

# GENDER EFFECTS IN PERCEIVING ADVERTISING ARCHETYPES

Sabrah D. Shipman

Faculty Advisor: Derik Gray

Capstone Director: Ryan Button

Tyler Junior College

## ABSTRACT

This study will examine the gender effects in perceiving advertising archetypes. Our society is constantly becoming more and more media saturated, and advertisers need to focus on employing evidence-based strategies to reach their target audiences. One repeating pattern throughout advertising is the use of archetypes. This study analyzes the prominent use of archetypes in today's advertising and factors in information on how gender can potentially impact the effectiveness of archetypes. Many studies in the past have shown females are naturally better at non-verbal cues and communication, and perhaps this translates over into them being better able to recognize advertising archetypes.

## CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

**What is an archetype?** It's the original pattern or model from which all things of the same kind are copied or on which they are based.

The **SAGE** seeks the truth and wants to find the wisdom in every situation. Sage brands promise learning and use a lot of symbolic imagery.

The **CREATOR** is driven by their desire to produce exceptional works. Creator brands often position themselves as the key to unlocking a creator's creativity.

The **CAREGIVER** is driven by their need to protect and care for others. Caregiver businesses offer protection, safety and support to their customers.

The **RULER** brand image is solid, polished and often very 'masculine'. They will value ads that reinforce their feelings of power and stability.

The **JESTER** wants to live in the moment and enjoy life. Brands targeted at younger people—who will appreciate the silliness—are often jesters.

The **REGULAR GUY** only wants to feel a part of something, and their greatest fear is to be left out or to stand out from the crowd.

The **LOVER** fears being unwanted and unloved. Lover customers value the aesthetic appearance of goods and services.

**HERO** customers value quality in their products. Hero businesses promote themselves as good quality and superior to their competition.

**REBEL** brands position themselves as an alternative to the mainstream. Rebel customers value unique or shocking content.

The **MAGICIAN** wants to understand the universe and their place in it. They flatter the customer by telling them to trust their own instincts.

The **INNOCENT'S** core desire is to be happy. Innocent-focused businesses promote themselves as pure, simple and trustworthy.

The **EXPLORER** craves adventure. Explorer brands promote themselves as a means to help others experience the new and unknown.

## METHODOLOGY

- Thirty six students enrolled in media classes at a junior college participated in the present experiment. There were 16 females and 20 males involved in the study. The average age of the participants was 20-years-old.
- The survey was administered to six, fairly small classes and took 10-15 minutes to administer.
- Data was collected by showing the participating students five commercials, each containing a different character archetype. Before playing the commercials, a definition of each character archetype was read to the students. The students were also given a paper copy of the character archetype definitions. In addition, a general definition as to what an archetype is was provided.
- After watching each commercial once, the students were given around 15 seconds to choose from four choices what archetype that they think the advertiser used in their commercial.
- The brands used in the experiment include Apple, Campbell's, The North Face, Levi's, and Duracell.

Brands used in experiment:



