in tune with the atmosphere of fun and excitement, suggesting youth as an attribute of luck. There are also depictions of the modern woman – self-assured, confident, and seemingly autonomous – but this autonomy is often contingent on access to the ‘privileges’ that come with gambling. Lora embodies this image through a combination of style, control, and magic: “*Experience the fun vibe of the Betano casino. Three exclusive EGT Digital slots – play them and win daily surprises with no wagering requirements*” (A7). Another common motif is the woman with mythological or magical connotations, such as goddess, queen, or symbol of good luck. Such an image suggests that success in gambling is almost predestined, controlled by a supernatural feminine force, and emphasizes an idealized and often unrealistic femininity, transforming women into decorative or fantastical symbols. Fortuna itself is personified: “*I am Fortuna, the goddess of luck, and now I am always by your side; you just have to find me. Because you are lucky when you feel lucky*” (A12), conveying a sense of security and confidence through the maternal, divine figure.

Even in commercials where women are portrayed in supporting roles, they play important functional roles: they accompany the male character, bring him luck, act as a dealer, or trigger an emotional reaction. The female presence catalyzes male action, reinforcing the narrative that the male character is active and decision-making, while women are either supportive or decorative. In one instance, the male character discusses choosing a new “*vampiric other half*” while the female figure becomes an explicit object of desire: “*Look at her curves, look at her from behind... how do I find her? She’s right here, at Vlad Casino. Start a romance with your new mobile home too*” (A10). This duality between the woman as object and the woman as agent illustrates how advertisements perpetuate an ambiguous image of femininity: on the one hand, valued and idealized; on the other, objectified. Men, by contrast, are often portrayed as active, autonomous, and self-assured: “*Bet both will score? Good... They’re definitely playing here. Use Playmaker in the new Casa Pariurilor app*” (A6) - the game presented as an extension of male self-confidence. Unlike men, women are much more frequently associated with decorative or magical symbolism, suggesting their role in the world of gambling is more supportive than essential.

In the eight-part video series *Lucky Ladies Mode ON!*, Ramona Olaru is the interviewer and plays a central role, guiding the flow of conversations, selecting guests, and introducing viewers to the world of gambling. She asks the guests questions to build their customized gambling profiles, walks them through creating a profile on the casino website, and encourages them during gambling sessions. She presents herself as a strong woman eager for “*responsible fun*” and applies these principles to her guests, emphasizes the formation of the Lucky Ladies community, symbolized by a pin that guests receive at the beginning: “*I want to meet the strongest women and create a community with these strong women that we’ll call Lucky Ladies*”/ “*We are responsible*”/ “*We, the strong women*”/ “*With this pin, we create a bond - all of us strong women. I want us all to come together*”/

“When you pin it to your chest, it means we’re ON all the time... we’re always open to having fun, to having fun responsibly” (V1).

Two clearly defined archetypes emerge among guests: of the strong or independent woman: *“A strong woman, or as I call her, a lucky lady”* (V2); *“Strong, sincere, inspirational woman”* (V3); and of the woman open to having fun: *“cool women who are open to everything new, to all the cool things, and especially to responsible fun”* (V4); *“I like that you’re so lucky”* (V5). This positioning may seem paradoxical - the strong woman represents control, while gambling represents luck and impulse - but the dual message serves to convey that women who gamble are in control of their lives and, by extension, of their gambling. Many guests stated that they had never tried gambling before, and when they engage in it, they got praised by the host: *“A community comprised exclusively of these inspirational women, open to new experiences and a new form of entertainment”* / *“I like that you were open to a new kind of entertainment”* (V6). As role models, their openness implicitly signals to viewers that it is normal to engage in such activity as well.

Celebrity endorsement. The inclusion of public figures and influencers serves as a deliberate promotional strategy. Antonia and Lora, two artists popular among young women, are featured in advertisements that promote an exclusive lifestyle, refined femininity, and control. Antonia becomes the face of Betano, taking center stage with a dedicated musical segment that transforms the ad into a veritable glam music video, where she sings *“cherries, oranges, you could call it a jackpot, crowns on the slots in the non-stop casino”* (A8). Lora embodies the confident woman who fulfills wishes with a simple gesture, suggesting that luxury, power, and success can be achieved effortlessly as part of a *“magical”* universe offered by gambling (A7). This association with public figures - whether perceived as role models of success or charismatic personalities - has a major impact on the public, especially young women. The ads subtly convey that adopting a luxurious, exclusive, carefree lifestyle is possible through gambling, and the influencer becomes an aspirational role model. Viewers are encouraged to imitate not only the gestures but also the attitudes of these figures, normalizing behaviors associated with gambling. This marketing strategy transforms participation in gambling from a mundane or risky act into a display of social status, self-confidence, or membership in an exclusive group, blurring the clear line between entertainment and risk.

