

# Seeing Beyond the Rainbow: Consumer Associations with Inclusive Brand Communication

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## **Abstract**

This study examines how consumers spontaneously interpret inclusive advertising by comparing free word associations to advertising campaigns featuring heterosexual, female same-sex, and male same-sex couples. Using a between-subjects design, participants reported immediate thoughts and feelings toward one of three milk advertisements. Positive and negative associations were coded into semantic categories to identify recurring meaning patterns. Results of multiple correspondence analyses show that heterosexual portrayals elicited strong product- and emotion-related associations, female same-sex portrayals triggered more aesthetic and diversity-related responses, and male same-sex portrayals generated the most negative reactions, particularly regarding intimacy and discomfort. The findings highlight how couple constellations activate distinct associative networks and reveal differentiated audience responses to LGBTQIA+ representation.

**Track:** Social Responsibility & Ethics