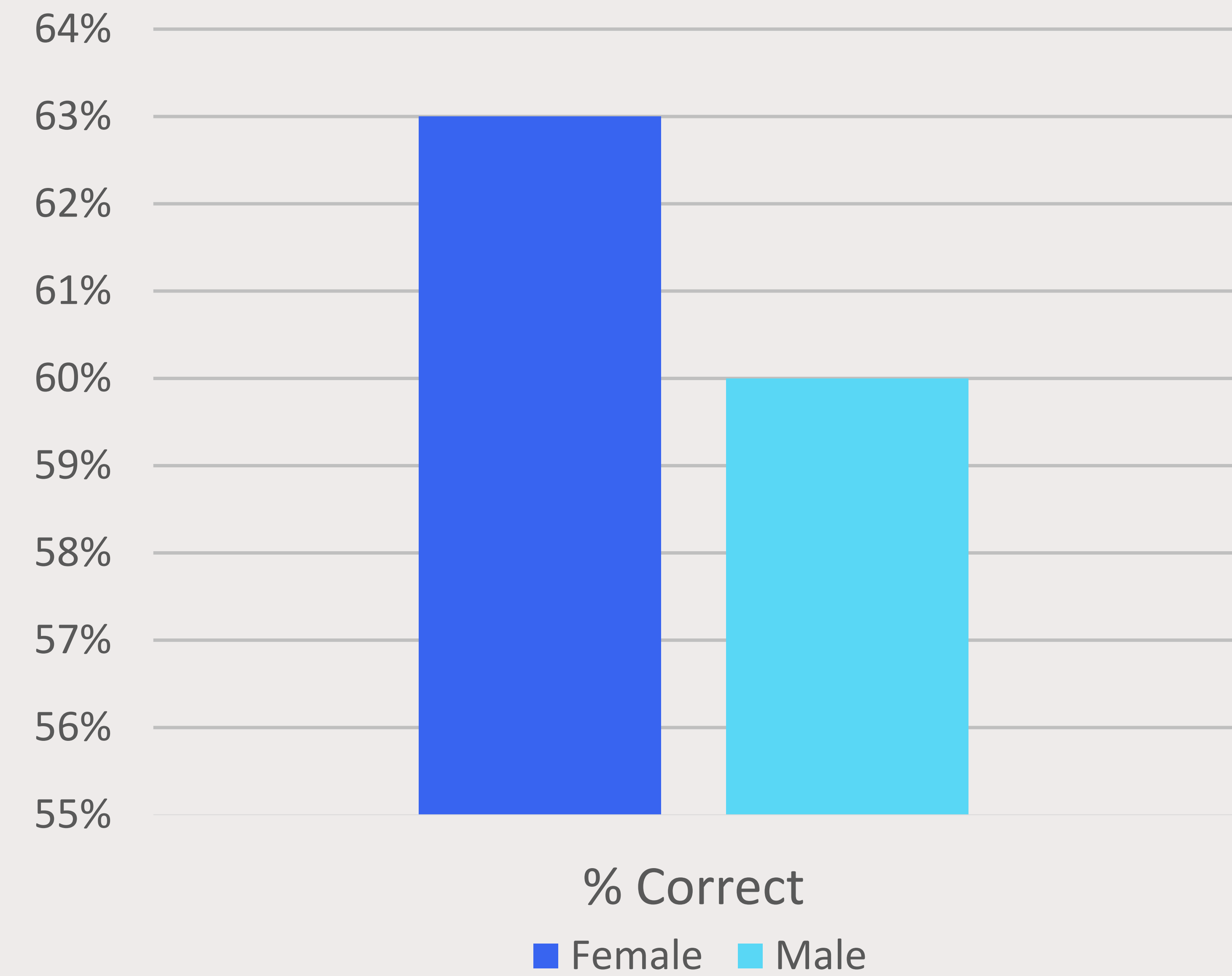
## DISCUSSION

The study examines how gender can potentially affect one's ability to recognize advertising archetypes. The results of this study certainly have implications on the way advertisers should use archetypes in the future:

- Advertisers should take into account the increased archetype recognition by women.
- When they are trying to sell a product or service to women, perhaps they should try and use more archetypes in their advertisements.
- A limit to the study is the small sample size. Though the amounts of males and females that participated in the study were fairly equal, a larger study would have shown more accurate results.
- All of the students surveyed were enrolled in media classes. This may have skewed the results. These type of students may have a better understanding of not necessarily archetypes, but how advertisers use certain tactics to manipulate consumers into purchasing their products.