In *Lucky Ladies*, each episode centers on a celebrity who welcomes viewers into an intimate setting, such as their home, while answering personal questions and exploring Betano’s games. This personal space serves a dual purpose: bringing viewers closer to the celebrities as ordinary, relatable people while simultaneously inspiring aspiration. The homes of certain celebrities convey comfort, relaxation, and familiarity, while others feature eccentric luxury items (V2) or works of art (V6). Celebrities are encouraged to give tours of their space, and the final segment of each episode showcases impressive personal possessions - vast collection of designer clothing, concert outfits, or awards. Through this association, “luxury” is reframed from a marker of social status to an element of accessibility: ordinary

people and celebrities are alike because they engage in the same activities, including gambling. Even without directly mentioning winnings, being part of the Lucky Ladies community alongside celebrities can stimulate compensatory behaviors like engaging in gambling to gain validation. The presentation of the domestic space also conveys the subtle idea of entertainment taking place in one's own home, presenting gambling consumption as an individual leisure activity based on the domestication of digital entertainment (Hing et al., 2017).

Visual and graphic elements. The ads are visually supported by modern, bold graphics featuring a vibrant color palette: red (passion, risk), yellow (reward, optimism), purple (mystery, luxury), white (purity, clarity), and orange (energy, enthusiasm). These colors are carefully paired with visual symbols and dynamic sequences. Lora is portrayed in an urban setting, creating dazzling effects and vibrant accents that emphasize a magical atmosphere: “*Experience the fun vibe of Betano Casino*” (A7). Antonia is surrounded by brightly colored fruits, slot symbols, and golden crowns against a predominantly purple background, emphasizing luxury and exclusivity (A8). This atmosphere is complemented by symbols of an idealized lifestyle: the association with the Untold festival is visualized through spectacular lights and wide shots of happy crowds – “*Luck comes to Untold, luck always by your side*” (A11). The viewer is invited to aspire to a promoted lifestyle: modern villas (A9), expensive cars (A3), designer clothes (A1), and a world of constant entertainment (A2). Gambling is presented not as a vice but as direct access to a world full of rewards and elite status. Through carefully chosen colors, symbols, and visual contexts, the ads create a psychological bridge between the viewer and an ideal of material success, emotional comfort, and social recognition - a fictional construct designed to mask the real risks of gambling.

A key element of the narrative structure is the placement of gambling within diverse, vibrant, and deeply positive social contexts. Whether in a casino styled like a masquerade ball or in scenes from everyday life - going out with friends to a club (A9), strolling through the city (A7), casual get-togethers in a food court (A6), house parties (A3), or a dream wedding (A4) – the chosen settings convey well-being, collective joy, and belonging. People are captured laughing, offering each other support, and sharing positive emotions, all subtly or directly linked to the gambling experience. This strategy is persuasive because presenting positive social contexts normalizes and legitimizes gambling as a common and acceptable activity. Ads exploit the human need for belonging, replacing the narrative of individual, solitary play with a festive and collective one: playing means being part of something bigger and experiencing special moments together - potentially winning more than just money.

In *Lucky Ladies*, the moment guests try out the games is intended to highlight how their interests and personality align with their personalized gaming profile. The host identifies with in-game characters - “*Look how much she looks like me, let's find her!*” / “*Just like me (she looks), exactly the same*” (V4) - suggesting that games are personalized and relatable. Although guests react lukewarmly to the graphics, the interviewer presents them as appealing. Emphasis falls on vi-

sual elements: “*What cute graphics*” (V1); “*I really like these graphics; they’re so colorful*” (V2) - focusing on colors and symbols such as gold, mythological characters, and cultural motifs, which creates cognitive distance from potential consequences and risks. The term “gambling” is gradually being transformed into “gaming,” thereby reducing gambling to entertaining and harmless practices (Hing et al., 2016).