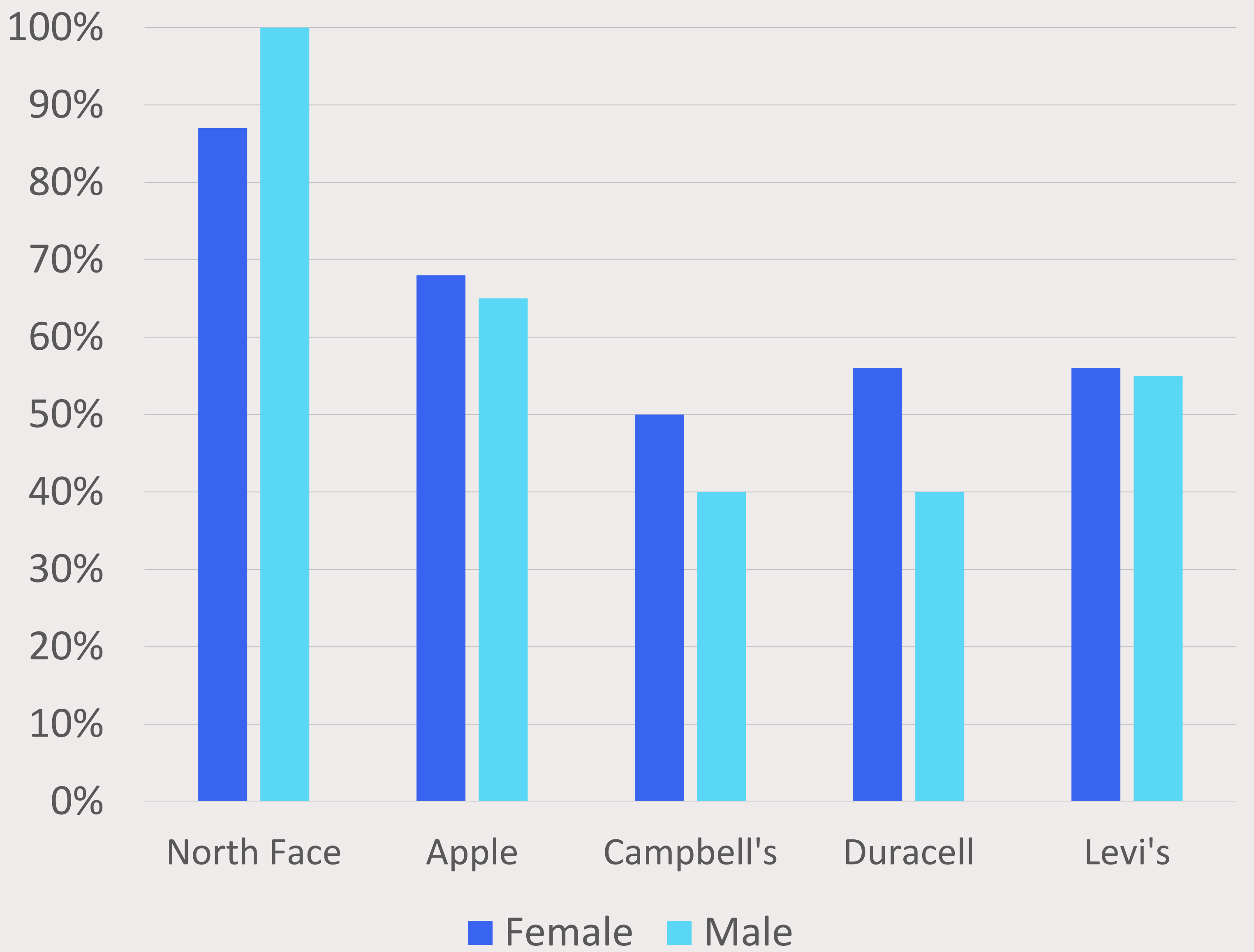
## RESULTS

Overall Results



Overall the females tested 3% better than the males.

Individual Question Results



As seen in the graph above, the females did better on every question except the North Face commercial, where the males tested better.

## SOURCES

Apple logo: [www.osxdaily.com](http://www.osxdaily.com)  
 Campbell's logo: [www.campbellsoupcompany.com](http://www.campbellsoupcompany.com)  
 North Face logo: [www.sportchek.ca](http://www.sportchek.ca)  
 Levi's logo: [logos.wikia.com](http://logos.wikia.com)  
 Duracell logo: [logok.org](http://logok.org)