Messages. The analyzed advertisements construct a coherent yet highly illusory advertising narrative based on promises of quick wins, emotional rewards, and spectacular life transformations. Promoting instant winnings is one of the most used strategies. NetBet normalizes the association between everyday events and immediate rewards - “*just wait and see what jackpot we’ll hit*” (A3) or “*playing slots at the wedding? Just wait and see what jackpot you’ll take home*” (A4) - a strategy particularly dangerous for economically vulnerable audiences, as it fosters the idea that financial salvation is just one click away. Superbet reinforces this with “*Play, have a blast, and win with Superbet Casino*” (A2), suggesting fun and financial success go hand in hand and are guaranteed. Even less direct messages, such as “*Bet on your super passion*” (A1), construct a seemingly positive but deeply manipulative logical chain between passion, gambling, and winning.

Beyond the promise of winnings, advertisements rely on sophisticated emotional tactics based on the need for validation and personal reward. The Betano ad places Antonia in an elite setting, promoting an “exclusive club” intended for those who “deserve” access to exclusive benefits, transforming gambling into a symbol of success. Lora is portrayed as someone who “*makes wishes come true just by snapping her fingers*” (A7), strongly resonating with young women promised a life free of constraints. Vlad Casino offers equally aspirational messaging: “*Hmmm, it’s so good to be me; I live in a corner of paradise; I lack nothing*” (A9). Fortuna draws on warm, feminine mythology: “*I am Fortuna, the goddess of luck, and now I am always by your side*” (A12), framing luck as a constant, affectionate presence that offers protection - building a relationship of trust with women who can perceive gambling not as risk but as an emotional promise of fulfilment. Together, these messages construct a coherent emotional narrative designed to build an alternative reality in which gambling is the answer to all the frustrations and unfulfilled desires (Lelonek-Kuleta, 2022).

In *Lucky Ladies*, messages operate on two levels. Direct messages center on “responsible fun”: “*We’re always open to having fun, to having fun responsibly*” (V1); “*What we’re doing now is responsible fun*” (V2), which becomes the series’ motto. This is a moral reframing strategy presenting risky behavior as safe and controllable, placing responsibility on the individual rather than on the product. When negative effects such as addiction arise, such discourse can lead to the internalization of guilt. Indirect, subtle messages emerge through inspirational questions posed to guests: “*What does success mean to you?*” (V7), “*How much time do you have for fun?*” (V7); “*What are your favorite ways to have fun?*” (V6) - that gradually outline an inspirational lifestyle viewers are encouraged to desire. Even if people cannot afford a vacation or a unique way to relax, they are given

the idea that they can turn to the quick and accessible “fun” offered by gambling companies.

Conclusions

The research question of this paper was: “*What are the communication and promotional strategies used in gambling advertisements targeting women?*” The findings indicate that gambling advertisements on social media frequently use eye-catching visuals, symbols of success and luxury, and narratives that frame gambling as a legitimate form of entertainment or escape from daily routine. Women are depicted in positive, relaxed social contexts or as strong, independent figures who are in control of their decisions.

According to social influence theory (McGrane et al., 2023), such portrayals contribute to *the normalization of gambling*, a process clearly observed in the content analysis. Advertising frames these activities as a risk but as part of the everyday landscape of modern life, presenting gambling as a common, valid, even desirable choice, while its negative aspects are completely ignored (Binde, 2014). This normalization is reinforced by friendly visuals, influencer endorsements, and persuasive strategies built on positive emotions and aspirational role models.

While gambling marketing targeting men relies heavily on sports to elicit engagement (Gainsbury et al., 2016), our findings indicate that women are targeted through figures from the music, fashion, and lifestyle industries. This reveals an instrumentalization of feminist discourse – concepts such as the strong, independent woman – for commercial purposes. The concept of “empowerment” presented is not grounded in real autonomy or personal development; the only new attribute offered to these women is that they “are open to having fun.”

These conclusions are consistent with recent studies indicating that gambling marketing is increasingly sophisticated and emotionally tailored, combining cognitive and visual strategies to gradually alter users’ perceptions (Newall et al., 2019). Women are targeted with messages that emphasize comfort, escapism, and refined aesthetics, woven into narratives that rarely mention associated risks. Overall, gambling advertisements on social media are designed to influence women’s perceptions through normalization, emotionalization, and personalization. This research contributes to understanding how advertising discourse intersects with gender, emotion, and psychological vulnerability, while providing a foundation for future recommendations on regulating gambling advertising content and protecting vulnerable groups.

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